META-ANALYSIS AND SCOPING EXERCISE INTO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE REGULATED INDUSTRIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report on the meta-analysis and scoping exercise undertaken into deliberative public participation in the regulated industries has been prepared by Involve and Ipsos MORI for Citizens Advice Scotland's Consumer Futures Unit to address the following research question:

What deliberative research has been done in the UK and internationally within the regulated industries (water, energy and post) and what can we learn from this?

THE PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

The Consumer Futures Unit (CFU) has a long history of undertaking research with consumers to inform policy-making and service planning in the regulated industries in Scotland. To date however much of this research has relied on polling, surveys, in-depth interviews, analysis of customer complaints or traditional focus group approaches to market research. The CFU is now interested in expanding the range of research models it uses to understand consumer attitudes by testing out a range of deliberative approaches. This is designed to help the organisation gain a deeper understanding of consumers' preferences, motivations and priorities in relation to policy-making and how public monies should be spent.

Recognising that there are a multitude of deliberative participatory methods that could be used, this research has been initiated to help the CFU identify which methods are most appropriate for engaging with customers, and the wider public, on strategic and policy issues within the specific context of the regulated industries.

METHODOLOGY

The research team from Involve and Ipsos MORI have used a combination of desk-based research, outreach to stakeholders and qualitative in-depth interviews to inform this report. The research has been undertaken in 3 stages, as outlined below:

1) Scoping Phase: A systematic literature review was undertaken to identify published examples of deliberative engagement activities within the energy, water and post sectors in the UK and elsewhere in the last 5-10 years. This aimed to provide a comprehensive account of where deliberative approaches have been used to influence policy development and outcomes (as opposed to other issues related to consumer experience, for example). At the same time we approached UK government/regulatory bodies and service providers in the water and energy industries and asked them to identify any examples of deliberative engagement they had undertaken (or knew about) which may not be published, or where detailed information is not publically available. This provided the team with an understanding of the range and scope of known activity.

2) Preparation of case studies: In consultation with the CFU, 31 of the research projects identified were selected for further focus and developed into case studies. This selection was designed to ensure that there were a range of projects included from each industry sector, as well as a range of methods represented. A further consideration in making this selection was the depth of information, including evaluative information, that was available (or likely to become available). The projects selected mainly came from the UK, however international examples were included where it was felt that there was something important that could be learnt from their approach. 8 of the research projects were also prioritised for further investigation through in-depth interviews intended to provide a more detailed understanding of the commissioning body's experience of the deliberative engagement process.

3) Analysis and reporting.

DEFINING DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Deliberative public engagement is a distinctive approach to involving people in decision-making. Where traditional consumer engagement tools, such as opinion polls or customer surveys, tend to measure 'top of the head' public views, deliberative public engagement offers policy and decision-makers much richer data on public attitudes and values, by exploring more fully why people feel the way they do and giving time to develop ideas, options and preferences <u>with</u> the public.

To be deliberative, a process must involve:

- discussion between participants at interactive events (including through online technologies). These events are designed to give sufficient time and space to enable participants to gain new information and to discuss in depth the implications of their new knowledge in terms of their existing attitudes, values and experience. These discussions result in a considered view, which may (or may not) be different from participants' original view, and which has been arrived at through careful exploration of the issues at hand.

- working with a range of people and information sources – including information, evidence and views from people with different perspectives, backgrounds and interests. This may include evidence requested or commissioned by participants themselves. Discussions are managed to ensure that a diversity of views from people with different perspectives are included, that minority or disadvantaged groups are not excluded, and that discussions are not dominated by any particular faction or individual.

- a clear task or purpose, related to influencing a specific decision, policy, service, project or programme.

When done well, deliberative public engagement can be of real benefit for all decision and policy-makers, able to create better policy and service delivery options, grounded in better knowledge of consumer values and priorities.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF THE SCOPING EXERCISE

The scoping exercise that informed this report identified 50 examples of deliberative engagement with consumers or the wider public that seem to have relevance to the questions posed by the CFU at the outset of this research. 17 of these examples are broadly linked to the energy sector (including energy generation, carbon mitigation and energy futures). 20 are related to water (covering topics including priorities for industry, environmental management and flood risks). Our scoping research was only able to identify one example from the postal sector.

A further 12 examples have been selected for inclusion from different industry contexts, including public sector infrastructure, health, public safety, local planning and telecommunications, because of the insight they offer in relation to how differing deliberative methodologies have been used to address a range of challenging policy questions. An outline of all of the examples identified can be found in Appendix A. 31 of these examples of deliberative engagement were selected for development as case studies (Appendix B).

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDIES BY METHODOLOGY

Chapter 5 of this report is organised by methodology. It looks at each of the case studies in more detail using the following classifications:

- Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums
- Citizens Advisory Forums
- General Deliberative Workshops – from Focus Groups to Structured Dialogues

- Distributed Dialogues
- Citizens Juries
- Citizens Assemblies
- Deliberative Mapping
- Participatory Strategic Planning
- Online Deliberations.

The focus of the analysis here is on how successful the method was in providing information to commissioning bodies that answered their research question, added new insight or knowledge relating to consumer preferences, and provided outputs that were useful to policy and decision-makers.

We conclude that, while there are examples of all of the methods under discussion being used effectively, very often their success comes down to careful planning, focused objectives, creative process design and nuanced targeting, rather than the specific method chosen.

The chapter closes with a summary table that identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses of each method type and highlights the contexts in which they are most effective.

IMPACT ON POLICY

In Chapter 6 the analysis is focused on the impacts the research outputs had on policy and decision-making. Here the case studies are grouped in terms of the type of policy question they were used to address: examining broad policy objectives; consulting on policy options; or addressing questions around consumer experience of existing policies or services.

While the evidence seems to suggest that the strongest predictor of whether research outputs will have an impact is how well the process is integrated into decision making structures, rather than the methods used, there are some general observations that can be made about the suitability of different methods for different purposes:

- **Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums** – When well chaired, with a broad and diverse membership and a clear relationship with decision-making bodies, these groups are able to bring the views, experiences and preferences of customers effectively into all areas of policy-making. This is particularly true if they are provided with, and/or able to commission, independent customer research.

- **Citizens Advisory Forums** – Forums made up of a representative sample of customers that meet on a number of occasions have been shown throughout this research to be able to have an impact across all types of policy questions, particularly if they are used and constituted in a similar way to Ofgem's Consumer First Panels (Case Study 2).

- **Deliberative Focus Groups** – Even when given a deliberative task, Focus Groups are still best able to address questions relating to customer experience and/or provide initial responses to policy options or proposals. This is largely due to the limited time usually available for deliberation.

- **General Deliberative Workshops and Repeated Structured Dialogues**[1] – Deliberative Workshops are equally able to address broad, horizon-scanning questions (as demonstrated by Case Study 24), consultations around different policy options (as illustrated in Case Study 26) and questions relating to consumer experience (as shown by Case Study 14), when effectively and creatively designed. The key determinant of their likelihood of achieving significant impacts on policy however, tends to be the numbers that are involved in the process.

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[1] These two categorisations are grouped together here because the main difference in the methodology is how often they are delivered, rather than any specific aspect of their design or capacity to address different types of policy questions.

- **Distributed Dialogues** – Distributed Dialogues tend to be most effective when they are used to explore consumer preferences in relation to broad policy issues, in part because it can be difficult to draw clear conclusions about consumers' specific policy preferences from the evidence collected in this way. Also, as it can be difficult to maintain quality control over the dialogues, there is no guarantee when using this process that the opinions that are fed back to the organisers represent anything more than participants' intuitive responses to the questions asked.

- **Citizens Juries** – This method is best used to consult on specific policy options or to identify priorities in a broad horizon-scanning exercise. Because the focus of a Jury tends to be on arriving at a verdict based on the analysis of evidence, it is less useful for opening up and exploring wider, speculative issues.

- **Citizens Assembly** – Citizens Assemblies are best used when the goal is to bring a large representative sample of the population into the same deliberative process. This method is most suited to addressing broad, horizon-scanning questions, and Assemblies are particularly useful when there is little known about consumers' opinions on the issue to date. Assemblies however, can also be effectively used to consult on policy options and reach collective recommendations.

- **Deliberative Mapping** – This is a method specifically designed to assess the relative merits of different policy options from the perspective of both expert stakeholders and the wider public.

- **Participatory Strategic Planning** – As this method is designed to begin by exploring and agreeing a collective vision for the future, it is best used in the context of a broad horizon-scanning exercise where there is scope for participants to develop new ideas, and new policy and practical options to achieve them.

- **Online Deliberations** – While there seems to be considerable potential for online deliberative platforms to be developed that are able to address all types of policy questions, the examples identified here tend to suggest that they are best used to consult on policy options, where information can be clearly presented and then discussed within quite defined parameters.

CROSS-CUTTING PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

With any deliberative forum designed to produce outputs that can be extrapolated to be relevant to wider public opinion, it is important that those invited to take part are broadly representative of the population of interest; whether that be the population of a given geographical area (for example, Scotland as a whole or a smaller region), or a particular group of customers or service users. Only on such a basis will it be reasonable to assume that the findings of the forum will reflect the views of the wider population.

Ensuring representativeness begins with choosing an appropriate sample frame. Many possible frames exist, from pre-existing databases (e.g. customer databases) and consumer or citizen panels, to the edited electoral register and 'free find' recruitment undertaken door to door and/or in street by professional recruiters. Each of these approaches however comes with its own challenges and limitations.

Further, even if a representative sample is successfully recruited for a deliberative forum, this does not necessarily translate into the forum being representative *on the day.* It is normal to see c.20% drop out for any given forum, which, despite the effort and expense that may have been dedicated

to ensuring representativeness, can result in a skewed sample, depending on the demographic and attitudinal profile of those who do not show up.

OPTIMAL NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS

A fundamental belief underpinning approaches to deliberative public engagement is that the results of a well-planned, well-resourced and effectively facilitated deliberation between a small, but representative, sample of the population can be extrapolated to be indicative of the views of the wider public, if the wider public had been given the opportunity to participate in the same deliberative process.

In practice, however, when it comes to using the results of deliberative research to inform policy, the case studies here tend to suggest that sometimes 'small' may be just too small to be considered useful. High numbers of participants, however, do seem to be a general indication for how robust the research outcomes are perceived by policy-makers, particularly if they are not directly involved in the process.

INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

Paying participants to attend deliberative engagement events is increasingly being used as a way to widen the sample of people who are willing, and able, to participate. Of the case studies where information about the payment of incentives to participate was available, payments were made to participants in 2/3 of the research projects.

THE ROLE OF EXPERTS

Deciding on the role experts should play in the actual engagement process will primarily depend on the type of outputs the commissioning body is looking for. The methods discussed in this report describe a variety of approaches to expert involvement: from those where experts produced information in advance but had no role in the engagement process, to those where the participation of experts throughout was considered vital.

The choice in reality however will often ultimately come down to either the practical availability of expert contributors, the complexity of the information that is required to be transmitted to participants, and expert interest in the research. This too will therefore have a bearing on the most suitable method for a particular research project.

COMPARATIVE COSTS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

It has been very difficult throughout this research project to obtain accurate costs for the examples presented as case studies in this report. In many cases both commissioning bodies and contracting organisations consider this information to be commercially sensitive and have withheld it in their published reports. What information has been made available to us, either through published sources or follow-up contact, is however included in the case studies.

In many cases however we are aware that this will not give the CFU the level of detail it is looking for. For this reason we have included in the body of the report some cost estimates designed to serve as an indication to commissioners of the types of costs a project may incur.

THE PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION

All of the case studies informing this report provide examples of where participants are being asked to use newly received information to inform their deliberations. As such the way information is presented – when, in what format and by whom – plays a key role in determining the quality of both the deliberations and outputs in a research project.

One way that some of the examples have attempted to deal with the challenge involved in asking participants to absorb a considerable amount of new, and often quite technical or complex information, is to design processes that take place over 2 or more occasions.

Regardless of the topic or the length and structure of the process however, ensuring that the information given to participants is engaging, accessible and presented in ways that hold their interest, is essential. The case studies analysed in this report highlight a number of different methods for doing this and emphasise that variety is key to success.

A final consideration in regards to the presentation of information relates to who is responsible for presenting the information to participants – facilitators, experts or a combination of both. In determining this, a key factor should also be how the public will perceive the authority and neutrality of the information provided.

REPORTING

One of the biggest challenges for anyone undertaking research into consumer views is ensuring that the information generated through the project reaches, and is taken into account by, policy and decision-makers. Having them aware of, supporting and possibly even directly involved in the research is an important first step to achieving impact.

There are however a range of additional measures that can be introduced into the process design to bring the outputs of the research to the attention of those that can best use them to affect change. One particularly successful approach appears to be having the participants themselves present the results of the research directly to decision-makers.

PLANNING AN EFFECTIVE DELIBERATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

In planning an effective deliberative research project there are a range of stages and considerations necessary to ensure that the method chosen is best able to produce useful evidence and have a demonstrable impact on the policy issue being addressed.

DEFINING THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Establishing a clear research purpose, and getting agreement on it within the commissioning body and partners, is the single most important stage of any engagement process. Indeed, no participatory process should proceed without it. A good purpose will be highly focused and have clear objectives which are easy for all to understand, including the participants. It is important that in defining the purpose there is also clarity about the desired outputs and outcomes.

UNDERSTANDING SCOPE AND CONTEXT

Considering the scope and context for a proposed research project is essential for understanding the social, political and institutional environment in which the research is taking place, and therefore the potential that it has to influence policy and decision-making. In order to have maximum impact a research process must be well embedded within its context.

It is also vital at this stage to identify the scope of influence available to the research (i.e. how much can really change and what can be achieved in practice?). This will require making explicit links between the participatory process and the location of the specific decision(s) that the research is hoping to inform or influence. Doing so will not only help in defining an appropriate and achievable purpose for the research project but will also establish its boundaries: clarifying what is, and what is not, open for discussion.

Finally, if the views of consumers attained through deliberative research are to have a direct impact on policy, these views not only need to be presented to the institutions responsible for the decision, but there needs to be agreement from the institution to receive the information generated, consider it in its decision-making processes and respond. Involving decision-makers in planning discussions

from the earliest stage, and getting their support for the project, is therefore going to improve the impact the research is likely to have.

RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Defining the type of outputs required from the research is a crucial part of designing the process because it:
- helps the process designer choose the right method to get the outputs wanted, as different participatory methods are designed to produce different types of outputs;
- helps everyone think through how the outputs will achieve the outcomes ("how will this meeting help achieve our overall outcomes?"); and therefore
- ensures the right outputs are produced at the right time.

Determining what type of outputs are going to be most useful and relevant to decision-makers in a particular policy context will help determine which method is best used to achieve the research purpose.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED?

Selecting the appropriate type of participants to take part in any deliberative research can be key to its success. The Case Studies considered in this report suggest that the results of consumer research are likely to be taken more seriously by policy-makers if they are able to demonstrate the representativeness of participants, or when they involve people from a targeted group who will be directly impacted by the results of the decision.

IDENTIFYING WHO ELSE NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED

Considerations regarding who needs to be involved in the research project should take into account not only the identification and recruitment of public participants for events but also the involvement of stakeholders in planning.

Our research suggests that even the simplest project will benefit from a formal Planning or Steering Group to help define the purpose of the research and contribute to its detailed planning. It is important, when identifying potential stakeholders, to think not only of who already has an interest in the research but also to consider who 'should' be involved, but has not been to date, and who would have the ability to obstruct progress or impact if they were not involved.

CHOOSING A METHOD

All methods have their strengths and weaknesses and the key is to select the right one for the particular purpose and context. There are a number of further factors and practical issues which a commissioning body may want to consider in shortlisting methods that are most likely to achieve their purpose:

- **Ability to deal with complex and/or technical information:** Some methods are better able to create time and space for participants to learn the details of a topic under discussion and become informed about the issue.

- **Depth of dialogue / deliberation:** Some methods specifically focus on creating space for dialogue between participants, and this can be particularly relevant when commissioners are interested in gaining greater insight into public reasoning.

- **Ability to deal with conflict:** In situations where there are known to be entrenched and opposing views on a subject it can be important to choose a method that is able to deal with conflict constructively, capture public reasoning effectively, and help participants to identify common ground through deliberation.

- **Costs:** In the planning and commissioning of any specific project a range of decisions (e.g. relating to the number of participants, number of meetings/events, geographic locations,

recruitment methods, payment of participant expenses etc.) will all clearly have an impact on final costs.

- **Time commitment required from participants:** The time of volunteer participants is also a resource and needs to be used wisely. While it may be easier to get people to commit to a single short event, the trade-off may be the depth of dialogue able to take place. At the same time, however, participants are often more willing to give greater amounts of their time to something that has strategic national importance or direct relevance to themselves, than they are to get involved even briefly in something they do not see as meaningful.

COMMISSIONING

While the budget available for the research project will ultimately play a decisive role in what can be commissioned, there are a number of things that will help ensure a successful commissioning process, including:

- Having a clearly defined purpose, along with the type of outputs expected, before beginning the commissioning process;

- Involving stakeholders and partners in the commissioning process, if possible, to ensure their buy-in to the research;

- Bringing the delivery team on board as early as possible, to benefit from their expertise in the process design;

- Being flexible about methods: while you may have a preferred method in mind, stipulating what features of the specific method have led to your choice, and being open to advice from contractors about hybrid or alternative methods, may result in the development of a bespoke methodology that could better deliver on your purpose;

- Allowing sufficient lead-in time for your research project, particularly if it is designed to influence a specific time-bound decision - things are likely to take longer than you expect!

IMPLICATIONS FOR DELIBERATIVE CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE REGULATED INDUSTRIES IN SCOTLAND

This report has used over 30 different examples of deliberative research, within the regulated industries and related sectors, to assess the methodological strengths, value to commissioning bodies and impacts on policy of different methodological approaches. The aim has been to identify what can be learnt from the experiences of others to help the CFU plan for future deliberative research with consumers in the context of the regulated industries in Scotland.

The report has shown that, while a wide range of deliberative methods are being used to influence these industries worldwide, there is limited evidence of some of the more creative methods having been used in the UK. That said, the evidence in this report suggests that it is clearly possible to use a wide range of innovative and creative methods to engage consumers in meaningful and productive deliberations on complicated policy matters.

It also shows that using deliberative methods effectively and appropriately will help the CFU, suppliers and regulators embed principles of effective consumer engagement, and the practical features of good practice that they support, into their efforts to place the interests of consumers at the heart of their planning, policies and decision-making.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first conclusion that has to be drawn from this research is that, in the considered opinion of all members of the research team, there is no simple answer to the question of which is the best method for the CFU to use to build their evidence base on Scottish consumer views and preferences in relation to utility policies.

There are however a number of lessons that can be taken from this analysis to inform the next stage of the CFU's research into how deliberative methods can be best used to represent consumer opinions in policy and decision-making within the regulated industries in Scotland.

1. All of the method types discussed in this report have demonstrated that they are able to answer a range of research questions effectively, produce useful and persuasive information that is able to influence policy-making, and deliver measurable impacts.

   Clarity of purpose, effective planning and a clear path for influence all seem to have more bearing on the ability of a deliberative research project to bring the views and preferences of consumers (and/or the wider public) into the policy process, than the specific method chosen.

2. Some methods however have been shown to be more effective than others in addressing different types of policy questions. Despite the small number of examples found, Citizens Juries are arguably a particularly appropriate method for engaging consumers in deliberation on a policy problem that can potentially be solved in a number of different ways. This method also has a proven record of delivering consensus-based outputs to research questions framed around the consideration of different policy or implementation options.

3. This research has highlighted that Citizens Advisory Panels are a particularly useful and cost-effective way of embedding a consumer perspective into the ongoing work of an organisation. The success of the model employed by Ofgem for their Consumer First Panels is a very clear example of good practice in this regard, demonstrating clear impacts on long-term strategic planning as well as practical policy implementation.

4. The number of people involved in the deliberations has been shown to be a key factor in whether the outputs from consumer research are likely to have a significant impact on policy, particularly policies that have strategic or nationwide implications.

   Structured Dialogues, repeated in a range of locations or with different groups, have been demonstrated to be a particularly effective method for achieving the scale of participation required for the results to be seen as robust and representative enough to be taken seriously in policy and decision-making processes. The caveat to this is that, as the name 'Structured Dialogues' is really one used to describe a logistical approach to delivery rather than a distinct method, the quality of the specific workshop design will ultimately have a fundamental impact on the success of the research.

5. The effective provision of information, and ensuring participants have the time to absorb and use it to inform their thinking and discussions, is key to delivering effective deliberative research projects. The evidence compiled here suggests that the most effective way of doing this is to design the process to take place over more than one session, allowing participants time to reflect on and/or seek more information about the matter under discussion.

6. The deliberative engagement events compiled in this report vary from 2-hour focus groups, to Citizens Juries run over 2-6 days, to ongoing Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums. While there are always exceptions to the rule, it seems that the more time allowed for learning, dialogue and deliberation within a research project, the greater the impact the process is likely to have.

7. The importance of clarity regarding the type of outputs required from the research (and how these outputs will be used) has also been identified as a key factor in delivering the greatest impacts from a research project.

   This is particularly relevant to the context in which the CFU is proposing to commission consumer research. The primary reason for the CFU choosing to undertake deliberative research into consumer views appears to be to give the organisation greater insight into customer preferences (including the motivations, values and reasoning behind them) in order to enable the CFU to represent these views better to decision-makers. Therefore methods that give the most focus to developing and encouraging effective and informed deliberation between participants, and which are designed to provide outputs that capture the process of public reasoning, seem most suitable for delivering on the CFU's objectives. For this reason Deliberative Focus Groups (due to their short length), Participatory Strategic Planning processes and online deliberations (at least in any of the formats used in the examples considered in this report) seem the least appropriate choices.

8. Across all of the Case Studies analysed for this report, concerns regarding the representativeness of those participating in the deliberation were identified as a key factor in determining whether the outputs of the research were considered a legitimate source of evidence and therefore suitable for informing policy decisions.

   As discussed in Chapter 7 however, a truly representative sample is virtually impossible to achieve at the scale of most deliberative projects (if ever). We would suggest that rather than dwelling on the need to recruit a representative sample for research projects, the CFU adopts an approach towards sampling that reflects the principles established for the Sciencewise programme, where the goal is to be appropriately representative to the scale and importance of the issue under discussion: "Public dialogue does not claim to be fully representative, rather it is a group of the public, who, after adequate information, discussion, access to specialists and time to deliberate, form considered advice which gives a strong indication of how the public at large feels about certain issues. The methodology and results need to be robust enough to give policy-makers a good basis on which to make policy".[2]

9. This research has demonstrated that paying consumers to participate in deliberative research projects has become standard practice. It is broadly considered to be a legitimate and necessary way of ensuring that the widest cross-section of the public agrees, and is able, to participate if asked. A budget to allow for this would therefore need to be built into almost any deliberative research the CFU was to commission in the future. However, from the evidence collated here the amount offered to participants appears to be quite arbitrary.

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[2] Sciencewise, "The Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology" (Sciencewise, September 2013), http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Publications/Sciencewise-Guiding-PrinciplesEF12-Nov-13.pdf.

10. The research projects that have demonstrated the clearest and most direct impacts on policy-making and service delivery are those that have been directly commissioned and planned by the organisations responsible for making the decisions. This is the case across all of the types of policy questions considered.

    This has important implications for the CFU because, unlike many of the organisations who have commissioned the work presented in the case studies, the CFU is unlikely to hold the final authority over the policies it is aiming to influence on behalf of consumers. It will be important therefore for the CFU to work very closely with its partners and stakeholders, particularly policy-makers, in the design and commissioning of prospective research to ensure it has the best chance of having significant influence on their decisions.

11. How the results of a research project are presented to policy and decision-makers is also very important in maximising its potential impact. Ideally negotiations with policy-makers in advance of the research starting will establish their receptivity and identify a route into the decision-making process, however in reality this is not always possible.

    Another strategy that has been shown to be effective throughout this research is for participants to present their conclusions directly to those with the authority to implement them. This can be achieved in a number of ways, depending on the interest and availability of decision-makers, including having them present and listening throughout the deliberations, attending a final session to hear and respond to recommendations, or reconvening with a selection of participants and policy-makers after the deliberative process specifically for this purpose.

12. It is also important to note that although a number of the research projects considered in this report were unable to claim any specific impact on policy-making they were still evaluated as successful, useful and worthwhile by the commissioning bodies. This emphasises the important role that deliberative research can play in developing a wider, and deeper, knowledge and understanding of consumers' views within an organisation as a whole that can then be deployed to influence policy-making more generally over time.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by Involve and Ipsos MORI to address the following research question posed by Citizens Advice Scotland's (CAS) Consumer Futures Unit (CFU):

> **What deliberative research has been done in the UK and internationally within the regulated industries (water, energy and post) and what can we learn from this?**

The CFU, alongside the regulatory and service providers involved in these industries in Scotland, has a long history of undertaking research with consumers to inform their policy-making and service planning. To date however much of this research has relied on polling, surveys, in-depth interviews, analysis of customer complaints or traditional focus group approaches to market research. Much less consumer research has been undertaken within these sectors using a deliberative approach. A deliberative approach provides consumers with information about the complexity of issues within these policy areas and engages them in informed deliberation, within a facilitated group, designed to explore their responses, understandings and preferences.

The CFU is now interested in expanding the range of research models it uses to understand consumer attitudes. It wants to test out a range of deliberative approaches designed to help the organisation gain a deeper understanding of consumers' preferences, motivations and priorities in relation to policy-making and how public monies should be spent. Recognising that there are a multitude of deliberative participatory methods that could be used, this research has been initiated to help the CFU identify which methods are most appropriate for engaging customers and the wider public on strategic and policy issues within the specific context of the regulated industries. The purpose of the research therefore is to enable the CFU to make informed, evidence-based assessments of methodological options when planning their own intended fieldwork research into what Scottish consumers think about utility policies.

In order to furnish the CFU with the learning the organisation seeks, the research team from Involve and Ipsos MORI have combined desk-based research with direct contact with UK service providers and regulatory bodies to identify published and unpublished examples of deliberative engagement undertaken within these sectors. We have also used published evaluation reports and in-depth interviews to enable us not only to describe, but also assess, the quality and impacts of the engagement work.

This report sets out to provide the CFU with:

- a comprehensive overview of the deliberative engagement done within the regulated industries, supplemented with key examples from other customer-focused sectors;

- a breakdown of how different methods have been used across the different industries and to address different types of policy question;

- an assessment of the deliberative qualities of the case studies identified, highlighting best practice in deliberative engagement from these sectors;

- an outline of the costs of different deliberative methods, as they have been used in recent examples;

- an assessment of how different methods have been evaluated by commissioning bodies considering: how effective the approach has been in adding to the sector's knowledge of customer opinions and providing useful data; whether they have been assessed as providing a value-for-money approach; and the impact they have had on policy and service delivery;

- an overview of the lessons learnt by commissioning bodies that will enable the CFU to gain from their collective experience of using deliberative approaches to present consumer perspectives to policy-makers and the challenges they faced in achieving this;

- a clear understanding of how it can use all the above information to inform its ongoing work to represent consumers' interests across the regulated industries. This includes its work both to integrate consumer principles into long-term strategic planning and to strengthen the impact of consumer voices in current policy-making processes.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research team from Involve and Ipsos MORI have used a combination of desk-based research, outreach to stakeholders and qualitative in-depth interviews to inform the research report.

Our research methodology can be described as having 3 distinct stages, as outlined below (although due to the time constraints associated with this project, all stages have been undertaken concurrently).

1. Scoping phase: literature review, outreach to service providers and regulators
2. Preparation of case studies: including in-depth interviews and evaluation
3. Analysis and reporting.

STAGE 1: SCOPING PHASE

A systematic literature review was undertaken to identify published examples of deliberative engagement activities mainly within the energy, water and post sectors in the UK in the last 5-10 years. This aimed to provide a comprehensive account of where deliberative approaches have been used to influence policy development and outcomes (as opposed to other issues related to consumer experience, for example). This provided the team with an understanding of the range and scope of known activity and enabled us to identify where international examples should also be sought to secure a useful range of examples across the different industries, policy stages and methods.

At the same time we approached UK government/regulatory bodies and service providers in the water and energy industries and asked them to identify any examples of deliberative engagement they had undertaken (or knew about) which may not be published, or where detailed information is not publically available. To date this has not yielded a significant response and, within the timeframe of the project, it has not been possible to follow up this initial contact. We are therefore not in a position to assess whether the lack of response is due to the fact that they had no examples or whether they did not see a reason to respond to our request.

All of the examples identified in this stage were coded by sector (water/energy/post/other), methodology and the type of policy question they were designed to address. The categories used to distinguish methods are:

- Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums
- Citizens Advisory Forums
- Deliberative Focus Groups
- General Deliberative Workshops
- Repeated Structured Dialogues
- Distributed Dialogues
- Citizens Juries
- Citizens Assembly
- Deliberative Mapping
- Participatory Strategic Planning
- Online Deliberations.

More detail on the definition of each of these methods can be found in the body of this report.

The classifications used to distinguish different types of policy question were drawn from the unpublished Options Appraisal previously prepared by Involve for the CFU and are:

- Examining broad policy objectives / horizon scanning – wherein participants are asked to examine the high-level objectives of a policy or policy programme and identify priorities, areas of interest and concerns. There may also be opportunities here to generate new ideas.

- Consultation on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered – here participants are generally being asked to consider a more specific set of policy or implementation options. The purpose would usually be to prioritise them and/or identify areas of agreement and concern.

- Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product – this focused on gaining consumer insight into existing practice. In addition to reviewing aspects of service delivery, the participants may also be asked about their understanding of, and response to, existing priorities and practices.

STAGE 2: PREPARATION OF CASE STUDIES

Following this scoping phase, and in consultation with the CFU, 31 of the research projects identified were selected for further focus and developed into case studies. This selection was made both to ensure a range of methods from across each sector and on the basis of the depth of information and evaluation available (or likely to become available). The projects selected mainly come from the UK and Ireland, however examples from elsewhere (particularly Australia and Canada) were included where it was felt that there was something important that could be learnt from their approach.

8 examples were also pursued for further investigation through in-depth interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to provide a more detailed understanding of the commissioning body's experience of the deliberative engagement process, specifically:

- how useful it was to them in terms of presenting the views of customers within strategic policy contexts;
- what it added to their understanding of customers' preferences and priorities;
- how effectively it answered their research question;
- how it compared, complemented or added to other engagement activities they have undertaken; and
- their overall evaluation of its value to decision-makers and value for money.

A small number of examples identified in our initial sweep of the literature were also excluded at this point, and ultimately have not been included in this report, because upon further investigation it was found that either:

- they were not actually deliberative in their methodology;
- the deliberative quality of the discussions was too poor to contribute any benefit to the study; or
- there was too little information available about the project to add value to the analysis.

STAGE 3: ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Analysis of evidence compiled throughout the project (from the case studies, interviews and any additional sources) was led by Kaela Scott from Involve and supported by the wider team.

Our focus has been not just on reporting what we have discovered, but also analysis of the implications of this evidence for the CFU's wider research purpose - embedding consumer perspectives and preferences into policy and decision-making within the regulated industries in Scotland. On this basis we have used our own professional judgement and experience to evaluate the relative merits of the examples discussed in the case studies, challenge some of the commissioners' own conclusions and draw out key lessons that will enable the CFU to apply the outcomes of this research to their work.

3. DEFINING DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Deliberative public engagement is a distinctive approach to involving people in decision-making. It is different from other forms of engagement in that it is about giving participants time to consider and discuss an issue in depth and then come to a considered view.

To be deliberative, a process needs to involve[3]:

- discussion between participants at interactive events (including through online technologies). These events are designed to give sufficient time and space to enable participants to gain new information and to discuss in depth its implications for their existing attitudes, values and experience. These discussions result in a considered view, which may (or may not) be different from participants' original view, and which has been arrived at through careful exploration of the issues at hand.

- the opportunity to work with a range of people and information sources – including evidence and views from people with different perspectives, backgrounds or interests. This may include evidence requested or commissioned by participants themselves. Discussions are managed to ensure that a diversity of views from people with different perspectives are included, that minority or disadvantaged groups are not excluded, and that discussions are not dominated by any particular faction or individual.

- a clear task or purpose, related to influencing a specific decision, policy, service, project or programme.

WHEN TO USE DELIBERATIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Deliberative public engagement is most suitable in circumstances when:

- policy or decision-makers are keen to listen to and take account of public views, as a contribution to more robust decisions based on a deeper understanding of public values and attitudes;

- the decision, policy or service in question involves complex issues, uncertainty or conflicting beliefs, values, understanding, experience and behaviours; or where one viewpoint might otherwise dominate;

- the decision will require trade-offs between differing policy options, and participants working together can explore in detail the implications of alternatives to result in a better-informed decision; or

- the decision-maker cannot make and implement a decision alone; there needs to be buy-in from others.

Conversely, deliberative public engagement should not be used when:

- crucial decisions have already been taken; or

- there is no realistic possibility that the engagement process will influence decisions.

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[3] The Involve Foundation, and The National Consumer Council. "Deliberative Public Engagement - Nine Principles," June 2008. http://www.involve.org.uk//wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles.pdf.

THE UNIQUE VALUE OF DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Arguments in favour of using deliberative engagement with consumers and the wider public are often made on the basis of this being a 'fairer' and 'more inclusive' way of making policy. There is however a growing body of thought that argues that there are a wide range of instrumental and practical benefits in using deliberative approaches, both for policy-makers and for those engaged.

Where traditional consumer engagement tools, such as opinion polls or customer surveys tend to measure 'top of the head' public views, deliberative public engagement provides policy and decision-makers with much richer data on public attitudes and values, offers opportunities to explore more fully why people feel the way they do, and allows the time to develop ideas, options and priorities with the public. For the public participants, the experience provides opportunities to share and develop their views with each other.

The objective of the following section is to set out these arguments in general terms and to demonstrate why many of these benefits can only be achieved through deliberative (rather than non-deliberative) engagement processes.

POLICIES DEVELOPED USING DELIBERATIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ARE GENERALLY OF HIGHER QUALITY

In "Deliberative Public Engagement - Nine Principles", Involve and the National Consumer Council state that engagement with consumers and the wider public leads to 'better policy and service delivery options, grounded in better knowledge of public values and priorities'.[4] The reasons they give for this include the following:

MULTIPLE POINTS OF VIEW MAKE FOR BETTER POLICY

Deliberative public engagement can lead to better policy-making both because of *who* is involved and *how* they are involved.

On *who*, there is evidence to suggest that larger more diverse groups can make better decisions or judgements than smaller, more homogenous groups of experts.[5][6] This is because of the different perspectives and experiences they bring to a policy question. Engaging the public – a different group with new perspectives - should therefore lead to better policy-making.

On *how*, engaging a more diverse group is unlikely to lead to better policy if participants are just asked for their immediate reactions to policy options (i.e. through non-deliberative methods like polling). This is particularly true in situations where the considerations involved in making a decision are more complicated, or require trade-offs or reconciliations between competing values or groups.

While understanding the public's most popular 'gut reactions' may still be useful to decision-makers, it does not provide a means of identifying levels of support for the compromises that may be needed. By contrast, however, deliberative engagement methods create a space in which participants can move beyond a debate based on competing self-interest towards negotiations focused on the common good. This in turn enables decision-makers to explore the reasons behind public preferences and their appetite for compromise, usefully informing policy decisions.[7][8][9][10]

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[4] The Involve Foundation and The National Consumer Council, "Deliberative Public Engagement - Nine Principles," June 2008, http://www.involve.org.uk//wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles.pdf.

[5] Surowiecki, James *The Wisdom of Crowds: Why the Many Are Smarter than the Few*, Repr (London: Abacus, 2014).

[6] Condorcet's Jury Theorem, for example, is a political science theorem about the relative probability of a group of individuals arriving at a correct decision by majority vote which suggests that the larger the group is, the greater the chance that it will arrive at the correct decision. It is often used to justify the value of direct democracy, and majority rule in deciding the winner of an election.

[7] List, Christian and Goodin, Robert E. "Epistemic Democracy: Generalizing the Condorcet Jury Theorem," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 9, no. 3 (September 2001): 277–306, doi:10.1111/1467-9760.00128.

[8] Quick et al. "Changing Minds Through Deliberation: Citizens' Accounts of Their Changing Local Transportation Policy Preferences," in *Transportation Research Board 94th Annual Meeting*, 2015, http://docs.trb.org/prp/15-1286.pdf.

[9] Gutmann, Amy and Thompson, Dennis "Deliberating about Bioethics," *The Hastings Center Report* 27, no. 3 (May 1997): 38, doi:10.2307/3528667.

ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO A MORE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO POLICY DECISIONS

Actively engaging with the public prompts policy-makers to consider ideas and evidence that they would not normally factor into their decision-making processes. This forces policy-makers to take a more holistic approach to policy-making, leading to better decision-making and, therefore, better policy.

However, superficial engagement exercises often fail either to tell policy-makers anything they do not already know, or to enable them to consider policy questions from different perspectives. In order for an engagement exercise to provide policy-makers with more than the brute facts of people's policy preferences, the process needs to provide participants with the time and environment to articulate the values that underlie these preferences, which is something only deliberative public engagement can guarantee.[11]

POLICIES DEVELOPED WITH THE HELP OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO BE IMPLEMENTED

Engagement, when done well, not only creates opportunities for policy-makers to hear public concerns and priorities around contentious issues, but also creates greater public understanding of issues that need to be considered. This has the potential to generate a senses of shared responsibility for successful policy and service delivery outcomes. In part this is because the process of engagement creates an environment of greater transparency and accountability (and thus legitimacy) for decision-making, and provides decision-makers with greater knowledge about the public acceptability (or not) of specific policy options.

POLICY IS MORE LIKELY TO GO WITH THE GRAIN OF PUBLIC VALUES

With many policy decisions, there is a risk of public backlash if people do not feel that their specific ethical or social concerns have been taken into account.[12] Because deliberative public engagement forces policy-makers to consider these factors, policy-makers who use it will be in a far better position to develop policy that is sensitive to public concerns and therefore avoids public backlash.

Through deliberative public engagement it is possible to move past participants' superficial agreement and disagreement on policy ideas[13] and get to an understanding of the values people bring to bear on the question in hand.[14] This is far harder to achieve through other participatory processes, which usually only present policy-makers with evidence of *what* participants think of a specific proposal, rather than *why* this is. Without a deeper understanding of the basis of participants' concerns, policy-makers may be left in a position of developing policy that takes the letter, but not the spirit, of people's concerns into account. In order for policy development to be durable, and to do justice to people's concerns, it needs to understand the fundamental values and assumptions that motivate them.

POLICY DECISIONS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PUBLIC

People are more likely to accept a decision that they disagree with (or that disadvantages them personally) if they believe that it has been reached through a fair and open process.[15]

In the context of controversial decisions, non-deliberative forms of public engagement run the risk of being perceived as unfair. Indeed, simply polling a representative sample of the population to

[10] Abelson, Julia et al., "Does Deliberation Make a Difference? Results from a Citizens Panel Study of Health Goals Priority Setting," *Health Policy (Amsterdam, Netherlands)* 66, no. 1 (October 2003): 95–106.

[11] The Involve Foundation and The National Consumer Council, "Deliberative Public Engagement - Nine Principles," March 2011, http://www.involve.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles.pdf.

[12] Science for All Expert Group, "Science for All - Report and Action Plan from the Science for All Expert Group," February 2010.

[13] Orsqu, K.C. et al., "Engaging the Public on Biobanks: Outcomes of the BC Biobank Deliberation," *Public Health Genomics* 12, no. 4 (2009): 203–15, doi:10.1159/000167801.

[14] Abelson, Julia et al., "Examining the Role of Context in the Implementation of a Deliberative Public Participation Experiment: Results from a Canadian Comparative Study," *Social Science & Medicine* 64, no. 10 (May 2007): 2115–28, doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.01.013.

[15] Van den Bos, Kees et al., "Evaluating Outcomes by Means of the Fair Process Effect: Evidence for Different Processes in Fairness and Satisfaction Judgments." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74, no. 6 (1998): 1493–1503, doi:10.1037/0022-3514.74.6.1493.

define public preferences is not necessarily the fairest means of informing a policy decision. There is a tendency towards preference aggregation, where decisions are made on the basis of what is most acceptable to greatest number of people. This approach to group decision-making can lead to the tyranny of the majority, with many people in the minority viewing such decisions as neither fair nor legitimate. In order to overcome this, the frame of conversation needs to be shifted to one focusing on the idea of the common good. Only when people feel that a decision is in the common good can they accept it, even if it is against their own self-interest. This shifting of the frame can be brought about by deliberative dialogue.[16][17][18] In addition to this, there is evidence suggesting that policy developed through deliberative public engagement is (and is seen to be) more legitimate than policy developed by other processes.[19]

THOSE INVOLVED BENEFIT FROM THEIR ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT BENEFITS PARTICIPANTS

Members of the public who participate in public engagement to develop policy benefit from an increased sense of empowerment and an increased sense of solidarity with their community.[20]

Those who have engaged, however, will usually not feel an increased sense of solidarity if all they have done is vocalised their differing opinions on a question and voted on a way forward, with the most popular view winning. If anything, this is more likely to exaggerate a sense of insuperable difference. To have the most positive effect on participants the engagement process needs to provide a context within which participants can work towards building consensus (or at least a position everyone can live with), which is something that deliberative engagement can do.[21]

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IMPROVES THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY OF INSTITUTIONS

Institutions that carry out public engagement benefit from improved policy development capacity. Because public engagement prompts institutions to question and reassess the means by which they make decisions, they find themselves in a better position to develop durable, publically acceptable policy in the future.

Public policy-makers cannot really equip themselves to develop durable policy that outlives specific concerns (and that follows the spirit rather than the letter of public opinion) if they do not understand the values and assumptions underlying the preferences people express.[22] In order to get to the bottom of these, engagement exercises need to be deliberative.[23]

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[16] Quick et al. "Changing Minds Through Deliberation."

[17] Gutmann and Thompson, "Deliberating about Bioethics."

[18] Abelson et al., "Does Deliberation Make a Difference?"

[19] Dryzek, John S. "Discursive Democracy: Politics, Policy, and Political Science," *The Journal of Politics* 55, no. 2 (May 1993): 545–47, doi:10.2307/2132297.

[20] Datta, Ajoy "Lessons from Deliberative Public Engagement Work," 2011, https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7489.pdf.

[21] Gutmann and Thompson, "Deliberating about Bioethics."

[22] Farmer, Harry "Submission to House of Common Science and Technology Select Committee Inquiry on Robotics and Artificial Intelligence" (The Involve Foundation, April 2016), http://www.involve.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Involve-ST-committee-robotics-and-artificial-intelligence.pdf.

[23] Orsquo et al., "Engaging the Public on Biobanks."

4. OVERVIEW OF THE SCOPING EXERCISE

The scoping exercise that informed this report identified 50 examples of deliberative engagement with consumers or the wider public that seem to have relevance to the questions posed by the CFU at the outset of this research. 17 of these examples are broadly linked to the energy sector (including energy generation, carbon mitigation and energy futures). 20 are related to water (covering topics including priorities for industry, environmental management and flood risks). Our scoping research was only able to identify one example from the postal sector.

A further 12 examples have been selected for inclusion from different industry contexts, including public sector infrastructure, public safety, local planning and telecommunications because of the insight they offer in relation to how differing deliberative methodologies have been used to address a range of challenging policy questions. An outline of all of the examples identified is included in Appendix A.

31 of the examples of deliberative engagement identified were then selected for closer analysis and development into case studies (see Table 1 below). This selection has been made to provide a balanced range of examples across sectors and methodologies. Emphasis has also been given to examples where published evaluation reports were available, enabling us to access a greater depth of information about the aspects of projects in which the CFU is particularly interested, including effectiveness, impact and lessons learnt. Case studies 1-31 can be found in Appendix B.

Table 1 - Examples of deliberative engagement selected for analysis and development into case studies

Case Study	Title and Commissioning Body	Year	Where	Sector	Method
1	**Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies** Committee on Climate Change (CCC)	2016	England	Energy	Online Deliberation
2	**Consumer First Panels** Ofgem	2011 - 2015	England	Energy	Citizens Advisory Panel
3	**Bioenergy Dialogue** Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	2013	UK	Energy	Distributed Dialogue
4	**Citizens Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland** Climate XChange	2013	Scotland	Energy	Citizens Jury
5	**Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions** Committee on Climate Change (CCC)	2013	England	Energy	Citizens Jury
6	**Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation** New South Wales Parliament's Public Accounts Committee	2012	Australia	Energy	Citizens Jury
7	**Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges** Consumer Focus	2012	UK	Energy	Repeated Structured Dialogue
8	**Energy 2050 Pathways: A Public Dialogue** Department of Energy and Climate Change	2011	England	Energy	General Deliberative Workshop
9	**My 2050 Simulation Game** Department of Energy and Climate Change	2011	England	Energy	Online Deliberation
10	**The Big Energy Shift** Department of Energy and Climate Change	2009	UK	Energy	Citizens Advisory Panel

11	**Participatory Planning of Sustainable Energy Strategy** Nova Scotia Department of Energy	2009	Canada	Energy	Participatory Strategic Planning
12	**Customer Advisory Panel** Southern Water	2016	UK	Water	Customer Reference Group
13	**Customer Forum** Water Industry Commission for Scotland, , Consumer Focus Scotland & Scottish Water	2011 - 2016	Scotland	Water	Customer Reference Group
14	**Flood-Risk Communications Dialogue** Environment Agency	2013 - 2015	England	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
15	**Consumer Challenge Groups** Ofwat	2015	UK	Water	Customer Reference Group
16	**Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform** Consumer Council for Water	2015	England	Water	Deliberative Focus Group
17	**Public Water Forum** Commission for Energy Regulation	2015	Ireland	Water	Customer Reference Group
18	**What Floats Your Boat?: Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan** Scottish Canals and Glasgow City Council	2015 - 2016	Scotland	Place Making	Participatory Strategic Planning
19	**Significant Water Management Issues** Environment Agency	2013 - 2014	England	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
20	**Listening to our Customers** Scottish Water	2012-2013	Scotland	Water	Deliberative Focus Group
21	**River Basin Planning Strategy** Environment Agency	2012	UK	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
22	**Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service** Ofwat	2011	UK	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
23	**Citizens Advisory Forum on Living with Environmental Change** Living With Environmental Change	2010	England	Water	Citizens Advisory Panel
24	**Metropolitan Melbourne Sewerage Strategy** Melbourne Water	2009	Australia	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
25	**Citizens Juries on Water Management** EU project	2003 - 2007	The Netherlands	Water	Citizens Jury
26	**Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy** Department of Sustainability & Environment (Victoria) and WaterSmart	2005	Australia	Water	Repeated Structured Dialogue
27	**Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government** Accenture Institute for Health & Public Service Value	2009	South Africa	Public Service	Repeated Structured Dialogue
28	**Mapping Options for Tackling Climate Change** University of East Anglia	2012	England	Climate Change	Deliberative Mapping

29	**Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Planning** City Council of Vancouver	2012-2013	Canada	Local Planning	Citizens Assembly
30	**NHS Citizens Assembly** NHS England	2015	England	Health	Citizens Assembly
31	**Postal User Needs Qualitative Research** Ofcom	2012	UK	Post	Repeated Structured Dialogue

5. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES BY METHODOLOGY

This section of the report looks at the research projects identified through the review in relation to methods used, and highlights good practice examples. By focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of each method as used within relevant industry contexts, the analysis identifies how successful the particular method was in answering the research question(s) posed and how effective it was in providing useful information for the commissioning body.

CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUPS / CUSTOMER FORUMS

Our review identified a range of ways in which Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums have been established to support engagement between the public and the regulated industries. Four of the examples identified, all from the water sector, have been developed into case studies to illustrate their differing purposes, approach to membership and impacts:

- **Southern Water Customer Advisory Panel** Case Study 12
  Southern Water have formed a Customer Advisory Panel of service users to:
    - Monitor delivery of the six priorities identified in the business plan and provide assurance these are being met;
    - Ensure that Southern Water's twenty-six 'customer promises' are being kept;
    - Advise and provide scrutiny of Southern Water's customer and stakeholder engagement programme, impact assessment and customer research.
  This is an expert challenge panel whose members have been selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience of the issues affecting customers within Southern Water's region of operation, the water sector, the UK utilities sector, and the wider economy.

- **Ofwat Consumer Challenge Groups (across England and Wales)** Case Study 15
  The purpose of the Consumer Challenge Groups (CCGs) is to provide independent challenge to water companies and independent assurance to Ofwat on the quality of a company's customer engagement; and the degree to which the results of this engagement are driving decision-making and are reflected in the company's business plans. More broadly, CCGs are intended to ensure that water companies' business plans reflect a sound understanding and reasonable balance of customers' views, and that the phasing, scope and scale of work required to deliver outcomes is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

- **Customer Forum (Scotland)** Case Study 13
  The Customer Forum is an independent entity, responsible for identifying and understanding customers' priorities and seeking to get the best outcomes for Scottish consumers in relation to water charges, services and infrastructure investment. It is a lay challenge group whose eight members were selected to bring a wealth of skills and professional experience from many walks of life, including consumer affairs, the water industry, the environment, public policy, business and academia. Its role is to ensure that the customer's voice is part of the regulatory process and at the heart of key decisions.

- **Public Water Forum (Ireland)** Case Study 17
  The primary purpose of the Forum is to represent the interests of the public and water consumers in the development of public water policy. The Forum is made up of 32 members in total plus a Chair and Secretary. Twelve members are drawn from organisations, each representing a specific sector of interest, and 20 members are domestic water consumers.

All of these consumer reference groups/fora have had a role in representing consumers to service providers and/or regulators in their specific areas. However, their membership, in particular, is quite

different. Case Studies 12, 13 and 15 all describe an approach to consumer representation that relies on an expert challenge and scrutiny panel, selected because of the expertise they bring to the discussion; whether that is through prior experience with the water industry or through related fields of expertise like law, marketing or business. When domestic consumers are directly represented on these panels their voices will tend to be mediated through 'consumer voice' organisations or voluntary sector groups formed to represent the interests of a particular sector of society e.g. Age UK.

The Public Water Forum in Ireland, by contrast, has a direct membership of 20 domestic consumers, an approach set out in The Water Services Act 2014 which called for its establishment.

Extract from Case Study 17 – Public Water Forum (Ireland)

Under legislation, the Commission for Energy Regulation was given the job of recruiting the members of the Forum. In September 2015 the recruitment campaign began, supported by significant media interest and advertising.

Domestic consumers were invited to submit a written application to become a member of the Public Water Forum. The application form included basic demographic information but did not ask about their qualifications or motivations. Approximately 250 applications were received.

A total of 20 domestic members were appointed for a period of 3 years from the applications received (and a 100 person reserve panel to allow for dropout.) The selection of members was carried out randomly (literally drawn from a box) but was carried out in way that would ensure that they were representative of Irish society generally. The selection process was independently verified and the 20 domestic members meet the following criteria:

- At least two people from each age category;
- At least five men and at least five women;
- At least three people from each location category;
- At least five people from an urban location and five from a rural location;
- At least five registered Irish Water customers and at least five unregistered people.

Organisational members were recruited at the same time as the domestic members and there is one organisational member from each of the following sectors (recruited through direct contact and advertisement):

- The interests of the consumer;
- The interests of those persons providing or occupying social housing;
- The interests of those persons owning or occupying private rented housing;
- The interests of the member organisations of the Community and Voluntary Pillar;
- Those with a disability;
- The interests of the environment;
- The interests of industry;
- The interests of agriculture and rural affairs;
- The interests of tourism and recreation;
- The interests of the education sector;
- The interests of the group water sector;
- The interests of the trade union movement.

The principal role of the Public Water Forum is to represent the voice of the consumer in interactions with Irish Water and the Commission for Energy Regulation. It also has the specific remit of commenting or contributing on 'any policy or domain which it considers relevant to the interests of such consumers.' Having a direct membership of 20 unaligned domestic consumers, who attend and participate as individuals rather than as representatives of their community or any other interest group, therefore seems an ideal way of ensuring that domestic consumers are able to influence decision-making directly through discussion and deliberation.

In an interview with staff from the Commission for Energy Regulation, which provides a secretariat for the Forum, it appeared however that there were already challenges emerging. The Forum's key function is to respond to government, industry and regulator consultations as the collective voice of the consumer. While the discussions within Forum meetings are reportedly highly deliberative, it seems it may be a challenge for this group to develop ways of working together which will be able to respond effectively as a collective voice of the consumer when there are so many different and competing perspectives involved (including the voice of business which has many different priorities from domestic consumers). Distilling these views into a collective response may potentially result in the formal responses being blander, and more high-level, than the discussions that actually took place. This is particularly true when, as is the case here, there is no dedicated resource or facilitator to support the process, and the responsibility falls to the chair who is himself participating on a voluntary basis.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

The examples discussed in case studies 12, 13 and 15 all contributed to the most recent price review processes within the water industry in the UK. In all cases they have been assessed as playing a useful role in giving stakeholders a platform through which to challenge industry plans and priorities on behalf of consumers.

In interviews conducted as part of this research project, staff from Ofwat have confirmed that Consumer Challenge Groups have in general played a valuable role in challenging companies' approaches to consumer engagement, and as such are now seen by Ofwat as an integral part of its overall regulatory strategy. They also noted that, while they have not mandated that Consumer Challenge Groups remain in place between price reviews, all water companies have chosen to maintain the groups, suggesting that they too find them valuable.

The Customer Forum in Scotland (Case Study 13) by contrast, had a specific role to facilitate effective customer engagement, including undertaking their own engagement activities in order to ascertain and then represent customers' priorities. The intention when the Forum was formed was that Scottish Water's customer research would be done in conjunction with the Forum. The length of time taken to establish the Forum meant that initially this was not possible. Once established, however, the Forum did challenge the effectiveness of Scottish Water's existing engagement around willingness-to-pay, and as a result further research was commissioned by the Forum. Overall, however, in terms of the information provided by the Forum it was acknowledged in evaluation reports that they had needed to 'exercise rather more judgement on behalf of customers than might initially have been expected' in order to ensure that proposals by the water company were in the best interests of customers.[24]

In relation to the Public Water Forum, Case Study 17, the group was only established in December 2015 so it is too early to assess the usefulness of its outputs. Further, since that time there has been significant upheaval in the water sector in Ireland, as a result of the May elections, which has led to a suspension of water charges and the appointment of an expert committee to review the situation and report in March 2017. This means that it has been particularly difficult for the Forum to plan an effective programme of work to date.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums are able to provide an ongoing role in challenging and scrutinising services and policy on behalf of consumers, and over time can develop considerable knowledge and expertise that will support them to do this.

- When they operate in a deliberative and engaging manner they provide a valuable forum for issues to be debated and positions formed.

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[24] Littlechild, Stephen "The Customer Forum: Customer Engagement in the Scottish Water Sector," *Utilities Policy* 31 (2014): 206–218.

- As with all of the cases referred to above, the groups are directly recognised and/or co-ordinated by the organisations they are designed to influence so they have a direct route into decision-making processes.

- A key challenge for any Consumer Reference Group or Customer Forum is ensuring that there is a diversity of views and experiences represented on the group that will enable them to represent the needs of all consumers effectively. Recognising that this is virtually impossible to achieve in an ongoing working group, one option is to ensure that members receive regular reports from research undertaken with consumers that they can use to inform their deliberations. Alternatively, mechanisms can be put in place to enable members to request or undertake outreach or further research when they identify aspects in discussion where further input would be useful.

- Most groups, even when established by or supported by the supplier or regulator, have an advisory function only and therefore, as illustrated in Case Study 15, their recommendations can be ignored.

- Further there are difficulties in ensuring that Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums are perceived by the wider body of consumers as independent and able to represent their interests. In Case Study 15 reference is made to the Consumer Council for Water's evaluation of the role Consumer Challenge Groups played in the 2014 Price Review, which noted that these groups need strong governance and a unique public identity to ensure they are seen as independent by customers. Moves made by the Public Water Forum and the Consumer Forum to establish their own independent web pages should do much to help achieve this for these two groups.

- In larger groups – and particularly where group members have a diverse range of interests in, and understandings of, the regulated industry's wider context – developing consensus positions can be challenging.

- Furthermore, while there is value demonstrated in Case Studies 13 and 15 of having a membership with a wide range of interests, it was suggested in the evaluation reports that some members with non-industry backgrounds struggle at times to cope with the complexity of the subjects under discussion, and the time commitment required over a long period.

- When participation in Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums is done on a voluntary basis it can be difficult to sustain the contribution being asked of members. As suggested in Case Studies 13 and 17, for groups like this to have the most impact they need to be adequately resourced, and supported by paid, professional and neutral staff.

- There is also a risk that as groups become more established, and more knowledgeable, about the sector they are scrutinising, that they can become integrated into institutionalised views and less able (or willing) to challenge regulators and suppliers. One way of helping to address this is by ensuring a regular refresh of members.

- A further challenge identified specifically in relation to Consumer Challenge Groups (Case Study 15) relates to the lack of early direction provided to companies from Ofwat about how best to establish, maintain and actually use the groups effectively.

CITIZENS ADVISORY PANELS

Six of the projects identified during our research have been classified as Citizens Advisory Panels, using the criteria outlined in the box below. Of these, 3 have been developed into case studies to demonstrate a range of ways that this approach can be used to achieve different outcomes.

- **Consumer First Panels (Ofgem 2011 – 2015)** Case Study 2
  Ofgem has been commissioning Consumer First Panels for a number of years now. Each panel consists of up to 100 domestic energy consumers from 4-6 locations who meet in local groups 3-4 times during the year to feed into Ofgem's policy-making. Panels cover a range of different issues but tend to be focused on how consumers engage with the energy market and the types of information they need in order to make informed decisions and to understand different energy-related issues. Workshops in previous years have focused on a variety of issues including:
    - identifying the information needed to equip customers to make informed consumer decisions;
    - identifying consumer expectations and understanding of the work of Ofgem;
    - understanding consumers' views on the current structure of tariffs and gauging initial reactions and understanding of potential models for new tariff structures;
    - consumers' views and understanding of privacy issues surrounding the rollout of Smart Meters;
    - understanding consumers' expectations of the non-financial support provided by suppliers and distribution companies to vulnerable and potentially vulnerable consumers.

- **The Big Energy Shift (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2009)** Case Study 10
  This project was commissioned in order to help inform the UK Government's policy decisions in relation to the proposals made in the Climate Change Bill. The goal was to establish an in-depth, deliberative dialogue with householders across England, Northern Ireland, and Wales to understand how people approach the issue of energy as individuals and householders, within the larger context of their views on what communities and the country as a whole should do. To achieve this, Citizens Forums were set up in 9 neighbourhoods (involving a total of 250 people) and members took part in a series of deliberative events over a 3-month period. These workshops focused on identifying triggers for behaviour change and understanding what motivates people to shift from individual, to household, to community-wide initiatives related to domestic energy usage and options.

- **Citizens Advisory Forum on Living with Environmental Change (LWEC, 2010)** Case Study 23
  LWEC is a network of 21 public sector organisations with a stake in environmental change research and innovation. They decided to pilot a short life Citizens Advisory Forum in Bristol to help feed public attitudes and values into their strategic decision-making process.
  Three Forum sessions were held with 18 members of the public. Participants were recruited to be inclusive of the wider community and reflective of different attitudes towards the environment (rather than strictly representative). Each 5-hour forum focused on a different issue:
    - Research into flood risk management;
    - Research into adaptation to environmental change;

- Decision-making and governance in response to environmental change challenges.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

Ofgem has used its Customer First Panels for several years now and is convinced that they provide useful findings – capturing the informed, considered views of consumers – that can be acted on by the organisation. Over time they have also refined the type of questions they put to the Panels to ensure that they are directly related to influencing a specific decision or policy so as to maximise the contribution the Panel discussions can make. They report that the information gained through these Panels is used regularly to inform Ofgem's decision-making and policy. They cite specific examples of using the findings of the research to inform their campaign messaging, short-term policies, Ofgem publications and their future strategic planning.

The evaluation report produced at the conclusion of the Big Energy Shift noted that the project had identified a range of practical insights into how to motivate individuals and communities into working together to achieve low-carbon targets and that these had influenced future policy-making within the Department of Energy and Climate Change. A number of useful findings were also identified in relation to the information needed to address misconceptions and low levels of awareness of, and therefore best communicate the benefits associated with, a range of alternative technologies. As this project was focused on behaviour change initiatives, it is also worth noting that the process had lasting positive impacts on participants' own behaviours in terms of energy conservation.

The project discussed in Case Study 23 however did not seem to enjoy the same level of success. The independent evaluation report used to inform this case study suggests this can be attributed to a number of factors in the project design; including the very small size of the panel, the type of question each meeting attempted to address and the relationship between the commissioning body and the event planners. While the case study acknowledges that LWEC did initiate the panel as a small-scale pilot to test the methodology, there was still the intention that the outputs would be useful to inform their future research priorities and strategic planning.

In the interviews undertaken during the evaluation of this project, different members of the LWEC network expressed remarkably different opinions about the value of the information generated throughout the process. While some indicated that they had used insights gained in discussions with colleagues or to inform current work, others felt that the process had added little of value: as one interviewee stated '*We'll be looking at them [Forum results] but I'm uncertain how much they will be used ... it was a reminder of how little the public really know about these issues. For LWEC it's more tricky – nothing came out that I thought "yes, we needed to know that".*'

One explanation for these divergent opinions is that, as a dispersed network, not all members were actively engaged with the project. This highlights the value of those who will ultimately use the results of the engagement to be involved in the identification and framing of topics for discussion and in the design and drafting of questions for the public. Planning an effective process therefore needs to bring together those with knowledge of the subject areas to be covered ('content'), and knowledge and experience of public engagement ('process') so that the engagement exercise will answer the questions that need to be addressed.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- This can be an effective way of undertaking a range of research objectives without having to go to the effort and expense of recruiting an entirely new group for each event.

- By reconvening regularly, participants are able to build a familiarity with each other and the process. This enables them to move into effective discussion of the issues more quickly, thus making the best use of available time.

- Although each workshop session may have a distinct and different focus, participants still have the benefit of the information provided at previous sessions. If the order of sessions is well planned, this can enhance their understanding in regard to new topics and policy issues.

- Due to the ongoing involvement of a consistent group, it can be possible to ask participants to undertake 'homework' activities between sessions that will inform their input the next time they meet. At a very simple level, this could include background reading. However, there are a range of more engaging activities that could be suggested including, as illustrated in Case Study 10, visiting low-carbon exemplar sites, interviewing neighbours or completing an energy diary.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- While the group may be meeting several times, the individual workshop sessions are usually relatively short (2-4 hours), which can limit the time available for in-depth discussion and deliberation. One impact of only having a short time for small group working is that the emphasis can shift from deliberative discussions among participants to a process that is closer to a focus group: with facilitators asking questions, participants responding on the basis of what they already know, and all discussion being funnelled through the facilitator. One of the ways Ofgem has sought to address this challenge is by ensuring that each meeting has very specific objectives, often requiring participants to choose between no more than two or three potential options, making it easier to work deliberatively within the short timeframe.

- As each event tends to be used to focus on a different policy or service question, which usually requires providing information to participants on potentially complex issues that they may not have considered before, it can sometimes be difficult to determine how effectively participants have processed the information and to what extent it has influenced their views. On occasions however, because it is the same group involved, with this method it is possible to devote some time at the next session to explore any further thoughts that have emerged through reflection on the previous discussion.

- The examples discussed in Case Studies 10 and 23 both point to the importance of those who will ultimately use the results being involved, both in the planning but also attending sessions so that they can observe public discussions first hand, as well as receiving reports of results. Public participants also value meeting decision-makers face to face. The final session of the Big Energy Shift project was designed to address this by providing an opportunity for panel members to present their findings directly to Ministers and policy-makers.

DELIBERATIVE WORKSHOPS

Deliberative workshops can best be defined as organised group discussions that provide participants with the opportunity to consider an issue in depth, challenge each other's opinions, develop

DELIBERATIVE FOCUS GROUP
Deliberative Focus Groups tend to be used to discuss existing customer experience or options for changing services or policies. They are most often delivered as short sessions with small groups and involve the presentation of information to participants and a discussion of their responses.

GENERAL DELIBERATIVE WORKSHOP
This is a deliberative workshop process of any size that occurs only once (although participants may meet on a number of occasions as part of a single process).

STRUCTURED DIALOGUE
The feature that distinguishes a Structured Dialogue from a General Deliberative Workshop is that the same workshop is repeated multiple times. Because the process is heavily structured, and therefore replicable, the data drawn from different dialogues can be analysed cumulatively.

views/arguments through a process of public reasoning and reach an informed position. This section of the report looks at a range of examples identified in the scoping exercise that have been variously classified as Deliberative Focus Groups, General Deliberative Workshops or Structured Dialogues due to their different organisational approaches.

24 examples of deliberative workshops were identified during the scoping exercise. 12 of these have been developed into case studies and will be discussed below, with particular emphasis given to features of their methodology which seem to have proved particularly successful.

- **Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform in England (Consumer Council for Water, 2015)** Case Study 16
  Focus groups were held in each of the nine water and sewerage company regions across England to understand customer views and perceptions regarding the possibility of introducing competition into the household water retail market in England. The focus groups began with a general discussion on competition and competitive markets and experiences across different sectors. Participants were then given progressively more information on what competition in the water industry would mean, and asked at each stage to consider whether they were in favour, or not, of competition and the likelihood that they would consider switching supplier.

- **Listening to our Customers (Scottish Water, 2012-2013)** Case Study 20
  Eight deliberative focus groups were carried out across Scotland with household bill payers. The aim of this research was to help Scottish Water better understand household and business end users' priorities for service improvement and their relative evaluation of the benefits of different possible improvements to water and waste services. To achieve this, following a brief warm-up discussion, participants were asked to outline their priorities regarding water and waste services to gain insight into their intuitive reactions. Participants were then given an information presentation, and time to digest the information, before being split into small groups for discussion. These discussions were designed to explore customers' views once they had further information about different service issues and understand different individuals' views and values.

- **Energy 2050 Pathways: A Public Dialogue (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2011)** Case Study 8
  The aim of the overall project was to enable people to make their opinions heard to government on how the UK should reach its 80% emission reduction target by 2050. One aspect of the project was a series of 3 different deliberative dialogue events in a range of rural, metropolitan and urban contexts designed to engage local community leaders in an informed deliberative dialogue about the choices and trade-offs needed on the route to 2050. Alongside group discussions the workshops used the 2050 Pathways Calculator (an online game format discussed in Case Study 9 as an example of online deliberation) to enable participants to experiment with various pathways towards a low carbon future. The ultimate aim in the workshops was to encourage community leaders to initiate further dialogues within their own communities.

The examples below all use a repeated Structured Dialogue approach.

- **Deliberative Research into Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges (Consumer Focus, 2012)** Case Study 7
  A series of Structured Dialogues was one of the four research approaches taken by the Who Pays? Programme to gauge customers' views and preferences on existing and future environmental and social levies on energy bills. 3 workshops were held in different areas with 30 participants in each, recruited to ensure an even representation in terms of environmental motivation, experience of fuel poverty, urban/rural and socio-economic status. A mix of presentations, a television programme, handouts and a quiz were used to

share information during the session. For part of the workshop, participants worked separately in groups representing these 3 consumer segments – environmentally motivated, experiencing fuel poverty and the general population. The overall goal was to understand consumer priorities regarding preferences and trade-offs in how the charges are levied, the relative value to consumers of the social and environmental outcomes and views about fairness and affordability.

- **Flood-Risk Communications Dialogue (Environment Agency, 2013-15)** Case Study 14
  A series of workshops were held across 5 areas in England at risk of, or affected by, flooding to examine different approaches to informing the public about flood risk. Each workshop involved 2 sessions, a midweek introductory session and a full-day weekend workshop. 95 people participated across the 5 areas, recruited to be broadly representative of the local population. The aim was to co-create practical outputs (messages, materials and approaches to the use of different media) designed to increase awareness, encourage engagement and improve responses to flood risk. Following the regional workshops, 28 participants (4-6 from each location) were brought together with representatives from Public Health England, the Red Cross, the National Flood Forum and the Environment Agency. At this final workshop they worked together to produce and agree more concrete recommendations to take forward.

- **Significant Water Management Issues (Environment Agency, 2013-14)** Case Study 19
  This public dialogue was designed to enable public views, ideas and concerns to be fed into final plans and priorities for the Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plans in 2015, and to inform the Agency's approach to meeting other Water Framework Directive commitments. The project included seven public workshops, one in each of the English river basin districts, and involved 119 local residents. Following the seven initial workshops there was a final re-convened workshop with a subset of 20 participants. This was designed to enable participants to build on their thinking and knowledge from the first workshop session in order to deliberate further about the issues that were raised.

- **River Basin Planning Strategy (Environment Agency, 2012)** Case Study 21
  The Environment Agency used Ketso (a distinct and trademarked system for hosting deliberative conversations based on the visual mapping of idea trees) to undertake a series of 5 workshops to discuss the River Basin Planning Strategy and explore how the requirements of the European Union Water Framework Directive were to be met. Over 120 people attended these events including local residents, farmers, wildlife organisations, water companies, port authorities and government agencies.

- **Domestic Water and Sewerage Customers' Expectations of Service (Ofwat, 2011)** Case Study 22
  Ofwat commissioned a series of workshops in 4 locations across the country to establish which aspects of service matter most and least to customers: their expectations and aspirations with regard to services; the way in which their suppliers deal with them; what should happen when a service is not delivered; and whether this depends on the relative importance of the services in question or the frequency and impact of particular failures of service. The workshops involved 77 customers receiving services from 10 different companies. Each workshop was divided into 2 sessions, with a week in between meetings to undertake background reading.

- **Melbourne Sewerage Strategy (Melbourne Water, 2009)** Case Study 24
  This project used deliberative workshops as a way to gain qualitative insights into the Melbourne sewerage system and explore what the community wishes to do about sewerage management in the future. Two full-day workshops were conducted, each involving a representative mix of 40 Melbourne residents. The workshops used a scenario-planning

approach to try to understand how the community would be likely to respond to specific 'scenarios' relating to climate change, urban growth, population and living standards, as a means of exploring views and expectations in respect to sewerage management.

- **Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy: Community Research Forums and Social Acceptability of Water Options (Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria Australia 2005)** Case Study 26
  The Victorian Government's 2004 'Our Water Our Future' White Paper called for the development of regional water strategies to manage the demands of a growing population in the face of the impacts of climate change upon the water supply system over the next 50 years. In response to this, 8 Community Research Forums, each attended by approximately 30 people, were held to: assess different options for securing water futures in the region; and to identify consumers' preferred pathways, including the specific reasons and factors influencing their choice.

- **Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government (Accenture Institute for Health & Public Service Value, 2009)** Case Study 27
  This example, from Johannesburg, is part of a multi-city worldwide research project designed to explore the public's views on 'public value' and the role of government in delivering services that enhance people's lives. In each city, a representative sample of approximately 80 residents were recruited for a 1-day workshop. They used electronic voting, role play, and facilitated group and plenary discussions to explore expectations of government – as public service users, citizens and taxpayers. Each event concluded with a vote on what the government's 3 main priorities for making their city a great place to live, study and work should be.

- **Postal User Needs Qualitative Research (Ofcom, 2012)** Case Study 31
  8 workshops were held across the UK with a representative sample of general public postal consumers to assess the extent to which the market for the provision of postal services in the UK is meeting the reasonable needs of users in relation to the universal postal service, with a specific objective to obtain an informed consumer view on use, needs and social benefits of the current postal service. In total 160 consumers each took part in a 3.5-hour workshop designed to understand better the importance of elements of the universal service obligation to different users, and to help inform policy on a sustainable universal postal service that meets users' needs.

Many of the case studies outlined above used quite straightforward, but proven, facilitation techniques to generate discussion and answer the research questions posed to the groups.

In Case Study 21 however, the Environment Agency used a different approach by choosing to use Ketso, a distinctive method that not only uses a specific set of materials (including a felt mat and re-useable coloured shapes to capture everyone's ideas) but prescribes a very structured facilitation and questioning process. The case study shows that the highly structured questions worked well to draw out participants and engage them in discussion of a new and complex subject quickly. The structured format was also shown to be instrumental in encouraging open discussion between participants and Environment Agency staff, allowing for the presentation of disparate views and ultimately revealing a significant degree of commonality in thinking. It was further noted that, despite an imposed structure, the discussion sessions were interesting, allowed ideas to flow and develop and enabled people to think creatively about this challenging policy area.

The value of a clearly structured workshop plan is also demonstrated by Case Study 31. After exploring participants spontaneous assessment of their needs from the postal service a series of new pieces of information was gradually introduced that illustrated the challenges facing the postal service in light of significant declines in use. This encouraged consumers to reflect on, and

potentially revise, their earlier opinions in order to differentiate between 'needs' and 'would be nice to haves' in regards to postal service provisions.

Case study 27, although from outside the regulated industries, also demonstrated a particularly creative methodology in its workshop design. By specifically allocating different participants within the process the role of 'taxpayer', 'citizen' or 'public service consumer' it created a range of different lenses through which the expectations the public have of public services could be considered and debated. When the groups were brought back together to identify areas of common ground, this previous role play stage seems to have set the conditions for effective negotiations that were able to integrate these different perspectives into prioritised recommendations.

Effective process design is key to the success of any deliberative process and it is clear that considerable creativity and thought were used to develop the methodology in Case Study 26. Recognising that the community's limited understanding of the available choices regarding future water supply and demand would hamper effective discussion, the workshop design sought to supply appropriate contextual information and outline the options in engaging and meaningful ways. The detailed session plan reproduced below also demonstrates the attention given in the process design to ensuring participants had significant and meaningful opportunities to discuss and comment on all of the options in detail, to choose between them, and to adjust their choices in light of hearing others' views/additional information. It is also interesting to note that as part of the workshop plan, all participants had the opportunity to record their preferences in writing, via the questionnaire used at the end of the workshop, in order that their final views could be given equal consideration/weight in post-workshop analysis.

> Extract from Case Study 26 – Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy: Community Research Forums and Social Acceptability of Water Options
>
> **Session Plan:** (4 hours) In recognition of the communities' limited understanding of the options available, considerable time and effort was spent at the outset of the forums to provide appropriate contextual information and outline options. This was done via a presentation. Subsequent sessions were as follows:
>
> a) **Initial sharing of reactions to water options** (full group);
>
> b) **Round-table discussion of options** at individual tables – each option rotated from table to table around the room giving all participants an opportunity to review each option in detail. Comments recorded on flip-chart sheets;
>
> c) **Initial review of reactions to options** – flip-chart sheets were pinned around the room and participants were invited to review and consider the responses of other tables and to discuss these with someone they had not already spoken to;
>
> d) **Second round-table discussions of options** – participants were given more detailed information on each option and their comments recorded as per the first round-table discussions;
>
> e) **Evaluation and wrap-up** – at the completion of the round-table discussions, participants were required to nominate their preferred combination of options to make up the 500 billion litre shortfall in water anticipated by 2055, and how they would distribute their preferred combination between the anticipated human usage requirement and the amount required to restore the health of rivers. A random selection of participants were asked to share their combinations with the whole group.
>
> Each respondent was required to complete a self-completion questionnaire over the course of the evening, allowing analysis to explore and measure:
>
> - existing beliefs, in relation to water and climate change;
> - initial acceptability of each option and preferred options;
> - recommended options to avoid the expected 500 billion litre shortfall in 2055;
> - recommendations for the water gain to be dedicated to humans and to restoring the health of our rivers and the environment; and
> - acceptability of each option following the forum round-table discussions.

Melbourne Water's approach to involving consumers in developing their sewerage strategy also demonstrated a clear awareness of the limited knowledge that most participants would have about the existing situation, let alone options for the future (Case Study 24). The approach they took to involving participants in assessing future scenario options is particularly interesting.

> ### Extract from Case Study 24 – Melbourne Sewerage Strategy
>
> Within the context of a 5½-hour workshop it was decided that, to allow people sufficient time to consider the different scenarios fully, each table would spend 50-60 minutes considering and discussing one particular scenario. In this discussion, participants were asked to play an invisible observer role and describe what they thought the people there (including different groups within the community) would be thinking and doing in relation to the water and sewerage cycle. This was undertaken by way of working through a series of worksheets, which asked about generally living in Melbourne, expectations of the sewerage system, water sources and uses, household appliances, and products that are disposed of via the sewer.
>
> Following these in-depth discussions, two representatives from each table spent around 5 minutes presenting their scenario, and the outcomes of their discussion to the rest of the participants, after which time the whole group cast their votes on a series of questions about the scenarios. An important distinction is that at this stage participants were asked to imagine that they had awoken to find themselves actually living in that world/scenario, at their current age, rather than just being observers.

It is clear from the evaluative information provided for this case study that this approach worked: participants clearly understood the concept under discussion and were quite able to imagine what a) the people in each scenario would be doing and thinking, and b) what they themselves might be doing and thinking if they were to find themselves living in each of the respective scenarios. Further it was assessed that having participants immerse themselves fully in one particular scenario was a more meaningful and appropriate use of time than if each participant was required to consider all of the various parameters of all four scenarios.

In planning for these workshops, Melbourne Water held a scenario-planning session with local stakeholders in order to share insights into customers and the Melbourne community. This included representatives from Melbourne Water and the metropolitan water retailers, a sustainability consultant and an environment and sustainability educator from Swinburne's National Centre for Sustainability. This seems to have been invaluable in ensuring that the process was well planned and ultimately, highly successful.

Case Study 14 also demonstrates the importance of building a scoping phase into the timeline for a project, and ensuring this is also well resourced. In this case, the Environment Agency worked with an oversight group of sector stakeholders throughout the planning phase to map existing knowledge and approaches to communicating flood risk. They used this to inform a design and development workshop with a wider stakeholder group to discuss the findings of their scoping stage and identify areas of focus for the public workshops.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

From the evidence available for Case Studies 14, 16, 20, 21, 22, 26 and 31 it appears that the commissioning bodies were on the whole very pleased with the outputs generated by the workshops and found them useful to informing either wider policy or direct action. For example, by the time of the reconvened workshop referred to in Case Study 14, the Environment Agency had taken on board many of the project's suggestions and findings. It had used these to create mock-ups of flood risk maps and communication materials (fliers, personal flood plans and so on), which were further refined during the reconvened event. This impressed participants and led to very high levels of trust in the usefulness of the process.

In reflecting on the value of the deliberative focus groups described in Case Study 20, a staff member from Scottish Water described the outputs from the research as very useful for presenting

customer experiences to stakeholders. They described the research method itself as an effective way to gather the views of the public and something that Scottish Water would consider using again in the future. They noted further that the process had been effective in identifying a range of issues that they would hope to explore further in subsequent quantitative research. A similar response was found regarding the outputs generated in the River Basin Management dialogues outlined in Case Study 19. Here the dialogue process was followed up by an omnibus survey with 867 residents, the content of which was informed by these workshops.

Regarding the overall value of this dialogue, however, it appears the Environment Agency was not completely satisfied and feel that the objectives set for the research were only partially met by the workshops. While the workshops did enable a sample of the public to engage with and deliberate on a range of evidence in relation to water management issues, it was apparently felt that there was a lack of decisive policy-related opinion generated through the discussions. Instead the outputs provided only generalised feedback on how the river basin areas could be best be managed in the future, rather than evidence of robust and substantive public opinion that could be applied to 'key decisions'. That said, however, the evaluators found the deliberative process had been worthwhile overall and there were some significant useful outputs, outcomes and learning. Furthermore, they reported that the process instilled substantially more confidence within the Environment Agency to work with the public.

Looking at the objectives set for these workshops, and the range of research questions they hoped to address, it is possible that this reaction stems from the Environment Agency expecting too much from the process. Given that most participants only attended a single 6-hour workshop, on a very broad topic they had quite probably never given much consideration to before, decisive recommendations seem unlikely to have been achievable.

A similar situation was identified in the Melbourne Sewerage Strategy (Case Study 24). While one of the objectives set for the process was to consider the community's willingness to pay for the sewerage services, this was not achieved within the research. Apart from the fact that very few of the participants were aware of what they were currently paying for sewerage services, or what is encompassed within the specific services that they pay for, participants' overall expectations of sewerage services were also fairly basic. In order for this issue to have been explored more comprehensively, a vast amount of additional information would have needed to be presented to participants to enable them to provide meaningful feedback. This was assessed to be unfeasible within the time allowed for the workshops, and the decision was made to focus on delivering the other, more achievable objectives.

A number of the case studies above refer to the importance of having key stakeholders involved from the outset in the planning of any customer engagement project. From the evaluative interview conducted for this research, the lack of this early engagement seems to have been a problem in Case Study 7 and had a significant impact on the usefulness of the outputs delivered. The issue it seems was that, although the research focused on customers' views on environmental and social levies on energy bills, the Energy Policy Team at Consumer Focus were not involved in the design of the research. As a result, it was felt that the process did not address the key issues or produce the types of outputs that would have been useful for influencing policy.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- As a whole, people tend to be bored with traditional PowerPoint presentations, and often find expert lectures difficult to absorb, so it is a continual challenge for organisers to come up with innovative ways to share new, and often complex, information with participants. As case studies 7, 8, 14, 24, 27 and 31 demonstrate, deliberative workshops can be particularly valuable when they use interesting, well-designed and engaging materials to introduce participants to new information and stimulate discussion.

- Deliberative workshops can be broken down into a range of stages, and even take place over a number of different sessions. Case Study 14 about flood risk communication, for example,

held a weekday evening workshop to introduce key concepts and maps, establish good group dynamics and provide a baseline snapshot of participants' knowledge of flooding and the respective roles and responsibilities of different agencies. The group was then reconvened 3 days later, on a Saturday, having asked participants to do 'homework' and absorb further introductory information. Case Study 22 used a similar approach with a full week break between sessions for participants to do further research.

- Delivering the same workshop in a variety of locations, or with different groups (i.e. using a Structured Dialogue method) means that reasonably large numbers of people can be involved in addressing a single policy question, without the need for a single, large-scale event. This can be more cost-effective and also highly productive when the results are able to be analysed cumulatively, as demonstrated by Case Studies 14, 22, 26 and 31.

- Case Studies 14 and 19 also demonstrated the added value that can be attained when a small number of participants from different Structured Dialogues are brought together at the end of the process to assess the outputs from each event and build on them collectively. This gives participants themselves the opportunity to help shape and influence the conclusions drawn from the deliberative process, rather than these being decided by the facilitators. In the case of the flood communication dialogue (Case Study 14), this was done in collaboration with expert stakeholders, but the process can be equally valuable with participants only.

- In Case Study 7 participants were polled electronically at different stages throughout the workshops. This allowed for any changes in opinion in response to additional information and discussion to be tracked and analysed. This can be a very useful way of demonstrating how participation in a deliberative process can shift people's attitudes. It also provides a valuable reminder about why the outcomes of a deliberative process should not be taken as representative of wider public opinion.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- A key challenge in planning any deliberative event is setting clear, realistic and achievable objectives. As highlighted above, a number of the research projects suffered from hoping to achieve too much from their events.

- A related issue identified in the discussions of Scottish Water's Deliberative Focus Groups was that, in endeavouring to undertake a broad assessment of consumers' concerns, the events ended up covering too many different issues. This made it difficult to synthesise all the findings into something useful and decide how to address them. Scottish Water concluded that more focused discussions of fewer issues would be a better use of this methodology, likely to result in more manageable, and useful, outputs.

- Most deliberative workshops tend to be quite short, with most of the examples discussed above only lasting 2-5 hours. Particularly for horizon-scanning exercises on complex industry questions, it is not always clear if there was enough time within the process for participants to grasp and consider new information fully. This results in uncertainty about the deliberative quality of the discussions that took place. One way to address this is to separate the learning phase from the deliberative phase (as in Case Studies 14 and 22).

- As most of the research projects referred to above aimed to work with a representative sample of the population, the challenges of recruitment must also be acknowledged. This is particularly apparent when the research has very specific sampling requirements: experience of flooding, experience of fuel poverty, water company or size of bill are all selection criteria included within at least one of the case studies discussed here. The challenges of recruitment will be returned to in Chapter 7 of this report.

- The early involvement of key stakeholders, and those who are likely to use the outputs of the research project, has been highlighted as important to the success of a project. Case

Study 19 highlights the difficulties of doing this in practice when there are different organisations with different objectives and levels of experience in public participation involved. The evaluation reports used to develop the case study note that, in this case, not every organisation involved in the Steering Group was convinced that the research design would enable the desired outputs and outcomes of the project to be achieved. It was suggested that the project would have benefitted from more time and focus at the start of the process to set these out very clearly, and develop a mutual understanding across the project partners and contractors about them. It was felt that this needed to be an iterative process that referenced the project's objectives against the resources, time and expertise available and then designed a process that had the best opportunity to satisfy those objectives.

- It was also noted in relation to Case Study 24 that maintaining the involvement and commitment of a large Oversight Group over a long project can pose real challenges in terms of management, coordination and maintaining continuity. However, this challenge must be balanced by the fact that it can also generate wider project benefits.

CITIZENS JURIES

Our overview identified 4 examples of where Citizens Juries (or methods based on a Citizens Jury model) had been used to address questions related to the water and energy sectors.

- **Citizens Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland (ClimateXChange, 2013)** Case Study 4
  Three Citizens Juries were held in different parts of the country – Aberfeldy (close to an existing wind farm), Helensburgh (where a wind farm had been proposed nearby) and Coldstream (where there was no existing or proposed wind farm). 47 people participated in the Juries, recruited as a broadly representative sample of the population in each area. Participants attended 2 full-day events, with 2-3 weeks between sessions for reflection and additional research. The question each of the Juries addressed was: "There are strong views on wind farms in Scotland, with some people being strongly opposed, others being strongly in favour and a range of opinions in between. What should be the key principles for deciding about wind farm development, and why?"

- **Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions: A public dialogue to better inform how to meet UK carbon budgets (Committee on Climate Change, 2013)** Case study 5
  25 members of the public, recruited from the London area to be broadly representative of

CITIZENS JURY
Similar to a judicial jury a Citizens Jury brings a small representative group of citizens together to hear evidence, deliberate among themselves and reach a conclusion.
A Citizens Jury is a tightly-structured method with experts invited to present 'evidence' to the Jury and answer questions. Throughout the process Jurors therefore learn about the issue at hand and, in doing so, move into the role of being informed decision-makers.
Citizens Juries tend to work best when they are convened around a clearly-framed question or set of choices. To date they have most often been used when a policy problem can potentially be solved in a number of ways, with the Jury meeting to consider the range of options.
To overcome concerns about the lack of numbers involved in a Jury process, organisers will often run a number of Juries on the same topic, especially if it is an issue of national or regional relevance.

Distinguishing Features:
- Small numbers of participants (12-20) usually selected to form a representative mini-public;
- Experts attend to provide evidence but are not part of the deliberative process;
- Emphasis is given to developing informed opinions through dialogue and in-depth deliberation;
- Usually takes place over 2-3 days;
- Deliberation is focused on reaching consensus (i.e. an agreed preference or recommendations).

the UK population, attended 3 sessions (2 evenings and a Saturday). The Jury aimed to uncover more about public understandings of the global climate change challenge, the acceptability of the risks of global climate change compared with the costs of global action, and the UK's role and responsibilities within this context. The purpose was to feed into the Committee on Climate Change's advice to the Government on the most appropriate level for the 4th Carbon Budget.

- **Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation (New South Wales (NSW) Parliament, 2012)** Case Study 6
  2 Citizens Juries were held, one in a rural area and one in Sydney, involving a total of 54 members of the public. Each Jury met 4-5 times over a 10-week period. The remit of both Juries was the same: 'to agree on an order of preference, barrier to adoption (including financial aspects and public perception issues) and recommended course of action with regard to alternative forms of energy generation (e.g. tidal, geothermal) in NSW'. The purpose was to inform the NSW Parliament's Inquiry into the economics of energy generation.

- **Citizens Juries on Water Management (EU-funded projects in the Netherlands, 2003-2007)** Case Study 25
  Three different Citizens Juries took place in the Rhine Basin area between 2003 and 2007, looking at different aspects of river basin management including what priorities the Government should set for water quality in Lake Markermeer and priorities for managing urban water streams in Utrecht. Each Jury consisted of between 12 and 15 residents selected to be broadly representative of the area's population. Part of the objective of this project, at least in the initial stages, was to test the usefulness of the Citizens Juries.

From the evidence available it appears that all of the Juries followed a similar framework, although the time allowed and the approach taken varied at each stage.

1) An information-giving stage: In Case Study 5, for example, participants were sent 4 short 'think pieces' to read before the events, to introduce them to the issues. The first two short meetings considered the issues raised in these papers, with each meeting dealing with a distinct element of the debate (e.g. the first covered the science of climate chance and the second the UK's plans for carbon emission reduction). Participants noted in the evaluation that this method was particularly effective, as breaking the information down into distinct sections made processing and understanding it manageable and encouraged quite focused discussions. In Case Study 4, giving information was the focus of the first day of the Jury. Here, Jurors had the opportunity to hear from expert witnesses and question them directly. Following this, there was a 2-3 week break before their next meeting where Jurors were given an information pack to consider in more depth, reflect on the issues raised and discuss the ideas with family and friends. Expert responses to questions raised on the first day, that had not been able to be answered immediately, were also provided during this time. The evaluation of the Juries suggests that the gap between the face-to-face sessions proved critical to allowing the Jurors to digest the ideas and information before forming judgements.

2) A deliberative stage: At this stage, Jurors have the opportunity to engage with the perspectives of others and have informed, inclusive discussions, often about very complex issues. This is often the part of the process that participants report they find most valuable, and most enjoyable. It is vitally important that this is well structured and well managed by facilitators. It is noted in the evaluation section of Case Study 5 just how much effort had gone into designing and delivering this phase, with the outcome being that there was a very good dynamic in the room particularly in relation to the 'openness of the discussions between participants as peers, as well as with stakeholders'.

3) <u>A process of drawing conclusions / arriving at recommendations</u>: In each of the examples discussed here, while the intended outputs were different, the process was evaluated as successfully addressing the question that was posed to the Jury.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

As noted above, all of the examples explored in these case studies were assessed as having achieved their intended outputs. There were however notable differences in the perceived usefulness (or value) of the outputs.

The Juries in NSW that explored alternative forms of energy generation (Case Study 6) delivered a combined report that presented their preferred courses of action to the Public Accounts Committee of the NSW Parliament, alongside the reasoning behind their choices. Many of the recommendations were considered to be quite innovative and their ideas were extensively drawn on by the Committee in its report to Parliament. By contrast, evaluative comments from at least one of the Jury processes in the Netherlands suggested that the outputs did not contribute very much in terms of new evidence or policy ideas, but acknowledged that they had been useful in demonstrating support for existing draft policy suggestions.

Evaluation comments from staff at the Committee on Climate Change (Case Study 5) show that they felt the process had provided them with a greater understanding of public views that they were able to use to inform their advice to government on the 4th Carbon Budget (and the 6 key recommendations presented in the final day's session were outlined in full in the supporting technical report). It was acknowledged however that the potential for wider use of the outputs from the project was limited by the relatively small number of participants involved in the process and the geographical focus around greater London.

The wind farm Juries in Scotland (Case Study 4) all successfully managed to develop and agree a list of principles that they felt should be used as criteria for making decisions about the location of onshore wind farms. As this research project had the supplementary aim of testing whether the Jury process was an effective methodology to engage citizens on complex and controversial issues, it is interesting to note that common themes emerged across all of the Juries, despite their different locations and exposure / potential exposure to wind farm developments. This reflects the ability of this method to identify wider community preferences despite involving relatively small numbers of people.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- Citizens Juries are designed to deliver clear and decisive outcomes (e.g. a list of priorities, recommendations for action, criteria for decision-making). This works best when the question asked of the Jury is tightly focused and clearly defined.

- Citizens Juries are recognised as a useful and proven method for enabling detailed, informed and productive deliberation among people who have previously not engaged with the issue: 'Citizens Juries are designed to bring public judgement to political decisions. That means going beyond public opinion — there are no knee-jerk gut reactions in the final report. The Jury, made up of a bunch of 'ordinary people', are given the time, information and support to get to the bottom of the issue, explore their different perspectives and arrive at a collective judgement. What's consistently impressive about Citizens Juries and similar processes is the capacity of these lottery politicians to get their heads around complex topics and come up with reasonable and valuable findings.'[25]

- By giving considerable focus to information-giving, and developing participants' understanding of a topic, the method can engender dialogue on even very complex issues.

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[25] Russell, Wendy "Citizens Juries: How Do They Fit into Democracy?," *The Mandarin*, October 12, 2016, http://www.themandarin.com.au/71362-citizens-Juries-fit-democracy/.

However, it is clear from the case studies referenced above that this works best when the question under discussion is clearly defined and the information is packaged into distinct and manageable pieces.

- Pre-polling of participants' attitudes in a number of cases has demonstrated that through a Citizens Jury process, as Jurors learnt about the topic and engaged with others' perspectives, they developed and, in some cases, revised their initial opinion on a topic.

- When participants are recruited to be a representative sample of the population, the outcomes delivered from the process can be taken to be indicative of the outcomes that would be delivered if the wider public had the same opportunity to participate in the deliberative process. Although the following quote has been written about a different Citizens Jury process in Australia, the observations made within it seem to hold true for Case Study 6 as well: 'Citizens Juries can lead to better decisions. The diverse Jury can bring more knowledge and lived experience to the issue than a typical elite group such as a council, government or bureaucracy. This is especially true for social policy issues. A Citizens Jury may also bring a more accurate picture of the values and aspirations of the wider community — their recommendations are likely to better reflect what ordinary people want. This is particularly relevant to planning and development issues.'[26]

- The evaluation reports that have informed these case studies all note that participants generally enjoy being part of the process.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- The small numbers of people that can be involved in a Jury process can limit the potential impact of the results as decision-makers can be concerned about how representative the views are. While the evaluation material drawn on for Case Study 4 makes the argument that when a Jury process is replicated the results are often surprisingly similar, the most effective way to overcome this lack of confidence is to hold multiple events.

- There are significant challenges in recruiting a representative sample to participate in these events, particularly when recruitment is based on multiple demographic criteria. Even when financial incentives are provided (as discussed later in this report), attaining a truly representative sample in the room, on the day, over a number of events is difficult to achieve.

- On a complex issue there is often a lot of information that participants need to be able to take in and understand before they can effectively engage in deliberation. Finding ways to present this information in accessible and engaging ways within a limited amount of time can be a key challenge.

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[26] Ibid.

CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

Two very different examples of Citizens Assemblies have been included here from outside the regulated industries because of the lessons they offer in relation to this methodology.

- **Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly (Vancouver City Council, 2012-2013)** Case Study 29
  The Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly was initiated following a neighbourhood planning process in which local residents had felt that their concerns and priorities had not been sufficiently recognised and acted upon by the City Council. 500 local residents applied to be part of the Citizens Assembly and 48 participants were selected to take part through a random draw. Over the space of 1 year, Assembly members took part in: a learning phase where they heard expert perspectives about the needs of their local area; a consultation phase where they engaged with the wider community; and a deliberation phase where they agreed local priorities and a plan to take them forward.

- **NHS Citizens Assembly (NHS England, 2015)** Case Study 30
  This Assembly was part of a wider engagement project undertaken by NHS England called NHS Citizen. The Citizens Assembly was run towards the end of the project and its research questions were framed by early engagement with patients and citizens through a gathering phase and a Citizens Jury. Over 250 members of the public, stakeholders and members of the NHS England Board attended the Assembly. After a brief introduction to the range of healthcare priority issues open for discussion, participants were asked to choose their interest area for further discussion. In small groups participants worked through 3 rounds of discussion covering: 'What is the situation now?'; 'What might better look like in 2013?'; and 'What needs to happen to take this forward?'.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

The Grandview-Woodland Assembly (Case Study 29) had a very clear focus and generated local consensus about neighbourhood priorities, which were then laid out in a formal plan and agreed by the City Council. It also created a greater sense of community cohesion among local residents, which appears to have then been instrumental in delivering the actions included within their plan.

In the NHS Citizen Assembly example however, in part because of the wide range of topics it set out to address, the outputs are less well defined. The report produced after the event summarised the

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CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

A Citizens Assembly involves bringing together a fairly large group of citizens, selected to be broadly representative of the demographics of the area, to deliberate on an issue.

A central part of a Citizens Assembly process is the learning phase wherein participants are able to develop an understanding of the issue based on unbiased information. Because of the time given to learning about an issue, Citizens Assemblies are able to address quite complicated and technical issues. They can also be good for debating value-laden and controversial questions.

With the help of facilitators, participants then engage in dialogue about a topic (usually in small groups), deliberate over options and make recommendations to inform policy-making. Sometimes, because of the numbers involved, voting systems are needed to reach conclusions or prioritise options.

Distinguishing Features:
- Large numbers of participants (50-250) brought together in one deliberative process;
- Participants are usually selected to form a representative mini-public;
- Depending on the complexity of the issue, Assemblies can be run on 1 day or over 3-5 days over a number of months;
- Experts attend to give information and advise, but usually do not participate in the deliberations;
- Equal time given to learning about the issue, dialogue (sharing perspectives and opinions), and deliberation (reaching conclusions).

various themes and issues that emerged throughout the day and is valuable in providing a snapshot of the public's concerns, views and priorities regarding the topics discussed. NHS England noted however that the process had not delivered specific policy recommendations or uncovered issues that they were not already aware of as a result of their other engagement activities with patients and service users.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- When run on a large scale, like the NHS Citizen example in Case Study 30, Citizens Assemblies can bring a diverse range of perspectives together into a single deliberative process.

- Citizens Assemblies can often be quite high-profile events and one of the key indicators of success is when the wider public recognise their own views within the reported findings. This seems to have been the case in relation to the Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- When an Assembly event is run as a broad, horizon-scanning exercise on an emotive issue like healthcare it can easily become overwhelmed by personal stories and a myriad of experiences and concerns that are outside the parameters of the research question. This can make it very difficult for groups to distil their discussions into clear points of agreement.

- While Assemblies can provide a valuable tool for opening up public discussions on aspects of policy where there is little already known about public opinion, examples like the NHS Citizens Assembly show that they can be less useful to address topics where there is already considerable evidence of user views.

DISTRIBUTED DIALOGUES

Only one of the examples identified in our research can be classed as a Distributed Dialogue: Case Study 3 presents the **Bioenergy Dialogue (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, 2013)** which used two distinct distributed methods which are worth discussing in more detail here.

> **DISTRIBUTED DIALOGUES**
>
> A Distributed Dialogue approach is based on the idea that dealing with complex issues should involve a range of conversations that happen in different spaces. It therefore involves a number of dialogue events organised by interested parties (rather than centrally planned), which are held across different geographical areas. This is intended to give multiple entry points for citizens and other stakeholders to take part.
>
> Distributed Dialogues tend to work best when there is a strong level of 'scripting' provided for the distributed events – with clear questions, background information and a planning and facilitation toolkit provided. By their very nature, however, the commissioning body has limited control over the quality of the discussion, the mix of people involved or the neutrality of the organisers/facilitators.
>
> It is also important to provide a standardised feedback form, or equivalent, that event organisers can use to capture dialogues' results. Without this, reporting can be inconsistent and make meaningful analysis difficult.
>
> Distinguishing Features:
> - Dialogue events are organised and run by different local or stakeholder groups;
> - They can provide opportunities for large numbers to participate if they are well promoted;
> - The commissioning body will set the question(s) but the actual discussions will be led independently;
> - Distributed Dialogues do not require centralised facilitation;
> - It is the responsibility of the organisers of a Distributed Dialogue event to ensure that the outcomes of their discussions are fed back to the commissioning body/decision-making group.

The dialogue was undertaken to help ensure that the views, concerns and hopes of the public were taken into account as the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) explored the potential for scientific and technological advance in bioenergy. To support the public engagement process, BBSRC developed 2 resources to be used by BBSRC-funded researchers and other interested groups to host their own dialogue events:

- **A toolkit for hosting a dialogue** including a set of 'futures scenarios', associated discussion materials and a facilitator's guide for running the event;

- **Democs Card Game**[27] – Democs is both a card game and a policy-exploration tool that enables small groups of people to engage with complex public policy issues. It aims to help people find out about a topic, express their views, seek common ground with the other participants, and state their preferred policy position within the non-confronting format of a game. The Democs Bioenergy Game used in this project was developed by the New Economics Foundation and Edinethics Ltd.[28]

As part of this engagement project, 11 dialogue events were run by researchers and other groups between January and September 2013. Outputs from the dialogues were collected using individual feedback forms completed by participants at the end of the sessions – 197 feedback forms were received. These feedback forms asked for participants' views on bioenergy following the dialogue and the questions included:

- Thinking about bioenergy, my main concern is…
- I think that bioenergy could be useful because…
- I would like researchers to think carefully about…
- There are significant issues that were NOT discussed at this event, but should have been. These are…

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

The findings from the public dialogue events outlined above tended to support what BBSRC already understood about public views and values on bioenergy rather than revealing new insights. They did, however, conclude that this was valuable in and of itself. However, factors such as the potential for inconsistencies between events run in different locations by different teams, the short time for discussion and some of the characteristics of the people involved (which were skewed towards those with high levels of educational qualifications and previous involvement with science) meant that the results could only be used with care: clarifying that they represented the concerns and priorities that s*ome* audiences have regarding bioenergy, as opposed to the views of the population more generally.

Evaluation reports used to inform the Case Study also indicated that the short length of each of the workshops, and the complexity of the stimulus material in the dialogue pack, hampered participants' opportunity to discuss bioenergy in real detail, and had an impact on the deliberative quality of the outputs. In contrast, the reports show that the Democs game was the most accessible of the materials produced to support the dialogues, and seemed to facilitate better-informed deliberations in which participants were both learning new things and taking them into account as they formed opinions.

Finally, while acknowledging the limitations of the method and areas for improvement in how this particular dialogue project was run, BBSRC have indicated that they would definitely consider using a similar model again.

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[27] Democs (Deliberative Meetings Organised by Citizens) is a deliberation method that takes the form of a card game that enables small groups of citizens to learn about and discuss complex scientific, political and ethical issues. Democs was created by the New Economic Foundation (nef) in the early 2000s due to growing interest in engagement with public through deliberative practices. Onyiliogwu, Kateryna "Democs," *Participedia*, September 2013, http://participedia.net/en.

[28] New Economics Foundation and Edinethics Ltd, "Bioenergy - a Democs Game - Instructions," 2013, http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/documents/bioenergy-democs-game-instructions-pdf/.

- A Distributed Dialogue approach is able to reach a similar number of people, and potentially more, than traditional engagement approaches for a lower cost. This is because it relies on community leaders and local groups organising and reporting on their own events.

- The Democs card game was shown to be an effective tool for encouraging group discussions on complex issues. This is because, despite no expert knowledge being required to participate in the game, the deliberative quality of the discussions that emerge can be relatively high.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- There are significant challenges to interpreting the information generated through most Distributed Dialogues, as the approach relies on participants and/or organisers feeding in their responses, and the quality of this feedback can be very inconsistent.

- Case Study 3 also highlights the difficulties that the organisers had in encouraging people to host or take part in the dialogue events. While this may have been related to the particular topic, the amount of time needed to promote a Distributed Dialogue approach should not be under-estimated.

- Participants in a Distributed Dialogue event are usually self-selecting and therefore the outputs cannot be interpreted as representing wider public opinion unless significant demographic tracking, and possibly weighting, is undertaken as part of the analysis.

- Case Study 3 identifies that the discussion materials prepared for the dialogues, particularly the future scenarios, were far too complex to be used in this form of workshop. This highlights the need for a well-constructed dialogue guide that is able to be used in a variety of contexts in order to deliver a successful Distributed Dialogue process.

PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING

Two Participatory Strategic Planning examples have been developed as case studies to inform this report. Each used a workshop structure that started by defining a vision of the future, identified what the existing barriers to achieving this were, explored options to overcome these barriers and agreed priorities, preferred options and/or next steps.

- **Participatory Planning of a Sustainable Energy Strategy (The Government of Nova Scotia's Department of Energy, 2009)** Case Study 11
  Two Participatory Strategic Planning processes were undertaken, firstly to develop a new institutional framework for energy efficiency, and secondly to develop a strategy to increase renewable energy generation in the province. In each process approximately 40 members of the public worked with experts and stakeholders to agree goals, develop plausible scenarios

PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING
Throughout a Participatory Strategic Planning process, members of the public and experts work together to agree a vision and collaborate to find solutions that are acceptable to all concerned. For it to work, participants must therefore be prepared to set aside some of their pre-existing positions and endeavour to find common ground. For this reason Participatory Strategic Planning processes require a high degree of trained facilitation and thorough planning.

Distinguishing Features:
- A workshop format involving between 20 and 50 participants;
- Experts and members of the public work together throughout the process as equal participants;
- The focus is on a vision for the future and how best to get there;
- The process is able to generate new ideas or proposals;
- Deliberation is focused on reaching consensus, or at least establishing common ground.

for the future, debate the relative merits of each scenario and establish preferred options. These were then turned into recommendations to government.

- **What Floats Your Boat?: Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan (Scottish Canals and Glasgow City Council, 2015-2016)** Case Study 18
  This research used a specific type of Participatory Strategic Planning process known as a charrette.[29] The project covered the Woodside, Firhill and Hamiltonhill areas of North Glasgow through which the Glasgow branch of the Forth & Clyde Canal corridor passes. The charrette engaged over 300 stakeholders and local community members in a collaborative forum over a period of 4 days to create a vision for the Woodside, Firhill and Hamiltonhill areas and the canal corridor. The charrette included guided walks, presentations and group workshops designed to maximise participation, test ideas and scenarios, and to merge opportunities and aspirations together to ensure that the final proposals had a place-making focus, with long-term benefit for the local communities and the wider Glasgow North area.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

The design-led outputs created through the charrette in Case Study 18 meant that the proposals produced through the engagement process were very quickly and easily able to be translated into a Spatial Development Framework for the area that sets out the development potential, connectivity enhancements, greenspace improvements and a high-level arts and cultural strategy.

While there is little evaluative evidence available regarding Case Study 11, the fact that the recommendations from both of the processes were translated into government policy has to suggest that the Government of Nova Scotia found them valuable. Further, an academic report about the projects highlighted them as good practice in policy-making and expressed optimism about both the quality and durability of the policies developed.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- Participatory Strategic Planning brings the public and expert stakeholders together to establish common ground and build consensus.

- Participatory Strategic Planning is a very effective method for involving the public in meaningful policy development processes, particularly around complex and technical issues, as it starts by setting a future goal that everyone can agree on, and then moves into more detailed deliberations between experts and the public about how this can be achieved in reality.

- Participatory Strategic Planning is a proven method for delivering clear policy recommendations that are able to be implemented.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- At times the demands of reaching agreement between diverse stakeholders can weaken the ambition of some policy recommendations.

- For this method to be most effective, it does require the active participation of all stakeholders throughout the whole process, and this can sometimes be a challenge for professional participants.

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[29] A charrette is an intensive design-led planning and engagement approach that allows residents, town planners, designers and other stakeholders to collaborate on a vision for development. It provides a forum for ideas and offers the unique advantage of giving immediate feedback to participants and designers, through iterative spatial design plans developed throughout the process. This, importantly, allows everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

DELIBERATIVE MAPPING

A single example of Deliberative Mapping was identified through our overview of engagement practices.[30]

- **Deliberative Mapping of Options for Tackling Climate Change (University of East Anglia, 2012)** Case Study 28
  The goal of this project was to establish how different stakeholders' views in relation to proposals for geoengineering compared with their views on other options for tackling climate change. 13 members of the public and 12 experts worked, initially separately, to establish a set of criteria which they could use to appraise options, and then to score each option against their agreed criteria. When the groups came together midway through the process, they compared how they had ranked the different options. Members of the public also had the opportunity at this stage to question the experts and find out more about their reasoning, and vice versa.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

In this case both groups arrived at fairly similar views on the proposed climate change mitigation techniques and agreed on clear preferences. As noted above, however, while the process was successful in demonstrating the viability of the method, the usefulness of the outputs was not tested in a real policy-making context.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- Deliberative Mapping involves members of the public and experts working together and learning from each other, but establishes a structure that does not allow expert views to dominate the discussions.

- Deliberative Mapping can be a useful tool for understanding the differences between expert assessments of options and the public's, with one output expected from the process being a map of differing levels of support for different policy options.

- A key feature of this method is that it involves participants explicitly determining criteria that they will use to evaluate options, and the weighting given to each criteria. This can be an important source of information in relation to the values and concerns that lie behind

> **DELIBERATIVE MAPPING**
> Deliberative Mapping involves members of the public and experts in undertaking an appraisal of different policy options. The 2 groups initially work separately (in order to prevent expert opinions dominating the discussions) to:
> - Decide on criteria against which they will score the policy options;
> - Systematically weigh up the pros and cons of each of the potential 'options' under consideration.
>
> The 2 groups then come together for a joint workshop designed to compare and contrast their individual assessments and, ideally, identify areas of common ground. The emphasis of the process is therefore not on integrating expert and public voices, but understanding the different perspectives each bring to a policy process.
>
> Distinguishing Features:
> - Involves both the public and experts in deliberation (c. 20 - 40 people);
> - Usually requires a series of meetings – with experts and the public initially working separately;
> - Through the process, public participants and experts develop a greater awareness and understanding of the priorities of the other;
> - Is designed to weigh up the pros and cons of a variety of policy options, rather than necessarily reach consensus.

public preferences and ultimately public acceptance.

- This process can really only be used with quite small groups.

- Although not the case in the example identified here, there can be difficulties finding common ground between the two groups and therefore findings can be inconclusive.

ONLINE DELIBERATIONS

While the examples of online deliberations identified in this research project could easily be classed as being within the scope of general deliberative workshops, it seems worth addressing them separately because of the particular lessons they demonstrate.

- **Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies (Committee on Climate Change, 2016)** Case Study 1
  The Committee on Climate Change undertook a public dialogue to improve understanding of views relating to low-carbon heating technologies using a newly-developed online discussion tool called the Sounding Board. A small sample of homeowners and renters (17) within urban, suburban or metropolitan areas were engaged in an informed discussion about:
  - Potential for uptake of low-carbon heating technologies, particularly heat networks and heat pumps;
  - Barriers to uptake; and
  - Potential solutions to address barriers.

  The project goal was to identify with participants what role the Government could play in supporting the public to reduce carbon emissions from heating. Up to 10 participants at a time took part in an initial information and introduction session for 45-60 minutes, followed by another 90-minute session designed to enable more substantive deliberative discussions. The dialogue took the form of an audio conversation, supplemented by a series of visual information presentations, the use of scenarios, participant polling and reflection upon participant polling. The discussions were moderated by a facilitator and experts from the Committee.

- **My 2050 Simulation Game (The Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2011)** Case Study 9
  The My 2050 Simulation game was an interactive online game format developed by Delib to engage users in the trade-offs required to reduce carbon emissions while 'keeping the lights on'. The game presented a framework through which to consider system-wide choices relating to economic, environmental and social concerns. It was used in the workshops run as part of the wider 2050 Energy Pathways project as a way of involving participants, both individually and in small groups, in experimenting with various pathways towards a low-carbon future.

USEFULNESS OF THE OUTPUTS

The Sounding Board technology used in Case Study 1 proved to be an innovative method to facilitate online the type of dialogue and deliberation that would traditionally happen in a workshop. The results from the discussions broadly confirmed what the Committee already understood about public opinion on the matter. However it did highlight to staff a few particular areas that they could focus on in promoting new low-carbon heating technologies and addressing misconceptions.

The outputs produced by the game in Case Study 9 were considered useful by the Department of Energy and Climate Change in understanding participants' priorities, and the approaches they took towards deciding them. They were also acknowledged to be largely in line with the views gathered through more traditional deliberative methods throughout their wider research project. An additional purpose in using the game within the deliberative workshops was to beta-test it for wider release as part of a toolkit to support community dialogues about how best to meet carbon targets. In this regard the information received through the workshops was also very useful and allowed modifications to be made before it was made available to the general public.

STRENGTHS OF THE METHOD

- The Sounding Board method used in Case Study 1 was highlighted in the project's evaluation as being a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to face-to-face workshops.

- The Sounding Board was also recognised as an effective way of presenting complex and technical information to a dispersed group of people in order to inform their deliberations.

- The game format employed in Case Study 9 was particularly effective in engaging participants in something new and challenging in a very interactive way as they learnt more about the trade-offs required to plan for sustainable energy futures.

- The game also produced detailed information about the priorities and views of those who played it, alongside their reasoning processes and the heuristics used to inform their decisions.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY ORGANISERS

- Despite their overall enthusiasm for the process, the Committee on Climate Change analysts involved in the project acknowledged that it allowed for less depth of deliberation than an equivalent face-to-face engagement process.

- While the overall evaluations received from users of the My 2050 Simulation game were very positive, some users found it difficult to use, something many of them attributed to their own lack of IT skills rather than the game format itself.

SUMMARY OF THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES IN USING DIFFERENT METHODS

When used appropriately, all of the methods discussed in this chapter can effectively generate research findings that are useful and valued by the commissioner. However, the discussion here has also highlighted a range of strengths and challenges in using each method which are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Strengths and Challenges of each Method

	Strengths	Challenges
Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums 12. Customer Advisory Panel 13. Customer Forum 15. Consumer Challenge Groups 17. Public Water Forum	• Establishes a 2-way relationship between consumers and suppliers that can be strengthened over time; • They are usually directly recognised by, and often supported by, the organisations they are designed to influence; • Participants have the opportunity to develop considerable knowledge of the sector that can support their challenge and scrutiny role.	• Members generally need to make a long-term, often time-intensive commitment, which limits who is able to participate; • Ensuring there is a diversity of skills and experiences among members is critical if these groups are going to be able to represent consumer views effectively; • Maintaining the independence of the group as they become more '*expert*' and integrated into the workings of the sector; • The *authority* of the group, in relation to the suppliers and regulators, needs to be clearly defined.
Citizens Advisory Forums 2. Consumer First Panels 10. The Big Energy Shift 23. Citizens Advisory Forum on Living with Environmental Change	• Establishing a Panel that can be re-convened to look at different issues reduces recruitment costs; • Participants learn what to expect from the process and can therefore move into productive discussions more quickly; • The Panel will build relationships and become used to working with each other, which can improve the quality of deliberations; • Panel members can be asked to complete 'homework' between meetings and come prepared to deliberate, making the best use of their time together.	• Individual Panel meetings are usually quite short which can limit the time available for deliberation; • Decision-makers are often not involved in these meetings and it can be a challenge to ensure that the information generated reaches them in a useful and relevant way.
Deliberative Focus Groups 16. Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform 20. Listening to our Customers	• Works well with small groups in short amounts of time; • Works best when the topic is clearly focused and a specific intended output has been identified.	• There are limits as to how much information can be presented and absorbed by participants within a limited time frame. This can have a negative impact on the depth of the deliberations.
General Deliberative Workshops and Repeated	• Very flexible and versatile method; • Allows for creativity in process design to meet the specific	• Ensuring that the purpose is clearly defined, and realistic, before the detailed workshop design is undertaken;

Structured Dialogues	needs of the research project;	• The participation of a representative sample of the population is important for the evidence produced to be considered capable of generalisation.
7. Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges 8. Energy 2050 Pathways: A Public Dialogue 14. Flood-Risk Communication Dialogue 19. Significant Water Management Issues 21. River Basin Planning Strategy 22. Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service 24. Metropolitan Melbourne Sewerage Strategy 26. Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy 27. Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government 31. Postal User Needs Qualitative Research	• When well designed is ideal for enabling learning, sharing of ideas and purposeful deliberation; • Using a Structured Dialogue approach to deliver the same workshop in a variety of locations, or with different groups, means that reasonably large numbers of people can be involved in addressing a single policy question, without the need for a large-scale event; • Added value can be attained by bringing a small number of participants in different workshops together at the end to be part of the process of drawing conclusions from a Structured Dialogue.	
Citizens Juries	• Citizens Juries are a recognised and proven method and therefore given institutional legitimacy; • Juries are good for enabling detailed, informed and productive deliberation among people who have previously not engaged with an issue; • Juries are designed to deliver clear, agreed outputs; • Useful for controversial or sensitive policy issues that require careful weighing up of options.	• Juries are most effectively used when there is a clearly defined question requiring an answer; • Given that Jury processes usually require participants to take in large amounts of information, it can be challenging to find ways of presenting this in engaging ways; • Only a small sample of citizens can be involved.
4. Citizens' Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland 5. Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions 6. Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation 25. Citizens Juries on Water		

Management		
Citizens Assembly **29. Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Planning** **30. NHS Citizens Assembly**	• Can effectively explore diverse perspectives on complex issues and reach consensual recommendations; • When run on a large scale they can bring a diverse array of opinions and experiences into a single event; • Can be an effective way of providing participants with a wide range of different or competing views to inform their deliberations; • Combining a learning phase with deliberation with peers can help participants to understand, develop and possibly change their initial views; • Brings decision-makers face-to-face with consumers with lived experience of the issues; • Can be a quite high profile process and provide an opportunity to draw wider attention to an issue.	• Recruiting a representative group of people at this scale can be challenging and expensive; • Assemblies are very intensive and resource-demanding (in terms of both people and time) processes; • Running a Citizens Assembly is a highly complex process requiring significant expertise.
Distributed Dialogues 3. **Bioenergy Dialogue**	• Through a Distributed Dialogue it is possible to engage a wide range of stakeholders in a variety of locations; • It can be a cost-effective way of enabling large numbers to participate; • Can be useful for identifying how priorities and opinions differ in different geographical areas or between different groups.	• Participants in a Distributed Dialogue event are usually self-selecting and therefore the outputs cannot be interpreted as representing wider public opinion unless significant demographic tracking, and possibly weighting, is undertaken as part of the analysis; • Distributed Dialogues can take a long time to organise and so are not suitable in situations where fast action is needed; • The commissioning body retains little control of how discussions are framed or facilitated in practice; • It is difficult to ensure inclusiveness and transparency of Distributed Dialogues; • It is difficult to ensure that local discussions are not dominated by 'loud voices' and are focused on the topic; • The process may produce contradictory or inconsistent

		data.
Deliberative Mapping **28. Mapping Options for Tackling Climate Change**	• Deliberative Mapping gives consumers and experts the opportunity to learn from each other and work together; • The method establishes a structure that does not allow expert views to dominate the discussions; • It can be a useful tool for understanding the differences between expert assessments of options and the wider public's; • Good for dealing with complicated issues, where a range of different considerations must be balanced against each other, and enabling policy options to be clearly prioritised; • In beginning by determining criteria that will be used to evaluate options, and the weighting given to each criteria, it can provide useful information about the values and concerns that lie behind public preferences and ultimately public acceptability of options.	• This process can really only be used with quite small groups; • Although not the case in the example identified here, there can be difficulties finding common ground between the two groups and therefore findings can be inconclusive; • It can place considerable demands on the time of expert participants; • It can be difficult to ensure expert buy-in to the process and that experts engage with public participants as equals.
Participatory Strategic Planning **11. Participatory Planning of Sustainable Energy Strategy** **18. What Floats Your Boat?: Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan**	• Participatory Strategic Planning is a very effective method for involving the public in meaningful policy or action planning processes, particularly on complex and technical issues, as it starts by setting a future goal that everyone can agree on; • Participatory Strategic Planning brings the public and expert stakeholders together to address an issue or solve a problem; • It can provide a quick and relatively cost-effective way of enabling a diverse group to identify common ground and reach agreement; • Participatory Strategic Planning is proven as a method able to deliver clear policy recommendations which are able to be implemented.	• At times the demands of reaching agreement between diverse stakeholders can weaken the ambition of some policy recommendations; • For this method to be most effective, it does require the active participation of all stakeholders throughout the whole process; • It can be difficult to ensure expert buy-in to the process and that experts engage with public participants as equals.

Online Deliberations	Online deliberative events can be a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to face-to-face workshops;	It can be difficult (if not impossible with current technology) to replicate the depth of deliberation possible in a face-to-face engagement process;
1. Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies	They can also prove to be an effective way of presenting complex and technical information;	Methods may be alienating to people with a lack of IT skills.
9. My 2050 Simulation Game	People can participate in their own time and at their own convenience;	
	Online game formats in particular can be an appealing way of engaging participants interactively in something new.	

6. IMPACT ON POLICY

This chapter focuses on the impacts on policy and decision-making achieved by the examples discussed in the Case Studies – discussing where and how the outputs from the deliberative research have been used to make a difference.

The examples identified in the scoping exercise have been classified for analysis in terms of 3 broad types of policy questions:

1. **Examining broad policy objectives / horizon-scanning** – wherein participants are asked to examine the high-level objectives of a policy or policy programme, and then identify priorities, areas of interest and concerns. There may also be opportunities here to generate new ideas.

2. **Consultation on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered** – here participants are generally being asked to consider a more specific set of policy or implementation options. The purpose would usually be to prioritise them and/or identify areas of agreement and concern.

3. **Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product** – wherein consumers are asked about their understanding of, and response to, existing service provision or policy priorities.

A 4th classification has also been used specifically to refer to Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums whose role often cuts across all types of policy questions.

RESEARCH WITH BROAD HORIZON-SCANNING OBJECTIVES

17 examples identified during the scoping exercise can be classified as taking a broad horizon-scanning approach to policy issues. 15 of these have been developed into case studies for this report.

The cases highlighted here have used a wide range of methods, including Participatory Strategic Planning, Citizens Juries, Deliberative Mapping, Citizens Assemblies and Citizens Advisory Forums. However the majority can best be described as having used a general deliberative workshop format.

The table below summarises the various impacts that have been reported from these research projects.

Table 3 - Impacts from Case Studies that asked broad, horizon-scanning questions

Case Study	Title	Impacts on policy, decision-making and service delivery
3	**Bioenergy Dialogue** Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	The findings of the dialogue largely supported what BBSRC already understood about public views and values on bioenergy rather than revealing new insights. As such it has had little impact on their approach to bioenergy policies. The evaluation reports however note that the most significant impacts of the Bioenergy Dialogue will probably be on BBSRC's practice around public engagement and dialogue. It further highlights that this influence is likely to go wider than BBSRC itself as they had already used this experience to contribute to two projects relating to the future shape of public engagement in the EU.
8	**Energy 2050 Pathways: A Public Dialogue** Department of Energy and Climate Change	The outputs from the workshops have contributed to the debate around achieving the UK's carbon targets and delivering the low-carbon economy, and have been presented to senior decision-makers. At the time the evaluation reports were written, it was considered too early to assess the long-term policy impacts of this

		research programme.
		One concrete outcome however was that, as a result of the workshops, a toolkit was developed for schools to enable further dialogue about climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy.
9	**My 2050 Simulator** Department of Energy and Climate Change	After being piloted in the workshops, the My 2050 Simulator was further developed and released to the public as My 2050 Pathways Calculator. This game was extremely successful in engaging with the wider public with over 50,000 users creating and submitting 10,000 pathways in 26 days in March 2011. A report on the pathways chosen by participants was prepared and is understood to have informed government planning.
11	**Participatory Planning of Sustainable Energy Strategy** Nova Scotia Department of Energy	Key recommendations from both processes have since been implemented: 1) The recommendation of a charge on electricity consumers equivalent to 5% of electricity costs, and the establishment of a 'performance-based' independent agency to maximise the impact of energy conservation measures, were legislated by the Government of Nova Scotia in 2009. 2) Recommendations for changes in institutional arrangements, financial incentives and technological options have been translated into government policy commitments.
18	**What Floats Your Boat?: Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan** Scottish Canals and Glasgow City Council	The Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership Action Plan (based on the outputs from the charrette) highlights the regeneration potential of the canal corridor between Applecross Basin and Firhill Basin, and its adjoining neighbourhoods and implementation funding was identified through the Vacant & Derelict Land Fund. On the basis of this research, a Planning Permission in Principle has been submitted for the derelict land.
19	**Significant Water Management Issues** Environment Agency	Feedback from the Environment Agency was positive about the value of the findings in influencing and informing their policy development. However, it is likely that the impact will be greater on the development of future consultation material and processes than in the direct influence of policy. For example, the research helped inform the design of the River Basin Management Plans consultation in September 2014. It informed the language used, how it was communicated to the public and supported the framing of some issues and options. It has also contributed to informing and supporting the work of other local Catchment Partnerships.
22	**Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service** Ofwat	The reports produced as a result of the deliberation process show that is was effective in generating detailed information about the public's views and priorities regarding water service provision. Ofwat are using these findings to feed into a number of projects being undertaken in support of Ofwat's Delivering Sustainable Water Strategy.
23	**Citizens Advisory Forum** Living with	At the conclusion of the project there were a number of indications given about how members would use the findings in the future including:

	Environmental Change (LWEC)	• Some LWEC Partners had already used the results of the Forum discussions in their work or had clear plans to do so • There were several specific areas identified where LWEC Partners expected there to be influence on future research policies: around governance and regulation, the Water Strategy and flooding • The Forum was also expected to have an impact on the development of LWEC's public engagement strategy
24	**Metropolitan Melbourne Sewerage Strategy** Melbourne Water	The outputs from these workshops were used directly to inform Melbourne Water's Sewerage Infrastructure Strategy.
25	**Citizens' Juries on Water Management** EU project	The findings of the Juries each broadly reflected proposed policy positions. Decision-makers saw the Juries as useful in demonstrating support for the draft policies but not contributing new ideas. Interestingly, politicians with different positions on the issues all saw the Juries' recommendations as supporting their views.
27	**Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government** Accenture Institute for Health & Public Service Value.	The findings have mainly been used by academics and other key stakeholders to influence global interpretations and strategies for building sustainable cities in the world today, contributing to the quality of human life and the viability of ecologies in those places.
29	**Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Planning** City Council of Vancouver	The Assembly produced a clear set of recommendations that were incorporated into a Neighbourhood Plan agreed by the City Council.
31	**Postal User Needs Qualitative Research** Ofcom	The study fed into a wider body of research carried out by Ofcom, on the extent to which the postal market is meeting the reasonable needs of users of postal services. The research allowed Ofcom to conclude that the postal market was meeting the reasonable needs of users and was highly valued by residential users and businesses across the UK. As a result of the research Ofcom concluded that it did not need to change the scope of the universal postal service.

While all of the research projects presented above have been evaluated by the commissioning bodies as successful and useful (albeit to varying degrees as discussed in Chapter 5), the evidence available suggests that only five have had a direct and demonstrable impact on policy.

The first of these was the Participatory Planning of Sustainable Energy Strategy process from Nova Scotia (Case Study 11) which led directly to legislative action and to several of the group's recommendations around institutional arrangements, financial incentives and technological options being taken on as policy commitments by government. This project is one of the few discussed in this report in which the methodology used involved the public, expert stakeholders and policy-makers working collaboratively to identify recommendations. It was a similar case in the Scottish

Canals charrette (Case Study 18) where the involvement of all stakeholders was vital to its success. In both of these cases the structure of the process itself ensured that research outputs were agreed, and considered achievable, by all of the different parties involved and this in part explains why they were able to have such a direct impact.

A direct policy impact was also achieved by Melbourne Water's workshops with consumers in two different parts of the city (Case Study 24). These workshops, already cited in Chapter 5 as an example of good practice in process design, productively and systematically explored different scenarios for future sewerage management. One reason therefore for this research having a direct impact on policy-making is that, whilst the subject covered a broad theme looking well into the future, its objectives were clearly, and quite narrowly focused, and the process design ensured that specific outputs were achieved.

Ofcom's postal research was also credited with directly influencing policy, although in this case it was in a way that confirmed there was no need to change existing arrangements. The final case was the Citizens Assembly in Canada. In all of these examples the research was directly commissioned by the body that was responsible for the policy decisions it was designed to affect. This will undoubtedly have contributed to the engagement's ability to impact directly on policy.

In the remaining examples most of the evidence seems to suggest that the value of the research lay in informing the organisation's wider thinking and overall understanding of consumers' views. This seems to hold true across all of the different methodologies and is not unexpected in a broad, horizon-scanning research exercise in which participants are being asked to deliberate on the high-level objectives of a policy or policy programme. Several of the evaluations therefore note that while the research did not make a specific difference to policy, it did inform their thinking and approach to a range of later policy decisions or recommendations.

A further area of impact that was highlighted in three of the examples (Case Studies 3, 19 and 24) was that the research contributed to the commissioning organisation's wider approach to public engagement. In the case of the Environment Agency's workshops on Significant Water Management Issues (Case Study 19) the research was identified as having had a direct input into shaping the design of their River Basin Management Plans consultation later that year: influencing the language used to communicate with the public and how the issues and options were framed.

It is also interesting to note that in discussing impacts, both Case Study 3 (the Dialogue on Bioenergy) and Case Study 25 (Citizens Juries on Water Management) state that the findings from the research confirmed what the commissioners already understood about public views and values and their current policy intentions. It is possible therefore that the impacts directly attributable to the research may have been greater if the outputs had challenged the organisation's existing policy proposals.

CONSULTATION ON POLICY OPTIONS

20 examples of deliberative research with consumers and the wider public were classified as 'Consulting on Policy Options' during the scoping stage of this project. 10 examples, using Citizens Juries, Customer Advisory Forums, Deliberative Mapping and general deliberative workshops, have been developed into case studies. Where the case studies include evidence of impact this has been summarised in the table below.

Table 4 - Impacts from Case Studies that consulted on specific policy options

Case Study	Title	Impacts on policy, decision-making and service delivery
1	**Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies** Committee on Climate Change	Overall the Committee on Climate Change felt that the Sounding Board had not identified any big issues of which they had failed to take account before. There were however a number of useful insights provided about the kind of information people want and need when considering taking up a low-carbon technology.
2	**Consumer First Panels** Ofgem	This research regularly informs Ofgem's decision-making by helping them to understand the priorities, views and experiences of consumers. The findings of the research have been used by Ofgem to inform their campaign messaging, short-term policies, Ofgem publications and their future strategic planning. Specific examples of impact include informing: - Ofgem's work on any protections that may be needed for early movers prior to the Government's mandated smart meter roll-out; - Ofgem's review of the Priority Services Register, which was published alongside their Consumer Vulnerability Strategy; - Ofgem's work with suppliers in terms of communicating with consumers, tariff structures, and the process of switching suppliers. The research also helps shape Ofgem's consultations with the energy industry, suppliers, environmental groups, and government to help represent the views of, and protect, consumers in the energy market.
4	**Citizens Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland** Climate Xchange	Given the primary objective of the project, the most important impact was not to change the principles by which decisions about wind farms are made, but to encourage policy-makers to use deliberative mechanisms to bring the public voice into such questions. The final report has therefore been useful to policy-making primarily because it provided an unusually detailed account of the process for practitioners, policy-makers, decision-makers and researchers interested in developing deliberative public forums.
5	**Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions** Committee on Climate Change (CCC)	The dialogue is referenced in the CCC's main advice to the UK Government on the most appropriate level for the 4th Carbon Budget, and the Panel's six key recommendations were outlined in full in a supporting Technical Report. Beyond this, however, the immediate impacts of the dialogue are considered likely to be subtle and gradual. A key reason for this is the fact that the findings from the dialogue largely supported the CCC's overarching narrative on climate change emissions reductions (i.e. that transition is possible at reasonable costs and the UK should retain its leadership role internationally). If the dialogue results had questioned specific measures or challenged the overarching narrative, then the impacts may have been more apparent. The CCC also state that the project has influenced internal discussions about future research needs, potentially arguing for a stronger role for

		assumptions about behaviour change in future assessments, and flagging potential public concern about specific technologies (e.g. shale gas, Carbon Capture and Storage).
6	**Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation** New South Wales Parliament's Public Accounts Committee	The Juries produced a Citizens Report presenting their conclusions and the reasoning behind them. This was extensively relied upon by the Committee in its recommendations to Parliament.
7	**Deliberative Research into Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges** Consumer Focus	The research provided clear answers to the research questions and findings were used by Consumer Focus to steer policy and inform discussion with energy suppliers and the UK Government.
10	**The Big Energy Shift** Department of Energy and Climate Change	Within DECC the impacts on policy development have been impressive. The findings have directly fed into the following policies: - Trials of pay-as-you-save; - The roll-out of smart meters; - The Renewable Energy Strategy, particularly public engagement around large-scale renewables and the 'green challenge'; - The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, particularly the case for pilots and learning on the ground; - DECC's public sector announcement because the findings from the householder dialogue were used to argue the need for a strong set of announcements; - The Low-Carbon Transition Plan, particularly the Low-Carbon Communities Challenge Fund. This initiative built directly on recommendations in the report and came about in response to calls from householders for local exemplars and an interest in community-level solutions that emerged during the process.
16	**Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform** Consumer Council for Water	The Consumer Council for Water intended to use the findings to inform its policy input into Ofwat's assessment of the costs and benefits of a competitive household water retail market. It is however difficult to assess the specific impacts of the Deliberative Focus Groups as they were part of a much wider research project, including 10 in-depth interviews and 3,595 qualitative research interviews.

Research projects designed to engage with the public around specific policy options, or to inform how a policy might be delivered, are ones from which you would usually expect to see the most direct impact from the findings on policy decisions and practice.

Case Study 2 clearly demonstrates the impact that Ofgem's Consumer First Panels have had on their communications with customers, short-term policies and longer-term strategic planning. Recruiting a Citizens Advisory Forum is a research methodology that Ofgem has used repeatedly over a number of years now, and it has clearly proven to be an effective way of enabling consumer opinions and preferences to influence their work directly.

The other example where there is evidence for significant impact being made on both policy formation and implementation is also one where a Citizens Advisory Forum was used, Case Study 10 The Big Energy Shift. The innovative and engaging process design, as already described, was clearly key to its success. Another important strength of this example is that the Department of Energy and Climate Change, which commissioned the research, also explicitly established at the outset the types of outputs it was looking for: in this case, identifying triggers for behaviour change and understanding what motivates people to shift from individual, to household, to community-wide initiatives related to domestic energy usage and options.

Three of the research examples included in Table 3 were Citizens Juries: a method that is well suited to using deliberation to reach consensus, and thus typically able to produce clear recommendations, criteria or ranked priorities that can be used by policy and decision-makers. Case Study 6 shows that the recommendations produced by the Citizens Juries held as part of the New South Wales Parliament's Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation were extensively relied upon by the Committee in its subsequent report. Thus, despite the limited evaluative information available regarding this research, it does appear to be a good example of this key feature of the Citizens Jury method being used in practice.

Case Study 4, which discusses the Juries held in Scotland to look at principles for decision-making about onshore wind farms, also clearly demonstrates the strength of this method as a way of involving members of the public in developing policy recommendations, despite not having a direct impact on wind farm planning policies. Undertaken as a proof-of-concept exercise to demonstrate the viability of Citizens Juries as a method to help make decisions about complex and contentious issues, this project demonstrated that all 3 Juries managed to develop and agree a list of principles by which wind farm policy should be set, and further that there was a considerable degree of consistency in the themes and priorities emerging from each group.

The Jury process described in Case Study 5, however, seems to have had less direct impact. This is in part because, unlike the other examples, in which the same process was run 2 or 3 times in different parts of the country (places specifically chosen because they were likely to have different perspectives on the question under discussion), the Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions Jury was only held once in London. When it came therefore to using the outputs of the event to inform policy decisions, there were concerns about the robustness of the outputs because of the limited sample of the public involved. While the outputs of the Jury were used to inform the Committee on Climate Change's advice to the UK Government it was noted that these may have been given more weight in decision-making if the process had been repeated several times across the country, given that the research question was an issue of national relevance.

Three of the research projects included here however appear to have had no specific policy impacts: either because the deliberative project was undertaken as part of a wider programme of research and thus any impacts cannot be attributed to its specific findings, or because it broadly confirmed what the organisation already knew. All however noted that the outputs provided by the research had provided insight into consumer perspectives which informed the organisations' wider thinking and the knowledge they were able to apply to policy formulation in broader contexts.

EXPLORING CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

A much smaller number of the examples identified during the scoping stage can be classified as being designed to explore consumer experiences of a service/product or gaining consumer insight into existing practice. This is in part because deliberative methods are not always those best suited to achieving this goal, and there are a range of other engagement methods that tend to be used more often to address these types of questions effectively.

Of the 7 included within the overview of examples, only 2 have been pursued as case studies. The impacts achieved in these examples are described in the table below.

Table 5 - Impacts from Case Studies that focused on consumer experience

Case Study	Title	Impacts on policy, decision-making and service delivery
14	**Flood-Risk Communications Dialogue** Environment Agency	The results of this research began to have an impact on Environment Agency mapping and flood information systems even before it was completed. By the time of the joint workshop convened to wind up the project, the Environment Agency had already taken on board many of the project's messages and specific findings in mock-ups of flood risk maps and communication materials (fliers, personal flood plans and so on). Action continued after the project ended including work to improve website access and information, revising flood maps and linking the work to post-flood review recommendations. A plan to implement the outcomes from the dialogue project was also developed, which detailed extensive further actions planned as a result of this research.
20	**Listening to our Customers** Scottish Water	The results from the focus groups have informed the design of subsequent research including the design of the Stated Preference Survey. They also helped inform Scottish Water's Strategic Direction Plan and their input into the Strategic Review of Charges 2015.

Both of these projects have managed to achieve clear outcomes and demonstrate the importance of choosing the right method to deliver upon the research objectives.

Case Study 14 is a particularly strong example of good practice. It used a Structured Dialogue approach to deliver a series of workshops aimed at improving communication with the public about (a) flood risk and (b) what householders can do to minimise the impact of flooding. From the time devoted to the planning stage of the research, to the early involvement of stakeholders in shaping the research question and methodology, this flood risk dialogue clearly demonstrates the importance of an effective, considered process design in maximising the impacts of research.

Precisely because of the time and resources devoted to this planning stage, the Environment Agency had very well-defined expectations of what information the research needed to generate to maximise its impact, before the actual engagement process began. They had also established an agreed route for how this information would be used, both by themselves and their partners, to generate practical outputs designed to increase awareness, encourage engagement and improve responses to flood risk. This not only allowed the research to have an almost immediate impact, but also ensured that the sample of the population recruited to take part in each of the workshops was constructed using criteria particularly relevant to the project's overall goals.

IMPACT OF CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUPS / CUSTOMER FORUMS

Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums usually fulfil a unique role, having the opportunity to influence policy and decision-making in an ongoing way and potentially cutting across all 3 types of policy questions.

As noted in Chapter 5, all of the examples of Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums explored in this report come from the water industry and 3 of them were involved in the price review processes completed in 2014, although each performed a different role. As noted by Heims and Lodge, 'in Scotland, consumer engagement reflected a tripartite agreement between company, regulator, and consumer organisation that was to engage directly with the company, whereas the English and Welsh experience involved consumer negotiations organised at the company level.'[31] This meant that their direct impact also varied. While the Water Industry Commission for Scotland in the end accepted the agreement reached between the Customer Forum and Scottish Water, in England and Wales Ofwat tended to play a more active role in revising the customer agreements reached between the Consumer Challenge Groups and companies, and in most cases imposed 'tougher' settlements on the companies. Evaluative reports suggest therefore that, while many of the English and Welsh water companies and Consumer Challenge Groups found the engagement process beneficial and rewarding (primarily in regards to their direct interactions with each other), perceptions of the overall value and impact of the Groups were damaged by the regulator's seeming lack of respect for the outcomes of their negotiations.[32]

However it is clear from the evaluative interviews undertaken in relation to the role of these Consumer Reference Groups/Customer Forums that all parties involved felt that definitions of effective customer engagement and considerations of customer perspectives played a far more prominent role in the deliberations of senior policy-makers in water companies across the country than they would have without the presence of these groups. In Scotland particularly, the Customer Forum is credited with achieving significant improvements in Scottish Water's understanding of what consumers want. In his evaluation report Littlechild noted that 'the sense at a working level is that the company would not have been willing to concede so much in the way of price, and the regulator would not have been able to make the case for as many customer benefits, as the Customer Forum was able to achieve.'[33]

SUMMARY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT METHODS IN ADDRESSING DIFFERENT TYPES OF POLICY QUESTIONS

The limited number of examples identified for some of the methods, along with the lack of information on impact for some of the Case Studies, makes it very difficult to draw any specific conclusions from the Case Studies themselves regarding the effectiveness of specific methods to answer different types of policy questions.

There are however some general observations that can be made about the suitability of different methods for different purposes:

- **Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums** – When well chaired, with a broad and diverse membership and a clear relationship with decision-making bodies, these groups are able to bring the views, experiences and preferences of customers effectively into all areas of policy-making. This is particularly true if they are provided with, and/or able to commission, independent customer research.

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[31] Heims, Eva and Lodge, Martin "Closing Time? Regulatory Agencies and Consumer Engagement in Economic Regulation" (London School of Economics, 2014), http://www.lse.ac.uk/accounting/CARR/pdf/DPs/CARR-DP81-Eva-Heims-and-Martin-Lodge.pdf.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Littlechild, Stephen "The Customer Forum: Customer Engagement in the Scottish Water Sector"

- **Citizens Advisory Forums** – Forums like this that meet on a number of occasions have been shown throughout this research also to be able to have an impact across all types of policy questions, as exemplified by Ofgem's Customer First Panels.

- **Deliberative Focus Groups** – Even when given a deliberative task, the Focus Group method is best able to address questions relating to customer experience and/or provide initial responses to policy options or proposals. This is largely due to the limited time usually available for deliberation.

- **General Deliberative Workshops and Repeated Structured Dialogues**[34] – Deliberative Workshops are equally able to address broad, horizon-scanning questions (as demonstrated by Case Study 24), consultations around different policy options (as illustrated in Case Study 26) and questions relating to consumer experience (as shown by Case Study 14) when effectively and creatively designed. The key determinant of their likelihood of achieving significant impacts on policy, however, tends to be the numbers that are involved in the process.

- **Distributed Dialogues –** Distributed Dialogues tend to be most effective when they are used to explore consumer preferences in relation to broad policy issues, in part because it can be difficult to draw clear conclusions about consumers' specific policy preferences. Also, as there is no way of maintaining quality control over the dialogues, there is no guarantee when using this process that the opinions that are fed back to the organisers represent anything more than participants' intuitive responses to the questions asked.

- **Citizens Juries** – This method is best used to consult on specific policy options or to identify priorities in a broad horizon-scanning exercise. Because the focus of a Jury tends to be on arriving at a verdict based on the analysis of evidence, it is less useful for opening up and exploring wider, speculative issues. In assessing their likely impact we would agree with Russell when she states 'Citizens Juries have traditionally been considered Rolls-Royce citizen engagement. Yet… in the context of policy-making, Citizens Juries may be more effective and efficient than inquiries or bureaucratic reviews. In bringing the range of stakeholders and experts into the room, having them apply themselves vigorously to providing evidence and arguments, and having a naïve Jury (without pre-existing positions) filter this information and come to judgement, may produce a more useful result in less time with a lower budget.'[35]

- **Citizens Assembly –** Citizens Assemblies are best used when the goal is to bring a large representative sample of the population into the same deliberative process. This method is most suited to addressing broad, horizon scanning questions, and Assemblies are particularly useful when there is little known about consumers' opinions on the issue to date. However Assemblies can also be effectively used to consult on policy options and reach collective recommendations.

- **Deliberative Mapping** – This is a method specifically designed to assess the relative merits of different policy options from the perspective of both expert stakeholders and the wider public.

- **Participatory Strategic Planning** – As this method is designed to begin by exploring and agreeing a collective vision for the future, it is best used in the context of a broad horizon-scanning exercise where there is scope for participants to develop new ideas, and new policy and practical options to achieve them.

- **Online Deliberations** – While there seems to be considerable potential for online deliberative platforms to develop that are able to address all types of policy questions, the

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[34] These two categorisations are grouped together here because the main difference in the methodology is how often they are delivered, rather than any specific aspect of their design or capacity to address different types of policy questions.

[35] Russell, Wendy "Citizens Juries."

examples identified here tend to suggest that they are best used to consult on policy options, where information can be clearly presented and then discussed within quite defined parameters.

7. CROSS-CUTTING PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

All but one of the examples identified in this report have prioritised the participation of a representative sample in their deliberative events. However, they have gone on to define this, and recruit their participants, in a variety of different ways.[36]

With any deliberative forum designed to produce outputs that can be extrapolated to be relevant to wider public opinion, it is important that those invited to take part are broadly representative of the population of interest; whether that be the population of a given geographical area (for example, Scotland as a whole or a smaller region), or a particular group of customers or service users. Only on such a basis will it be reasonable to assume that the findings of the forum will reflect the views of the wider population of interest.[37]

Ensuring representativeness begins with choosing an appropriate sample frame. Many possible frames exist, from pre-existing databases (e.g. customer databases) and consumer or citizen panels, to the edited electoral register and 'free find' recruitment undertaken door to door and/or in the street by professional recruiters.

The use of pre-existing databases is appropriate where these are known to give universal coverage of the population of interest. A water provider's database of complainants, for example, would likely include all such complainants and, as such, could feasibly function as the sample frame for a forum among this group. In contrast, its database of customers who have signed up to receive its newsletter would be likely to include only the most engaged customers and so would not be an appropriate frame for a forum aimed at gauging the views of customers *in general*. In essence, it would be likely to contain 'bias'.

The Sciencewise programme, for example, maintained a database of previous participants who had indicated that they were interested in taking part in further dialogue events. It was from this list that 11 of the 17 participants in the low-carbon heating technology dialogue discussed in Case Study 1 were recruited. While participants were still selected to be broadly representative of the wider public and had no prior knowledge of the particular policy area, this potential to skew the results was acknowledged. As this was a very small dialogue project (in part designed as a proof of concept of the methodology) it was considered an acceptable risk in the circumstances.

Such bias can similarly affect consumer or citizen panels. Though such panels can, and usually are, constructed to be demographically representative of the population from which they are drawn, this does not necessarily mean they are attitudinally or behaviourally representative. Ipsos MORI knows, for example, that people who join panels tend to be more civically, politically and digitally engaged than the public as a whole, which in turn can be reflected in the views and priorities they express in deliberative fora.

A similar risk of self-selection bias may have been present in the recruitment for the Victorian Sustainable Water Strategy deliberative workshops (Case Study 26). The recruitment for the forum was undertaken by InfoNet (an external market research company) and it is noted in the research

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[36] The exception to this is the Distributed Dialogue process undertaken around Bioenergy (Case Study 3). However, it was noted in the evaluation of this research that the reliability and usability of the results were limited because the participants were generally younger, more highly educated and more likely to be already involved in science than the general population. This is an acknowledged risk in using this type of methodology.

[37] Unlike survey research, qualitative social research does not aim to produce a quantifiable or statistically representative summary of population attitudes, but to identify and explore the different issues and themes relating to the subject being researched. The assumption is that issues and themes affecting participants are a reflection of issues and themes in the wider population concerned. Although the extent to which they apply to the wider population, or specific sub-groups, cannot be quantified, the value of qualitative research is in identifying the range of different issues involved and the way in which these impact on people.

report that '…while care was taken to ensure a representative mix of the wider general community, it was not possible to ensure all demographic, psychographic and socio-economic groups were represented given time and budgetary constraints'. It is, however, possible for individuals to register with InfoNet's database online and, while it is not known if this list was used for this project, it does suggest that a level of 'self-selection' may occur within their samples. In cases like this, with the growing popularity of incentive payments being made for participation, it must also be acknowledged that financial gain, rather than increased civic and/or political engagement, may be a key motivating factor for joining these lists.

The edited electoral register, by virtue of its wider population coverage, has the potential to deliver more representative samples. In practice, however, it may fail to do so. In recruiting from the register, it is necessary in the first instance to write out to target individuals and invite them to opt in to the sample frame (or 'self-select'). This was the approach taken in Case Study 6, the Citizens Juries exploring energy generation in New South Wales, Australia. Participants were recruited via invitations sent to 8000 randomly selected citizens in the Sydney and Tamworth regions. A random selection of 30 participants was then selected from the positive responses, to match the demographic profile of each community.

It is worth noting that, in this type of recruitment model very few of those individuals who receive a letter will respond, far less opt in; a corollary of which is that the minority who *do* may differ from the wider population in important ways. As in the case of research panel members, they may be more civically engaged and/or have a particular reason for wanting to take part in the research – for example, because they hold strong views on the topic concerned. Again, this would be likely to be reflected in their contribution to the deliberations.

Another approach, although one that runs the same risks as those noted above, is to recruit via public advertisement and then construct a representative sample from the applications received. This was the approach taken to recruit domestic customers to the Irish Public Water Forum (Case Study 17). Following a widespread advertising campaign across a range of traditional and social media outlets, approximately 250 applications were received. Members were then randomly selected based on a set of criteria established in legislation that included age, gender, region, and the water company they were registered with. A reserve panel of 100 was also selected to ensure that, if someone were to drop out, they could be replaced by the next person on the list – thereby enabling the panel as a whole to retain the balance established by the selection criteria.

Free-find recruitment undertaken door-to-door and/or in street can obviate these challenges. Recruits are less self-selecting as the recruiter chooses who to approach, based on pre-defined geographical and socio-demographic (quota) parameters, and can take steps to encourage participation (for example, by explaining to prospective recruits what the forum will involve and addressing any questions or concerns they may have etc.). People recruited using free-find approaches are also less likely to be pre-conditioned by having previously taken part in research – an issue that often emerges with panel recruitment. This type of recruitment method was used to recruit participants for the events discussed in Case Studies 8, 10 and 19, for example.

Even when recruitment is undertaken using a free-find or similarly robust approach (e.g. through a database that provides universal coverage), there are additional challenges to be overcome in attempting to recruit a representative set of participants to a deliberative forum.

Firstly, and at the most basic level, people are not always able or willing to give up several hours of their spare time to take part in a forum. They may have other commitments – from work or caring responsibilities to scheduled hobbies – that they cannot readily abandon, or feel nervous about the idea of interacting with a roomful of strangers. Alternatively, they may simply have no interest in the topic to be discussed or in civic participation. (For all of these reasons, incentive payments are more and more often seen as crucial in helping to maximise the size and diversity of the pool of prospective recruits).

Secondly, while care can be taken to recruit a representative mix of the population using quota and other criteria, practical or budgetary constraints may mean that certain sub-groups have to be

excluded. This might include, for example, people for whom English is a second language – in the event that it is not feasible to have translators at the forum – and those who are housebound. Depending on the location of a forum, people living in some very remote or rural areas may also have to be excluded on the basis that may be unreasonable to ask them to travel substantial distances to attend.

Thirdly, it should be borne in mind that success in *recruiting* a representative pool of people for a deliberative forum does not necessarily translate into the forum being representative *on the day.* It is normal to see around a 20% drop out for any given forum, which can result in a skewed sample, depending on the demographic and attitudinal profile of those who do not show up.

OPTIMAL NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS

A fundamental belief underpinning approaches to deliberative public engagement is that the results of a well-planned, well-resourced and effectively facilitated deliberation between a small, but representative, sample of the population can be extrapolated to be indicative of the views of the wider public, if the wider public had been given the opportunity to participate in the same deliberative process.

In practice, however, when it comes to using the results of deliberative research to inform policy, the case studies here tend to suggest that sometimes 'small' may be just too small. If the policy-makers who are intended to use the results feel that the number of participants is too small, then the perceived legitimacy of the results can be undermined. This was highlighted in Case Study 23 (where only between 13 and 18 people took part in each of the Citizens Advisory Panel discussions), as a key obstacle to the outputs being perceived as useful for informing future planning. A similar point was made in Case Study 5, where it was noted that the findings of this Citizens Jury (held in London with 25 residents selected to be broadly representative of the national population) would have been more persuasive to policy-makers if the process had been repeated in different areas of the country.

Nonetheless, the question of the right number of people that need to be involved in any particular engagement exercise is ultimately dependent on the purpose, context and scale of topic under investigation. This is illustrated by Case Study 1 where the Sounding Board, despite only involving 17 people, was considered by policy-makers to have been a useful exercise that could be used to inform their thinking about the types of information needed by the public to encourage the uptake of low-carbon heating technologies. Because the research question was very narrow and the outcome focused on providing practical information and guidance to policy-makers – rather than influencing wider strategic decisions – the small numbers involved appear to have been less of an obstacle.

High numbers of participants, however, do seem to be a general indication for how robust the research outcomes are perceived by policy-makers, particularly if they are not directly involved in the process. It was particularly noted in the evaluation of Case Study 26 – which contributed to the Sustainable Water Strategy for the Victorian Central Region – that the large sample size achieved over the five regional forums (150 in total) meant that the results could be taken as strongly indicative of the views of residents of the wider region, and therefore used to inform policy. Distributed Dialogues, Citizens Assemblies and Structured Dialogues are all methods that enable large numbers of participants to take part in the research, although not always as part of the same event.

INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

As noted above, incentive payments are increasingly being used to widen the sample of people who are willing and able to participate in the types of deliberative events under discussion here.

If we exclude participation in most Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums (which the case studies have shown tend to be mainly expert panels whose members, while they receive

expenses payments, are unlikely to be paid for regular attendance at meetings) and in Distributed Dialogues where payment is not an option, then 25 case studies remain. Of these, we have been able to find information about incentive payments for 19. This shows that payments were made to participants more than 2/3 of the time.

The table below demonstrates that there are significant differences in the payments made across different projects, with Cases Studies 1 and 24 appearing, on face value, to be the most generous and Case Study 19 the least. There does not appear, however, to be any pattern, either in relation to the commissioning body, method of recruitment or type of method to explain these variations.

Table 6 - The range of payments made to participants

Case Study	Title	Payments made to participants
1	Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies	£60 for 2.5 hours online engagement
2	Ofgem Consumer First Panels	Participants were paid but amount unknown
4	Citizens Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland	£90 per day for 2 days
5	Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions: A public dialogue to better inform how to meet UK carbon budgets	Participants were paid but amount unknown
6	Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation	Not paid
7	Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges	£150 full-day workshop
10	The Big Energy Shift	£100 full-day workshop
14	Flood-risk Communications Dialogue	Not paid
16	Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform in England	Not paid
17	Public Water Forum	Not paid
19	Significant Water Management Issues	£65 for 6-hour workshop
22	Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service	£120 for 2 workshops of 3 hours each
23	Citizens Advisory Forum on Living with Environmental Change	£50 per day for 3 days
24	Metropolitan Melbourne Sewerage Strategy	$220 (Aus.) for 5.5-hour workshop
25	Citizens Juries on Water Management	Not paid
26	Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy: Community Research Forums and Social Acceptability of Water Options	$150 (Aus.) for 4 hours
28	Mapping Options for Tackling Climate Change	Participants were paid but amount unknown
29	Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Planning	Not paid
30	NHS Citizens Assembly	Participants were paid but amount unknown

Rather than trying to determine a rationale for the differences in payment levels, it is more interesting to look at some of the examples where participants were unpaid.

It is an explicit condition of membership of the Public Water Forum, for example, that domestic consumers participate on a voluntary basis. By applying for membership in response to public advertisements, these participants have therefore made a proactive choice to become involved. It is also worth noting that one of the other examples identified where selection for participation relied

on an active response – albeit to a letter sent to 8000 randomly selected residents – is also one of the few other cases where participants took part in a voluntary capacity (Case Study 6).

In Case Study 14, the locations for the workshops were very explicitly related to the topic under discussion i.e. a mix of locations where people had experience of flooding in their homes and those where participants may have had no experience of flooding in their homes but were at high risk of flooding. While participants were still recruited to be broadly representative of the populations of each location, it seems reasonable to assume that participants agreed to take part on a voluntary basis because the topic was of direct and immediate relevance to them and their communities.

THE ROLE OF EXPERTS

As highlighted elsewhere in this report, having expert[38] stakeholders involved in the planning process is important to ensuring that the research project addresses questions that are valuable to, and able to be used by, decision-makers. Deciding on the role experts should play in the actual engagement process however will depend on the outputs which the commissioning body is looking for – and will also have a bearing on the most suitable method of engagement.

Case studies prepared for this report highlight a variety of approaches to expert involvement: from those where experts produced information in advance but had no role in the engagement process (for example Case Study 3 which used a Distributed Dialogue method and Case Study 2 which illustrates this approach being used for Ofgem's Citizens Advisory Panel) to those where the participation of experts throughout was considered vital (for example Case Study 18).

Some methods, for example Citizens Juries, are designed to have experts available to provide information and advise participants, but explicitly exclude them from the deliberative process. This is because the method is designed to enable Jury members to determine their own positions and conclusions based on having access to relevant information.

Deliberative Mapping processes also begin with the experts working separately from public participants – initially to prevent them dominating or leading the discussion before members of the public have had time to form and develop their own opinions. The two groups are brought together in the second stage of the process to compare their preferences and see if and where there is common ground that could be worked towards. Case Study 28, which outlines how this method was used to examine proposals for mitigating the effects of climate change, shows that in this case the two groups had come to fairly consistent conclusions, albeit for possibly different reasons.

In Participatory Strategic Planning processes, which are designed to be used to deliver plans which are able to be implemented, it is vital for public participants and experts to work together throughout in order to learn from and understand each other's perspectives. Evaluative comments in Case Study 11 suggest that, with a complex and value-laden issue like regional energy planning, the method was particularly successful in overcoming difficulties in reaching consensus and agreeing workable proposals for action.

Other methods, like Citizens Assemblies and Structured Dialogues, are more flexible in how they approach the role of experts, although when experts do participate they are usually heavily outnumbered by non-expert participants. In some cases, however, as illustrated by Case Study 30, this can be a challenging and confronting position for experts to be placed in. In its pilot Citizens Assembly, NHS England policy-makers sometimes found themselves taking a defensive attitude to criticisms of services, or feeling that they were being expected to provide information that they did not feel qualified to comment upon. It is therefore very important to ensure that policy-makers are fully aware of the situation they are going into and clearly briefed about their role. Conversely, it is

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[38] Here the term 'experts' is used very broadly and, depending on the context, could include policy or decision-makers, industry experts, regulators, academics and/or lobby groups.

important to ensure that participants understand the parameters and constraints of the experts' role.

COMPARATIVE COSTS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

It has been very difficult throughout this research project to obtain accurate costs for the examples presented as case studies in this report. In many cases, both commissioning bodies and contracting organisations consider this information to be commercially sensitive and have withheld it in their published reports. What information has been made available to us, either through published sources or follow-up contact, is included in the case studies. In many cases, we are aware that this will not give the CFU the level of detail it is looking for.

We also found that a number of the published reports that do include financial information tend to give an overall figure that includes development, planning, engagement and evaluation. With so many variables involved in projects like this, it can therefore be difficult to determine the actual costs of a particular activity. Furthermore, it seems to be the case that a number of the projects presented as case studies have been commissioned as part of a wider piece of consumer or public research. This has meant that even when overall budgets are made public it can be impossible to separate out the costs associated with the deliberative activities from the other work.

ESTIMATING COSTS

To assist the CFU in gaining a better understanding of the types of costs likely to be involved in delivering deliberative engagement events, the research team has prepared the table below.[39]

It is intended to give a broad indication of the cost of a standard 1-day General Deliberative Workshop for 30 people, recruited to be a representative mix of the local population. These costs are based on the workshop taking place in a central belt urban location (e.g. Edinburgh or Glasgow), with 3 facilitators attending in each case. The costs also assume full analysis and reporting of the findings (but exclude the production/delivery of a presentation or printed report).

Table 7 - Indicative costs for a 1 day General Deliberative Workshop for 30 participants recruited as a representative sample

	Set up and first workshop	Per subsequent workshop
Recruitment of participants	Redacted	Redacted
Staff costs*	Redacted	Redacted
Incentives	Redacted	Redacted
Venue hire and catering	Redacted	Redacted
Transcription	Redacted	Redacted
Travel	Redacted	Redacted

*Staff costs include all project management, design of materials, facilitation, analysis and reporting

In practice, costs clearly may be lower or higher than those set out above depending on a range of variables, including:

- the number of participants to be recruited overall;
- the number of recruitment quotas fulfilled (the above costs assume basic quotas on sex, age, working status and social class, plus one or two attitudinal quotas);

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[39] PLEASE NOTE: Ipsos MORI considers the information contained in this section to be commercially confidential. It contains commercially sensitive information on our costs which could be severely detrimental to our business if disclosed to a competitor. We consider that it would remain sensitive for a period of five years from the date of submission of this report (i.e. until October 2021).

- location(s) – workshops in rural areas are likely to incur additional costs in the form of travel and subsistence time/expenses. However, these costs will be likely to be offset to a degree by the lower costs of venues in rural areas;
- the level of incentive offered to participants – for a shorter workshop of around half a day's duration, we would recommend an incentive of at least £40;
- whether or not respondents are required to undertake any tasks in advance of the workshop (additional staff time and respondent incentives may be required in such cases);
- the number of break-out groups anticipated – one facilitator will usually be required per break-out group;
- whether or not the discussions are to be transcribed – professional transcribers charge around 90p to 95p per minute for transcription;
- whether facilitators are required to attend planning or Steering Group meetings as part of the planning process; and
- whether there is a need to pay expert contributors for their involvement in the workshop.

VALUE FOR MONEY

In terms of assessing value for money, most of the published evaluation reports, and our follow-up contact with commissioners, have resulted in vague, positive statements. The one negative assessment that we received was in relation to the Consumer Focus research project (Case Study 7) where the staff member interviewed commented that the process had been *'an expensive (but politically very visible) way of getting information that can be got by more conventional methods much cheaper and easier…but as a way of demonstrating things to stakeholders it is invaluable'*.

Unsurprisingly, the case studies relating to more unusual methods have tended to be the most unequivocal in their assessments of value of money. Case Study 3, prepared on the distributed dialogue on bioenergy, notes that it was considered a very cost-effective method for undertaking a larger-scale dialogue. It further notes that, while the bioenergy public dialogue project had a total budget of £137k, there was significant underspend on the project and the cost was lower than that of many more traditional dialogues. This included a previous BBSRC dialogue on synthetic biology which involved roughly the same number of participants but cost almost three times as much. Case Study 1, which describes the use of the Sounding Board model for online deliberations, also clearly states its cost-effectiveness, emphasising the ability of this method to gain public input on challenging issues, concerning science and technology, in less time, and for less money, than a face-to-face deliberative exercise.

Only one of the case studies includes a specific metric for how value for money was assessed. This was in relation to the Flood Risk Communication workshops commissioned by the Environment Agency (Case Study 14).

Extract from Case Study 14 – Flood Risk Communications Dialogue

It would only require 12 households (that is, 13% of those involved in dialogues, all of whom live in high flood risk areas) to take preventative action (for example, signing up to Floodline, fitting property-level protection measures such as air brick, toilet valves or flood skirts, and moving their possessions upstairs in the event of a flood) to avoid flood damage in a major flood event to recoup project costs. While the evaluation was not able to collect robust quantitative data on actions taken, anecdotal evidence from participants suggests that at least this percentage had the intention of taking action individually or collectively. However, such benefits will not be tested until the time of a major flood in their area.

THE PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION

All of the case studies informing this report provide examples of participants being asked to use new information to inform their deliberations. As such, the way information is presented – when, in what format and by whom – plays a key role in determining the quality of both the deliberations and outputs in a research project.

One way that some of the examples discussed in this report have attempted to deal with the challenges involved in participants needing to absorb a considerable amount of new, and often quite technical or complex, information is to design processes that take place over 2 or more sessions. Several of them have also explicitly separated the information-giving phase of their projects from the deliberative stage, allowing time between meetings for information to be processed and potentially discussed informally with family and friends (Case Studies 1, 4, 9, 14 and 22). Case Studies 4, 10 and 22 also highlight the value of this time being used by participants to undertake 'homework' – either background reading or additional self-initiated research triggered by the information presented in the preceding session.

Regardless of the stage of the process, ensuring that the information given to participants is engaging and accessible is essential. There have been a number of case studies throughout this report that demonstrate the effectiveness of creative techniques in presenting information to participants in meaningful ways (Case Studies 7, 8, 9, 14 and 24 in particular).

In a longer or full-day workshop, using a variety of different formats for imparting information is key to keeping participants engaged. In the Consumer Attitudes to Social and Environmental Taxes and Charges research (Case Study 7), a wide variety of stimulus material was used to maintain participants' interest and learning throughout the day – ranging from traditional presentations and handouts, to screening a television programme and having a quiz. Case Study 22 describes how Melbourne Water were able to keep participants engaged with the complex information needed to deliberate effectively on future sewerage strategies by using a scenario-planning technique. It further shows how they sought to maximise the value of the deliberations by asking small groups, within the same workshop, to focus on different scenarios. This gave participants time to engage in detailed consideration of the implications and opportunities posed by the option with which they were presented.

Short sessions can be equally challenging, however, particularly if there is a large amount of new and/or complex information that needs to be conveyed in order to ensure informed deliberation. In the space of a 2-3 hour workshop it can be difficult to know how well participants have processed the information and to what extent it has influenced their views. In an attempt to address this concern, the decision was made that, in structuring the focus groups described in Case Study 16, information about proposals to introduce competition in the water market would be provided gradually throughout the session, with short discussions taking place in between each new input. This allowed the facilitators to confirm that each new piece of information had been understood and the implications explored. It also enabled participants' responses to each new aspect of the proposal to be recorded for analysis.

A final consideration regarding the presentation of information is the question of who is responsible for presenting the information to participants. While Citizens Juries emphasise the importance of the evidence being presented by experts – and of covering a range of different perspectives – this may not always be either possible or preferable in practice. In Ofgem's Consumer First Panels (Case Study 2) for example, the transfer of information comes from the facilitators rather than experts or stakeholders (though stimulus material and written information is supplied by Ofgem). While this can be a practical use of the resources available, it does mean that those responsible for hosting and recording the deliberations may not be able to explain complex issues fully and/or respond to participant enquiries.

Furthermore, as highlighted in Case Study 23, the public perception of the authority and neutrality of any information provided during a deliberative process needs to be carefully considered when

deciding who will present it. The following quote from the evaluation report produced for the Living with Environmental Change Citizens Advisory Forum very clearly captures the factors that need to be balanced when making this decision.

Extract from Case Study 23 – Citizens Advisory Forum

One of the implications of this approach was that it led to the contractors [facilitators] presenting the information themselves in many cases, and for the written information to be branded by them. This does have implications for the process, as it is normally expected in public dialogue that the contractors will be responsible for delivering the 'process' and the commissioning body is responsible for oversight of the 'content'. In this case, those boundaries became blurred. The separation of content and process in this case was not crucial but, on more contentious topics, these boundaries can become vital in participants (and others) trusting that the process has not been biased by the commissioning body: the facilitator may need to be seen to be entirely neutral and ensuring the process is fair and balanced. It is for these sorts of reasons that it is usually seen to be good practice for the information on content to be separated from the process management.[40]

REPORTING

One of the biggest challenges for anyone undertaking research into consumer views is ensuring that the information generated through the project reaches, and is taken into account by, policy and decision-makers.

Typically, the final output from any research project is a report that can be presented to decision-makers or used by representative organisations (like Citizens Advice Scotland) to advocate on behalf of those consulted in meetings or through written submissions. Several of the case studies where the commissioning body was not the ultimate decision-maker note that this was primarily how their research was used (including Case Studies 5, 7, 8 and 16). While the format of their final report was not mentioned in any of the case studies, there are a wide variety of ways to make reports more interesting and appealing to readers, and thus much more likely to engage and hold their attention. The Committees at the Welsh Assembly, for example, are currently experimenting with how they present the reports of Committee Inquiries by using new and interactive publishing formats like Adobe Slate[41] – and by producing video reports.[42]

As discussed previously, having key decision-makers aware of, supporting and possibly even directly involved in the research is an important first step to achieving impact. Moreover, there are a range of additional measures that can be introduced into the process design to bring the outputs of the research to the attention of those that can best use them to affect change.

A number of the case studies emphasise the value of participants presenting the results of the research directly to decision-makers – citing it as instrumental in allowing the research to have greater impact. In the Citizens Jury on carbon budgets discussed in Case Study 5, policy-makers from the Committee on Climate Change were invited to the closing session to hear the outcomes of the groups' deliberations. After each of the presentations, one of the Committee members responded directly to the recommendations as described. This appears to have worked well, although it was noted in the evaluation of the project that participants would have liked more time for direct interaction with these experts.

In the Big Energy Shift (Case Study 10), the final phase of the project was an event in London where representatives from the 9 local forums were brought together with key stakeholders and decision-

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[40] Diane Warburton, "Evaluation of the Living with Environmental Change (LWEC) Citizens' Advisory Forum" (Sciencewise, July 2011), http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Uploads/Project-files/LWEC-eval-report-FINAL.pdf.

[41] "How Can Poverty Be Reduced in Wales?," *Adobe Slate*, accessed October 27, 2016, https://spark.adobe.com/page/EN6np/.

[42] AssemblyCynulliad, *Ymchwiliad I Entrepreneuriaeth Pobl Ifanc - Youth Entrepreneurship Inquiry*, accessed October 27, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFzbPcQjrtc.

makers, including the Secretary of State for the Environment. Using a combination of PowerPoint presentations and videos filmed throughout the earlier workshops, participants presented their findings and recommendations, before breaking into small groups to discuss their conclusions. While there were problems noted in the Case Study about the dynamics between the different groups at this final event, as a structural model it seems to be an effective way of allowing stakeholders to hear the outputs of the research directly from participants – thereby increasing the research's impact.

In the Citizens Assembly for NHS England (Case Study 30), board members and policy leads attended and sat in on discussions throughout the day. Though their principal role was to answer participants' questions and provide information, they were also invited to give feedback to the whole Assembly on what they would personally take away from the day. This not only gave these senior decision-makers a real opportunity to hear, in an unmediated way, stories of what things were like 'on the ground', but also gave participants confidence that their ideas were being heard and listened to.

8. PLANNING AN EFFECTIVE DELIBERATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

Deliberative, participatory engagement is most readily understood through reference to the different methods used. There are however a wide range of considerations that must come into play when planning a research project in order to ensure that the method chosen is best able to produce useful evidence and have a demonstrable impact on the policy issue being addressed.

This chapter sets out a range of key elements in the planning process that are vital to ensuring that the method ultimately chosen is best able to meet a commissioning organisation's research goals. It draws heavily from Involve's 9 steps for planning and delivering a public engagement process[43] and the unpublished Options Appraisal which Involve prepared for the CFU in June 2016[44].

DEFINING THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Establishing a clear research purpose, and getting agreement on it within the commissioning body and partners, is the single most important stage of any engagement process. Indeed, no participatory process should proceed without it.

Deliberative methods of public participation can be used to address an almost infinite range of questions at different points in the policy cycle. Throughout this report we have been categorising research objectives under 3 broad headings that summarise their purpose:

1. **Examining broad policy objectives / horizon scanning** – wherein participants are asked to examine the high-level objectives of a policy or policy programme and identify priorities, areas of interest and concerns.

2. **Consultation on policy options** – wherein participants are asked to consider a more specific set of policy or implementation options.

3. **Gaining consumer insight into existing practice** – wherein consumers are asked about their understanding of, and response to, existing service provision or policy priorities.

While these categories were agreed with the CFU as most likely to be relevant to their research into consumer views across the regulated industries in Scotland, there are a range of other possible purposes that could drive the decision to undertake research with consumers. These include aims to:
- gain a greater understanding of consumers' motivations for choosing a specific service;
- explore issues and come up with new ideas;
- build a network of engaged consumers for potential future involvement;
- improve relationships, or overcome conflict, between consumers and suppliers;
- evaluate the success of a specific policy initiative;
- explore the impact of a policy decision;
- make a decision.

A good purpose will be highly focused and have clear objectives which are easy for all to understand, including the participants. It is important that in defining the purpose there is also clarity about the desired outputs and outcomes.[45]

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43 The Involve Foundation, "People and Participation" (The Involve Foundation, 2005), http://www.involve.org.uk//wp-content/uploads/2011/03/People-and-Participation.pdf.

44 Scott, Kaela and Blake, Sophie "Options Appraisal - Looking at Deliberative Public Participation Methods Suitable for Use in the Regulated Energy, Water and Postal Sectors in Scotland" (The Involve Foundation, June 2016).

45 Outcomes are what you ultimately want to achieve (for example, improved flood management protocols); outputs are what you need the project to deliver to achieve the outcomes (for example, an assessment of existing strengths and points of failure, improved local awareness, options for practical interventions). Being clear on the distinction at this stage will help in defining a robust and useful purpose.

Outcomes are more specific than 'purpose' and provide a clear statement of exactly what is sought from the process. Possible outcomes include:

- agreement on the purpose and direction of a project, programme, or new policy;
- identification of issues, benefits and drawbacks;
- generation of new ideas;
- improved services for people;
- policy change;
- cost savings;
- capacity building and learning (individual and organisational);
- behaviour change.

One measure of a good, well-defined purpose is that it is able to create a commonly shared understanding of the potential impact of the project. Case study 14, for example, illustrates quite clearly how a shared understanding of the purpose of this project among the Environment Agency's stakeholders – to co-create with members of the public ways of improving communication regarding flood risk and increase preventative action within communities – enabled the outputs of the local workshops to be used almost immediately to develop new tools and approaches (i.e. achieve outcomes).

Too often however, when the purpose of a project is less well defined, different understandings of its purpose may exist within the same organisation. Sometimes these unspoken or assumed purposes only come to light when the process is underway, or are revealed through evaluation when some stakeholders may express their disappointment that their expectations were unmet. This seems to have been the case in Case Study 23, where different members of the Living With Environmental Change network expressed very different opinions relating to the project's success when interviewed for the evaluation report. In this case a clearer research purpose may have enabled the commissioning body to ensure that the right mechanisms were in place to both deliver useful outputs and then transform these outputs into outcomes.

Key questions that can be used to help clarify the purposes of a research project are:

a) **Why is this project needed?**

b) **What do you want to have achieved at the end of this process (outcomes)?**

c) **What tangible products do you want to have produced during, and as a result of, the process (outputs)?**

And a checking question:

d) **What will you have to do with the outputs to ensure you achieve the desired outcomes?**

UNDERSTANDING SCOPE AND CONTEXT

Considering the scope and context for a proposed research project is essential for understanding the social, political and institutional environment in which the research is taking place, and therefore the potential that it has to influence policy and decision-making.

In order to have maximum impact a research process must be well embedded within its context. Being clear on the wider context will help to ensure that a project:

- links with other relevant activities going on at the same time so that outputs can be shared (and/or dovetailed if appropriate);
- builds on previous experience and learns lessons from the past;
- does not duplicate other activities;
- progresses quickly and is relevant.

Central to understanding the environment within which a project is being developed is appreciating the decision-making context in which the outputs will be presented. Therefore as part of the planning process it is important to build an awareness of:
- the interest, commitment and/or involvement of key decision-makers in the process;
- how the proposed research fits into the relevant decision-making systems (e.g. timing, required documents, etc.);
- past engagement exercises on the same project /programme, including how they went (e.g. conflict, agreement), and what happened as a result.

It is also vital at this stage to identify the scope of influence available to the research (i.e. how much can really change and what can be achieved in practice?). This will require making explicit links between the participatory process and the location of the specific decision(s) that the research is hoping to inform or influence. Doing so will not only assist in defining an appropriate and achievable purpose for the research project but will also establish its boundaries: clarifying what is, and what is not, open for discussion. It will also help determine whether a deliberative participatory approach is useful at this stage, as there is likely to be very little point in pursuing an engagement exercise if nothing can change.

Involving decision-makers in the planning process from the earliest stage can also have a significant bearing on the impact which the research project is likely to have. For the views of consumers attained through deliberative research to have a direct impact on policy, they not only need to be presented to the institutions responsible, but there needs to be agreement from the institution to receive the information generated, consider it in its decision-making processes, and respond. Clarifying the process for gaining an institutional response during the planning stage is vitally important because it:
- establishes an institutional commitment to considering the results of the research and recognises that some response will need to be made;
- ensures that mechanisms are in place to deal with the outputs that come from the participatory process and ensures that these outputs can be dealt with effectively and within a given timescale;
- allows those running the process to explain to participants exactly what will be done with their effort, how the process will be managed and how its outcomes will influence policy-making.

The value in having the mechanism for an institutional response established from the outset is illustrated clearly by Case Study 6, where the results of the Juries' deliberations were able to have a direct input into the report presented to Parliament for approval.

Attaining an understanding of an institution's likely receptiveness to a piece of research is particularly important when the research is initiated from outside the direct policy-making environment. This will probably be the case for most consumer research initiated by the CFU, where the results will primarily be used to allow the CFU to represent the views of consumers in other decision-making forums. Liaising with the people and institutions ultimately responsible for the decisions, during the planning stage of the research, will help ensure that the CFU asks research questions and provides information in ways that are relevant to, and most able to be used by, policy-makers. The hope would be that this early involvement should also result in a clear indication from them as to how, where and when the outputs from the process will be used. The answers to these questions will also affect the choice of methods to be used.

Some key questions when considering the scope and context of a research project include:

a) **What can this research add to what is already known on the subject?**

b) **Is the process linked to a particular decision-making event?**

c) **What is open to influence by the results of the research?**

d) **How open are decision-makers to using the results of the proposed research to inform their policy and decision-making?**

e) **Is there agreement (or at least tacit agreement) by those responsible for decisions on how and when the outputs from the research will be used in their decision-making process?**

RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Defining the type of outputs required from the research is a crucial part of designing the process because it:

- helps the process designer choose the right method to get the outputs wanted, as different participatory methods are designed to produce different types of outputs;
- helps everyone think through how the outputs will achieve the outcomes ("how will this activity help achieve our overall outcomes?"); and therefore
- ensures the right outputs are produced at the right time.

As part of the planning process, consideration therefore needs to be given to the type of information or evidence that the project hopes to generate. While there is a multitude of outputs that a deliberative research project might hope to achieve, the following four options have been agreed by the CFU as most relevant to their wider research goals:

1. **Gathering intuitive responses** – this involves collecting consumers' intuitive responses or value judgements in response to the information provided and their initial reactions to the views of others on the topic. Focus groups are a particularly useful method for delivering this type of output, as illustrated by Case Study 20, Listening to our Customers. Opportunities to collect this type of information could also be built into the start of several of the other methods discussed here, before moving on to more in-depth deliberation.

2. **Generating new ideas/ blue-sky thinking** – methods that specialise in delivering this type of output are those that encourage creativity and problem-solving from participants. Case Study 10 shows where this was achieved by a Citizens Advisory Panel over a series of workshop sessions designed to identify ways to prompt household behaviour change in respect of energy use. General deliberative workshops can also be designed to deliver these types of outputs, as demonstrated by Case Study 21 which used Ketso to involve disparate stakeholders in developing new ideas.

3. **Understanding public reasoning on the acceptability of policy initiatives/ interventions** – methods that focus heavily on developing dialogue between participants and/or different stakeholders will tend to be most effective in delivering this type of output, and include Citizens Advisory Panels, Citizens Assemblies and Deliberative Mapping.

4. **Consensus building or agreeing recommendations** – deliberative methods that emphasise arriving at a collective position through negotiation and compromise are best able to produce this type of output. Case Studies 4 and 6 which discuss Citizens Juries, Case Study 20 looking at a Citizens Assembly, and Case Studies 11 and 18 covering Participatory Strategic Planning, clearly demonstrate how these methods were used to establish consensus and deliver clear policy recommendations.

Deciding what type of outputs are going to be most useful and relevant to decision-makers in a particular policy context will help determine which method is best used to achieve the research purpose. More information about the types of outputs the methods discussed in this report are designed to produce can be found in Appendix C.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED?

Selecting the appropriate type of participants to take part in any deliberative research can be key to its success.

There are essentially 3 distinct ways of identifying the type of participants you may want to recruit:

1. **A self-selecting cross-section of the general public** – sometimes participation projects want to consult with an interested group of the public. For example, if the purpose of a project was to understand what prompts people to get involved in local energy conservation schemes, then the participation of those with an existing interest in the matter might be most valuable. Participants could then be recruited through public advertisement. While the aim would always be to make this group as broad and mixed as possible, their interest and willingness to get involved is the key factor in recruitment and selection. In Case Study 17 the Centre for Energy Regulation called for applications for membership from interested household consumers. From this however they selected members to meet a range of criteria established to ensure diversity of experiences within the group.

2. **A representative sample** – a group constructed to match, as closely as possible, the demographics of the population affected by the question under discussion. It is also possible however, to construct a sample based on criteria directly relevant to the project (e.g. if looking at household energy efficiency measures you might want to construct a sample with a representative mix of home-owners, private tenants and those in social housing from across rural and urban areas).

3. **A specifically targeted group or groups** – this could be, for example, low-income earners, rural residents, the elderly, migrants, families with children etc. depending on the purpose and context of your specific project. In Case Study 8, for example, the focus was on recruiting Community Leaders (in this case defined as councillors, elected representatives, business representatives and third sector leaders) so as to develop a toolkit to support other community leaders to engage the public around the 2050 carbon reduction target.

As illustrated throughout this report, deliberative research projects are likely to be given more influence within a policy context if they are able to demonstrate representativeness, or when they involve people from a targeted group who will be directly impacted by the results of the decision.

IDENTIFYING WHO ELSE NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED

Considerations regarding who needs to be involved in the research project should take into account not only the identification and recruitment of public participants for events but also the involvement of stakeholders in planning. Our research suggests that even the simplest project will benefit from a formal Planning or Steering Group to help define the purpose of the research and contribute to detailed planning. The group can also be used to get early buy-in from those who need to take account of the results of the process (sometimes a separate 'executive group' may be needed for major processes to ensure senior management involvement).

A number of the case studies used in this report have highlighted the importance of having a Planning/Steering Group of stakeholders from an early stage (Case Studies 14, 23 and 24 for example). Ideally this group should include representatives from the decision-making organisation, as well as others with a wider interest or influence in the broad question under discussion. In Case Study 14, for example, stakeholders brought together to plan the flood-risk dialogue included representatives from Environment Agency, Met Office, Hampshire County Council, Red Cross, Public Health England, Cambridge University, Welsh Government, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), Lancaster University, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Northumbria University, National Flood Forum, the Cabinet Office, a local authority councillor, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), and Natural Resources Wales. This group were involved in undertaking background research, as well as a design and

development workshop with stakeholders to identify areas of focus and discussion, before any engagement with the public took place.

The Planning/Steering Group can be the same people as those responsible for delivering the process, or a separate Design/Delivery team may need to be established, involving external contractors[46] as well as stakeholders who will be directly involved in the research. It is important, when identifying potential stakeholders, to think not only of who already has an interest in the research but also to consider who 'should' be involved, but has not been to date, and also who would have the ability to obstruct progress or impact if they were not involved.

Once established, the Planning or Design Group should then be responsible for preparing a project plan which would include details of:

- Timelines – remembering to allow time for recruitment of participants and that time might be needed between events for work to be completed that can be used by participants in the next stage of their deliberations;

- Budget – an adequate budget is essential, including setting aside time for staff who need to be involved;

- Key dates and actions – including when final decisions will be made, who by, and how this links to the research process;

- Methods – the process may use a range of different methods at different stages, and careful planning is needed to ensure that these work well together to make the overall process successful.

- Ethics of the process – research ground rules should be set to establish a clear ethical framework for the research (e.g. non-attribution or confidentiality; being aware of child protection and equalities issues).

CHOOSING A METHOD

When all the key issues identified above have been broadly considered, a detailed design will be needed for the whole participatory process. It is at this stage that the decisions about timing, numbers, costs, methods etc. will finally be made. All methods have their strengths and weaknesses and the key is to select the right one for the particular purpose and context[47].

Appendix C rates the different methods discussed in this report against some of the key options relating to purpose, participation and outputs discussed above. It is however important to note that planning for participatory engagement is not an exact science and, as the case studies discussed throughout this report demonstrate, a wide range of different methods have been used to deliver successful outcomes in a range of circumstances – as long as they have been well planned, and effectively designed and delivered.

In considering the choice of method there are a number of other factors[48] and practical issues which a commissioning body may want to consider to help shortlist methods that are most likely to achieve their purpose:

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[46] Whoever is selected to deliver a process should be involved as early as possible. It is worth noting that facilitators should not simply be thought of as just the people hired to run meetings, they can also help to plan processes and provide realistic guidance about what can be achieved and how to do it. In fact, many professional facilitators will not run meetings unless they have been involved in the planning process.

[47] Simply choosing an appropriate method however is never on its own a guarantee of success. A skilled practitioner can often make a method work in a situation for which it was never designed; equally, an appropriate method used badly will fail to live up to its potential.

[48] There are a range of other factors that could influence decisions at this stage including, for example, the ability to build ongoing relationships or the ability to empower the public. The factors chosen for inclusion here are those that appear most relevant to the CFU's wider research project with the regulated industries.

- **Ability to deal with complex and/or technical information:** Some methods are better able to create time and space for participants to learn the details of a topic under discussion and become informed about the issue. Sometimes this is because it is a specific feature of the method itself, for example in Citizens Juries, Citizens Assemblies, Deliberative Mapping and Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums. Case Study 17, on the Irish Public Water Forum, presents a particularly good example of how a Consumer Reference Group / Customer Forum can be used to involve domestic consumers in ongoing learning and discussion around a broad and complex issue.

  A number of case studies have also shown that, particularly when they are designed to take place over a number of sessions, General Deliberative Workshops (repeated or not) create time and space for this. Good practice examples of where this seems to have been a key factor influencing the design of the workshops include Case Study 26 where 150 consumers were involved in deliberations to inform the Sustainable Water Strategy for Victoria's Central Region. Another example, although on a much smaller scale, is presented in Case Study 1, the Sounding Board on low-carbon heat technologies.

- **Depth of dialogue / deliberation:** Some methods specifically focus on creating space for dialogue between participants. This is an intrinsic feature of many of the methods discussed here (including Citizens Juries, Citizens Assemblies and Deliberative Mapping). However, one case where an emphasis on the depth of dialogue between different stakeholders seems to have been a particular factor in the choice of method would be Case Study 11, Nova Scotia's Participatory Strategic Planning process for their sustainable energy strategy.

- **Ability to deal with conflict:** In situations where there are known to be entrenched and opposing views on a subject, it can be important to choose a method that is able to deal with conflict constructively, capture public reasoning effectively, and help participants to identify common ground through deliberation. Case Study 4, the Citizens Juries on wind farms, particularly illustrates how a Citizens Jury process was used effectively in a context where there were known to be strongly held opposing views on the subject.

- **Timelines:** It is very difficult to estimate, without detailed understanding of the context, scale and purpose, the time that any specific method will take to deliver (and the case studies demonstrate this clearly). There are however some broad observations that can be made. Typically a large-scale Citizens Assembly will take longer to organise than a Citizens Jury for example, mainly due to the time involved in recruiting a large number of representative participants. Single workshops or focus groups are generally quicker to organise.

  One of the greatest demands on time, however, can actually be in the planning phase, particularly if this involves a wider stakeholder group. It is of vital importance to invest time at this stage as it is one of the key indicators of the likely success of a project, as illustrated by Case Study 24 where an extensive planning process led to the workshops about Melbourne's Sewerage Strategy being both very well designed and, ultimately, exceedingly useful to the company.

- **Costs:** In the planning and commissioning of any specific project, a range of decisions (e.g. relating to the number of participants, number of meetings/events, geographic locations, recruitment methods, payment of participant expenses etc) will all clearly have an impact on final costs. This is clearly demonstrated by the case studies where information on overall costs was available. Typically however Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums, Focus Groups and Distributed Dialogue approaches will be less expensive as they tend to demand fewer resources in the delivery phase. Larger processes, particularly if they involve covering the costs of experts to attend and/or participate, can quickly become quite expensive. Citizens Advisory Panels have been suggested to be a relatively cost-effective way of involving consumers in multiple deliberative events over time, as they only require a single round of recruitment.

- **Time commitment required from participants:** The time of volunteer participants is also a resource and needs to be used wisely (although it is becoming more common to pay participants for their time). While it may be easier to get people to commit to a single short event, the trade-off may be the depth of dialogue able to take place. At the same time, however, participants are often more willing to give greater amounts of their time to something that has strategic national importance, or that has direct relevance to them, than they are to get involved even briefly in something they do not see as meaningful. This seems to be evidenced by the ongoing, voluntary involvement of consumers in the Irish Public Water Forum (Case Study 17) and the fact that in the Citizens Juries on options for energy generation in New South Wales, 60 members of the public each met 4-5 times over 10 weeks without payment.

COMMISSIONING

Almost all of the examples discussed in this report were delivered by external contractors. Not only does this allow the commissioning body to bring in outside expertise, but it can also be an important way of demonstrating the independence and neutrality of the process.[49]

While the budget available for the research project will ultimately play a decisive role in what can be commissioned, there are a number of other things, highlighted throughout the case studies that will help ensure a successful process. These include:

- Having a clearly defined purpose, along with the type of outputs expected, before beginning the commissioning process;

- Involving stakeholders and partners in the commissioning process, if possible, to ensure their buy-in to the research;

- Bringing the delivery team on board as early as possible, to benefit from their expertise in the process design;

- Being flexible about methods: while you may have a preferred method in mind, stipulating what features or elements of the specific method have led to your choice, and being open to advice from contractors about hybrid or alternative methods, may result in the development of a bespoke methodology that could better deliver on your purpose;

- Allowing sufficient lead-in time for your research project, particularly if it is deigned to influence a specific time-bound decision – things are likely to take longer than you expect!

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[49] A similar demonstration of a process's independence is achieved by appointing an independent Chair to a Consumer Reference Group or Customer Forum.

9. IMPLICATIONS FOR DELIBERATIVE CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE REGULATED INDUSTRIES IN SCOTLAND

This report has attempted to set out the methodological strengths, value to commissioning bodies and impacts on policy and practice of 30 different examples of deliberative research, within the regulated industries and related sectors. The purpose has been to identify what can be learnt from this that will help the CFU to:

- make informed, evidence-based decisions when planning the next stage of their research into deliberative methods;

- identify the most effective methods for understanding what Scottish consumers think about utility policies so that they can be tested through field research; and

- increase its own understanding of, and therefore its ability to, represent the interests of consumers in policy forums related to the regulated industries in Scotland.

DELIBERATIVE CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

In 2011, Consumer Focus Scotland set out 7 principles for best practice in consumer involvement in decision-making[50] which have clear relevance to engagement within the regulated industries. These are:

1. Engagement should aim to make a difference.
2. Organisations should know who their consumers are.
3. Methods of engagement should be appropriate.
4. Methods of engagement should be accessible.
5. Engagement should make a difference to the outcome.
6. Consumers should be kept informed.
7. Organisations should continually improve their engagement practice.

The case studies and analysis provided in this report show that using deliberative engagement methods effectively and appropriately will help the CFU, suppliers and regulators to engage with consumers in ways that will help embed these principles into efforts to place the interests of consumers at the heart of their planning, policies and decision-making.

1. **Engagement should aim to make a difference.**
   The specific purpose of an engagement exercise needs to be clearly defined: 'Cloudiness of purpose does nothing to build or enhance consumer confidence or consumer trust'.[51] At the centre of any consumer engagement activity should be a commitment from the organisation leading the research to listen to what consumers have to say and to act on that information.

   An added value of deliberative research is that very often it not only makes a difference to the organisation commissioning the project, but also adds to consumers' understanding of the context in which decisions are being made, the constraints of resources and any other restrictions, and the impact this can have upon the options. Involving consumers in this way

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[50] Consumer Focus Scotland, "Consumer Engagement in Decision-Making; Best Practice from Scottish Public Services" 2011 http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130523170158/http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk/scotland/publications/consumer-engagement-in-decision-making-best-practice-from-scottish-public-services-report. [ARCHIVED CONTENT] UK Government Web Archive – The National Archives, accessed October 27, 2016.

[51] Tricia Mcauley, "Consumer Engagement in Public Service Design and Delivery - Why? How?," *Policy Hub Scotland*, accessed October 27, 2016, http://policyhubscotland.co.uk/consumer-engagement-in-public-service-design-and-delivery-why-how/.

can therefore also build trust in the decision-making process and enhance their patience and understanding when decisions do not go the way they would choose: 'Quality engagement also means that information about the service and how it is communicated is better, leading to more accurate expectations, less confusion by consumers and less complaints'. [52]

2. **Organisations should know who their consumers are.**
   Throughout this report, the value of conducting deliberative engagement with a representative sample of the population that will be affected by the outcome of a decision has been emphasised as a way of adding greater legitimacy to the results of the research. In relation to the regulated industries it is important therefore to recognise that consumers are not necessarily just existing customers, but also people who are potentially eligible to use a service (but may currently choose not to, or face barriers to using it) as well as those who could reasonably be expected to use the service in the future. This can be demonstrated to be particularly relevant when deliberative research is focused on wider strategic and policy issues likely to have a long-term and/or nationwide impact, rather than specific decisions by service providers.

3. **Methods of engagement should be appropriate.**
   This report has demonstrated that there are a wide range of deliberative engagement methods that can be used to involve consumers effectively in informing policy and decision-making processes. Chapters 5 and 6 have illustrated how each method is more, or less, suited to particular purposes or stages of policy-making. It is also important to ensure that the method chosen is proportionate to the scale of the decision being made.

4. **Methods of engagement should be accessible.**
   A central consideration here in relation to deliberative engagement with consumers is the amount of information they will need to absorb and integrate into their discussions in order to ensure that the process is genuinely deliberative. The challenge of meaningfully conveying this information in accessible ways was discussed in Chapter 7, and needs to be a key consideration when planning for deliberative engagement.

5. **Engagement should make a difference to the outcome.**
   Throughout this report we have highlighted examples of good practice where consumer research using deliberative engagement methods has made a real difference to policy and decision-making within the regulated industries, either by directly informing specific policy decisions (e.g. Melbourne Water's Sewerage Strategy, Case Study 24) or influencing the organisation's wider strategic planning (e.g. Ofwat's Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service, Case Study 22).

   Even when the impacts of the research cannot be so clearly identified, many of the case studies discussed here have shown that there is still considerable value to be gained from deliberative engagement when it provides the commissioning organisation with a better, and more nuanced, understanding of consumer preferences that they can use to shape their approach to policy-making in ongoing ways.

6. **Consumers should be kept informed.**
   While the importance of providing feedback to participants (i.e. information that shows their input has been valued and how it has been used) has not been specifically discussed elsewhere in this report, it is a fundamental element of good engagement practice. 'Research shows that people are generally happy to give their opinions and want to share their experiences, particularly if it will improve things for themselves or other people who use services. Consultation fatigue is not so much a function of apathy as it is a symptom of

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[52] Mcauley, Tricia Ibid.

poor engagement mechanisms and in particular, of a failure to feed back to participants that their involvement led to real change'.[53]

7. **Organisations should continually improve their engagement practice.**
Evaluation, and learning from the experience of others, are key to continually improving deliberative research with consumers: to ensure the research is useful; able to deliver impacts; and works well for the commissioning organisation, decision-makers and consumers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first conclusion that has to be drawn from this research is that, in the considered opinion of all members of the research team, there is no simple answer to the question of which is the best method for the CFU to use to build their evidence base on Scottish consumer views and preferences in relation to utility policies.

There are however a number of lessons that can be taken from this analysis to inform the next stage of the CFU's research into how deliberative methods can be best used to represent consumer opinions in policy and decision-making within the regulated industries in Scotland.

1. All of the method types discussed in this report have demonstrated that they are able to answer a range of research questions effectively, produce useful and persuasive information that is able to influence policy-making, and deliver measurable impacts.

   Clarity of purpose, effective planning and a clear path for influence all seem to have more bearing on the ability of a deliberative research project to bring the views and preferences of consumers (and/or the wider public) into the policy process, than the specific method chosen.

2. Some methods however have been shown to be more effective than others in addressing different types of policy questions. Despite the small number of examples found, Citizens Juries are arguably a particularly appropriate method for engaging consumers in deliberation on a policy problem that can potentially be solved in a number of different ways. This method also has a proven record of delivering consensus-based outputs to research questions framed around the consideration of different policy or implementation options.

3. This research has highlighted that Citizens Advisory Panels are a particularly useful and cost-effective way of embedding a consumer perspective into the ongoing work of an organisation. The success of the model employed by Ofgem for their Consumer First Panels is a very clear example of good practice in this regard, demonstrating clear impacts on long-term strategic planning as well as practical policy implementation.

4. The number of people involved in the deliberations has been shown to be a key factor in whether the outputs from consumer research are likely to have a significant impact on policy, particularly policies that have strategic or nationwide implications.

   Structured Dialogues, repeated in a range of locations or with different groups, have been demonstrated to be a particularly effective method for achieving the scale of participation

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[53] Consumer Focus Scotland "Consumer Engagement in Decision-Making; Best Practice from Scottish Public Services" 2011 http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130523170158/http:/www.consumerfocus.org.uk/scotland/publications/consumer-engagement-in-decision-making-best-practice-from-scottish-public-services-report., accessed October 27, 2016,

required for the results to be seen as robust and representative enough to be taken seriously in policy and decision-making processes. The caveat to this is that, as the name 'Structured Dialogues' is really one used to describe a logistical approach to delivery rather than a distinct method, the quality of the specific workshop design will ultimately have a fundamental impact on the success of the research.

5. The effective provision of information, and ensuring participants have the time to absorb and use it to inform their thinking and discussions, is key to delivering effective deliberative research projects. The evidence compiled here suggests that the most effective way of doing this is to design the process to take place over more than one session, allowing participants time to reflect on and/or seek more information about the matter under discussion.

6. The deliberative engagement events compiled in this report vary from 2-hour focus groups, to Citizens Juries run over 2-6 days, to ongoing Consumer Reference Groups or Customer Forums. While there are always exceptions to the rule, it seems that the more time allowed for learning, dialogue and deliberation within a research project, the greater the impact the process is likely to have.

7. The importance of clarity regarding the type of outputs required from the research (and how these outputs will be used) has also been identified as a key factor in delivering the greatest impacts from a research project.

    This is particularly relevant to the context in which the CFU is proposing to commission consumer research. The primary reason for the CFU choosing to undertake deliberative research into consumer views appears to be to give the organisation greater insight into customer preferences (including the motivations, values and reasoning behind them) in order to enable the CFU to represent these views better to decision-makers. Therefore methods that give the most focus to developing and encouraging effective and informed deliberation between participants, and which are designed to provide outputs that capture the process of public reasoning, seem most suitable for delivering on the CFU's objectives. For this reason Deliberative Focus Groups (due to their short length), Participatory Strategic Planning processes and online deliberations (at least in any of the formats used in the examples considered in this report) seem the least appropriate choices.

8. Across all of the Case Studies analysed for this report, concerns regarding the representativeness of those participating in the deliberation were identified as a key factor in determining whether the outputs of the research were considered a legitimate source of evidence and therefore suitable for informing policy decisions.

    As discussed in Chapter 7 however, a truly representative sample is virtually impossible to achieve at the scale of most deliberative projects (if ever). We would suggest that rather than dwelling on the need to recruit a representative sample for research projects, the CFU adopts an approach towards sampling that reflects the principles established for the Sciencewise programme, where the goal is to be appropriately representative to the scale and importance of the issue under discussion: "Public dialogue does not claim to be fully representative, rather it is a group of the public, who, after adequate information, discussion, access to specialists and time to deliberate, form considered advice which gives a strong indication of how the public at large feels about certain issues. The methodology and

results need to be robust enough to give policy-makers a good basis on which to make policy".[54]

9.   This research has demonstrated that paying consumers to participate in deliberative research projects has become standard practice. It is broadly considered to be a legitimate and necessary way of ensuring that the widest cross-section of the public agrees, and is able, to participate if asked. A budget to allow for this would therefore need to be built into almost any deliberative research the CFU was to commission in the future. However, from the evidence collated here the amount offered to participants appears to be quite arbitrary.

10. The research projects that have demonstrated the clearest and most direct impacts on policy-making and service delivery are those that have been directly commissioned and planned by the organisations responsible for making the decisions. This is the case across all of the types of policy questions considered.

     This has important implications for the CFU because, unlike many of the organisations who have commissioned the work presented in the case studies, the CFU is unlikely to hold the final authority over the policies it is aiming to influence on behalf of consumers. It will be important therefore for the CFU to work very closely with its partners and stakeholders, particularly policy-makers, in the design and commissioning of prospective research to ensure it has the best chance of having significant influence on their decisions.

11. How the results of a research project are presented to policy and decision-makers is also very important in maximising its potential impact. Ideally negotiations with policy-makers in advance of the research starting will establish their receptivity and identify a route into the decision-making process, however in reality this is not always possible.

     Another strategy that has been shown to be effective throughout this research is for participants to present their conclusions directly to those with the authority to implement them. This can be achieved in a number of ways, depending on the interest and availability of decision-makers, including having them present and listening throughout the deliberations, attending a final session to hear and respond to recommendations, or reconvening with a selection of participants and policy-makers after the deliberative process specifically for this purpose.

12. It is also important to note that although a number of the research projects considered in this report were unable to claim any specific impact on policy-making they were still evaluated as successful, useful and worthwhile by the commissioning bodies. This emphasises the important role that deliberative research can play in developing a wider, and deeper, knowledge and understanding of consumers' views within an organisation as a whole that can then be deployed to influence policy-making more generally over time.

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[54] Sciencewise, "The Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology" (Sciencewise, September 2013), http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Publications/Sciencewise-Guiding-PrinciplesEF12-Nov-13.pdf.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – OVERVIEW OF EXAMPLES OF DELIBERATIVE RESEARCH

Table 8 - Overview of examples of deliberative engagement

Case Study #	Title	Year	Where	Sector	Method	Type of Policy Question	Overview of the Research Purpose
1	**Public Views on Decarbonised Heating Technologies** Committee on Climate Change (CCC)	2016	England	Energy	Online Deliberation	Consulting on policy options	The Committee on Climate Change undertook a public dialogue to improve understanding of views relating to low-carbon heating technologies. A small sample of homeowners and renters, within urban, suburban or metropolitan areas, were engaged in an informed discussion about: - potential for uptake of low-carbon heating technologies, particularly heat networks and heat pumps; - barriers to uptake - potential solutions to address barriers.
2	**Consumer First Panels** Ofgem	2011 - 2015	England	Energy	Citizens Advisory Panel	Consulting on policy options	The Ofgem Consumer First Panels consist of around 100 domestic energy consumers who meet 3-4 times a year to feed into Ofgem's policy-making. Workshops have focused on a variety of issues including: - consumers' views of their own and other energy suppliers; - the extent to which trust influences consumer behaviour in the energy market; - awareness, understanding and use of some of the Retail Market Review information remedies introduced by Ofgem; - consumer views on vulnerability and the non-financial support vulnerable customers may need; - what do consumers want in a future Change of Supplier process.
3	**Bioenergy Dialogue** Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	2013	UK	Energy	Distributed Dialogue	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	The dialogue was undertaken to help ensure that the views, concerns and hopes of the public were taken into account as the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) explored the potential for scientific and technological advance in one of its priority areas – bioenergy. To support the process BBSRC developed a toolkit of resources

						to be used by BBSRC-funded researchers and other interested groups to host their own dialogue events. The toolkit included: - guidelines for running an engagement event; - a set of 'futures scenarios' and associated discussion materials; - a Democs card game.
4	**Citizens Juries on Wind Farm Development in Scotland** Climate Xchange	2013	Scotland	Energy	Citizens Jury	Consulting on policy options	Three Citizens Juries in different parts of the country were brought together to develop criteria for decision-making about onshore wind farms in Scotland. The question each of the Juries addressed was: "There are strong views on wind farms in Scotland, with some people being strongly opposed, others being strongly in favour and a range of opinions in between. What should be the key principles for deciding about wind farm development, and why?"
5	**Trajectories for Carbon Emission Reductions** Committee on Climate Change (CCC)	2013	England	Energy	Citizens Jury	Consulting on policy options	This project was designed to provide further insights into public acceptability of climate policies and their accompanying impacts, and to feed into the CCC's advice to the Government on the most appropriate level for the 4th Carbon Budget.
6	**Inquiry into the Economics of Energy Generation** New South Wales Parliament's Public Accounts Committee	2012	Australia	Energy	Citizens Jury	Consulting on policy options	The objective of this process was to return an agreed community view on the potential for, and barriers to, development of alternative forms of energy generation (e.g. tidal, geothermal) in New South Wales (NSW) in order to inform the NSW Parliament's inquiry into the economics of energy generation.
7	**Consumer Attitudes to Social & Environmental Taxes and Charges** Consumer Focus	2012	UK	Energy	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Consulting on policy options	One of four research approaches taken by the Who Pays? Programme to gauge customers' views and preferences on existing and future environmental and social levies on energy bills was a series of deliberative workshops. The overall goal was to understand consumer priorities regarding preferences and 'trade-offs' on how the charges are levied, the relative value to consumers of the social and environmental outcomes, and views about fairness and affordability.
8	**Energy 2050 Pathways: A**	2011	England	Energy	General Deliberative	Broad, horizon-	The aim of the overall project was to enable people to make their opinions heard to government on how the UK should reach its 80% emission

	Public Dialogue Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)				Workshop	scanning exercise	reduction target by 2050. One aspect of the project was a series of 3 deliberative dialogue events in a range of rural, metropolitan and urban contexts designed to engage local community leaders in an informed deliberative dialogue about the choices and trade-offs on the route to 2050.
9	**My 2050 Simulation Game** Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	2011	England	Energy	Online Deliberation	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	As part of their effort to engage the public in discussions about how to meet the 2050 emissions targets, DECC commissioned Delib to create an interactive simulation, whereby the public can create their own solution to meeting the target. The objective of the game was to raise awareness and encourage deliberation about the trade-offs between reducing carbon emissions and 'keeping the lights on'.
10	**The Big Energy Shift** Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	2009	UK (England Wales and Northern Ireland)	Energy	Citizens Advisory Panel	Consulting on policy options	The project was commissioned in order to help inform the UK Government's policy decisions in relation to the proposals made in the Climate Change Bill. The goal was to establish an in-depth, deliberative dialogue with householders across England, Northern Ireland, and Wales to understand how people approach the issue of energy as individuals and householders, within the larger context of their views on what communities and the country as a whole should do.
11	**Participatory Planning of Sustainable Energy Strategy** Nova Scotia Department of Energy	2009	Canada	Energy	Participatory Strategic Planning	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	Two participatory planning processes were undertaken in Nova Scotia to feed into the area's strategic planning for sustainable energy. The purpose of the first process was to develop a new institutional framework for electricity energy efficiency. The second developed a strategy to increase renewable energy generation in the Province.
	Ontario Consumer Consultation Ontario Energy Board (OEB)	2014 - 2016	Canada	Energy	Citizens Advisory Panel	Across all types of policy questions	A multi-year, multi-phase, ongoing panel comprising a broad cross-section of Ontarians who were brought together to consider a policy area identified by the OEB as being of interest and importance to energy consumers, and for which it wished to receive feedback and understand perceptions. The results of this consultation assisted the OEB in the formation of their future strategic direction and ongoing approach to consumer engagement. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report – included in evidence pack entitled "1. Ontario Consumer Commission".)
	Correct Tariff Research	2016	Australia	Energy	Citizens Advisory	Questions around	When the regulator decreed that the electricity tariff structure must be changed to reflect better equity between customers, resulting in

	Essential Energy				Panel	consumer experience	significant bill increases for heavy users, the decision was made to bring together a group of customers to form a committee to advise on the process. While the tariff change is still in the implementation stage, the process, timelines, scope of support and surrounding communications are all likely to be changed as a result of this customer consultation. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report – included in evidence pack under "2. Correct Tariff Research - Proposal – Ipsos".)
	Customer Forums to Develop Customer Charter SSE (Scottish Hydro, Southern Electric and SWALEC)	2015	England	Energy	Customer Reference Group	Questions around consumer experience	SSE was the first energy company to introduce a Customer Charter - offering guarantees on customer services. They used independently chaired customer forums to gather insights which informed the content of the Customer Charter. https://www.sse.co.uk/about-us/sse-and-you/our-customer-charter#item1
	Public Views on the Research Priorities about Onshore Oil and Gas Environment Agency	2015	England	Energy	On-line Deliberation	Consulting on policy options	The objective of this project was to enable input from members of the public into the future direction and priorities of the Environment Agency's research related to the environmental regulation of the onshore oil and gas industry. 17 members of the public from selected locations in England were involved in an online dialogue about the environmental impact of onshore oil and gas extraction and the Agency's future research priorities in this area. http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/sounding-board-environment-agency-research-needs-for-onshore-oil-and-gas-shale-gas/
	Public Engagement with Shale Gas and Oil Department of Energy and Climate Change	2014	England	Energy	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Consulting on policy options	The purpose of this project was to understand better how to engage the public most effectively in unconventional gas and oil developments in their area. The key objectives for public dialogue were to: - test out how best to explain the science around shale gas and oil extraction so the public understand what it could mean if it takes place in their area. - test how to engage the public on issues related to shale gas exploration, in order to inform developing government plans on engagement. - see what the industry's recently launched community engagement charter, including community benefits, meant for communities https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-engagement-with-shale-gas-and-oil

	Engaging Civil Society in Low-Carbon Scenarios European Union co-ordinated project	2009 - 2012	France and Germany	Energy	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Consulting on policy options	The project set out to develop an easy-to-replicate method for engaging civil society via national climate policy scenarios. An iterative process of scenario building, quantitative modelling, and stakeholder review was simultaneously carried out in France and Germany. These scenarios were based on a set of policy measures thought necessary for a transition to a low-carbon economy. Energy sector stakeholders such as associations, trade unions, and businesses played a central role in the development and review process. http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/20121212-final-report-eesc-comm-05-2012_formatted.pdf
12	**Customer Advisory Panel** Southern Water	2016	UK	Water	Customer Reference Group	Questions around consumer experience	Southern Water formed a Customer Advisory Panel (CAP) of service users to: - monitor delivery of the six priorities identified in the business plan and provide assurance these are being met - ensure that Southern Water's twenty-six customer promises are being kept - advise and provide scrutiny of Southern Water's customer and stakeholder engagement programme, impact assessment and customer research.
13	**Customer Forum** Water Industry Commission for Scotland, , Consumer Focus Scotland & Scottish Water	2011 - 2016	Scotland	Water	Customer Reference Group	Across all types of policy questions	The Customer Forum is an independent entity, responsible for identifying and understanding customers' priorities and seeking to get the best outcome for customers. It is an expert challenge group whose 8 members were selected to bring a wealth of skills and professional experience from many walks of life, including consumer affairs, the water industry, the environment, public policy, business and academia. Its role is to ensure that the customer's voice is part of the regulatory process and at the heart of key decisions.
14	**Flood-Risk Communications Dialogue** Environment Agency	2013 - 2015	England	Water	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Questions around consumer experience	A series of workshops were held across various areas at risk of, or affected by, flooding to examine different approaches to informing the public about flood risk. The aim was to co-create practical outputs (messages, materials and approaches to the use of different media) designed to increase awareness, encourage engagement and improve responses to flood risk.
15	**Consumer Challenge Groups** Ofwat	2015	UK	Water	Customer Reference Group	Across all types of policy	The purpose of Consumer Challenge Groups (CCGs) is to provide independent challenge to water companies and independent assurance to Ofwat on:

					questions	- the quality of a company's customer engagement; - the degree to which the results of this engagement are driving decision-making and are reflected in the company's plan. More broadly, CCGs are intended to ensure that water companies' business plans reflect a sound understanding and reasonable balance of customers' views, and whether the phasing, scope and scale of work required to deliver outcomes is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.
16	**Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform** Consumer Council for Water	2015	England	Water	Focus Group	Consulting on policy options	Focus groups were held in each of the nine water and sewerage company regions to understand customer views and perceptions of the possibility of introducing competition into the household water retail market in England. The research objectives were to: - identify household customer appetite for water market reform; - assess motivating factors and barriers to engagement in a reformed water market; and - gauge views and opinions relating to wider market change considerations.
17	**Public Water Forum** Commission for Energy Regulation	2015	Ireland	Water	Customer Reference Group	Across all types of policy questions	The primary purpose of the Forum is to represent the interests of the public and water consumers in the development of public water policy. The Forum is made up of 32 members in total plus a Chair and Secretary. Twelve members are drawn from organisations, each representing a specific sector of interest, and 20 members are domestic water consumers.
18	**What Floats Your Boat?: Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan** Scottish Canals and Glasgow City Council	2015 - 2016	Scotland	Place-making	Participatory Strategic Planning	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	Scottish Canals' approach to engagement with their customers and other users of the canal system has transformed over the last 10 years from a technical to a place-making approach. While still underpinned by a strong ethos of engineering and pragmatic asset management, they now view the inland waterways as catalysts for regeneration in both urban and rural areas that are able to generate positive impact on health and communities. Working with partners and local communities along Scotland's canals, they have focused on encouraging place-making that empowers local people, uses clever solutions for local challenges and supports the physical transformation of underused or derelict land in ways which delivers tangible benefits to the local community. This is one example of this approach in action.
19	**Significant Water**	2013 -	England	Water	Repeat	Broad,	This public dialogue on Significant Water Management Issues was

	Management Issues Environment Agency	2014			Structured Dialogue	horizon-scanning exercise	designed to enable public views, ideas and concerns to be fed into final plans and priorities for the Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plans in 2015, and to inform its approach to meeting other Water Framework Directive commitments. The project included seven public workshops, one in each of the English river basin districts (with Humber and Northumbria combined).
20	**Listening to our Customers** Scottish Water	2012-2013	Scotland	Water	Focus Group	Questions around consumer experience	The aim of this research was to help Scottish Water better understand household and business end users' priorities for service improvement and the relative valuation of benefits in relation to improvements to elements of the water and waste services they provide.
21	**River Basin Planning Strategy** Environment Agency	2012	UK	Water	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	The Environment Agency used a Ketso methodology to undertake a series of workshops to discuss the River Basin Planning Strategy and explore how the requirements of the European Union Water Framework Directive were to be met.
22	**Domestic Water and Sewerage: Customers' Expectations of Service** Ofwat	2011	UK	Water	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	Ofwat commissioned a series of workshops in 4 locations across the country to explore household water customers': - expectations and aspirations for the services they get from their water company; - perceptions of risk in relation to service failure and what the response should be when things go wrong; - interest and willingness to engage with their water company on issues that concern customers, including future periodic reviews.
23	**Citizens Advisory Forum on Living with Environmental Change** Living With Environmental Change (LWEC)	2010	England	Water	Citizens Advisory Panel	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	A short-life Citizens Advisory Forum was established in Bristol to help feed public attitudes and values into the LWEC strategic decision-making process. Three Forum sessions focused on different issues: - research into flood risk management; - research into adaptation to environmental change; - decision-making and governance in response to environmental change challenges.
24	**Metropolitan Melbourne Sewerage Strategy**	2009	Australia	Water	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	This project involved deliberative events as a way of exploring community expectations in relation to future scenarios specific to water usage and sewerage services under a range of possible scenarios. Two whole-day workshops were conducted and involved a representative mix of 40 Melbourne residents at each event.

	Melbourne Water					
25	**Citizens Juries on Water Management** EU project	2003 - 2007	The Nether lands	Water	Citizens Jury	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	3 Citizens Juries took place in the Rhine basin area between 2003 and 2007 looking at different aspects of river basin management including: - what priorities the Government should set for water quality in Lake Markermeer; - priorities for managing urban water streams in Utrecht.
26	**Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy** Department of Sustainability & Environment. (Victoria) and WaterSmart	2005	Australia	Water	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Consulting on policy options	The Victorian Government's 2004 Our Water Our Future White Paper called for the development of regional water strategies to manage the demands of a growing population in the face of growing impacts of climate change upon the water supply system over the next 50 years. 8 Community Research Forums were held to assess different options for securing water futures in the region and identify their preferred pathways, and the specific reasons and opinion influencers.
	Customer Advisory Panel Ofwat	2012-2016	England and Wales	Water	Customer Reference Group	Across all types of policy questions	The Ofwat Customer Advisory Panel was established as part of their customer engagement strategy designed to put customers at the heart of the price-setting process. The members were invited to join by Ofwat on the basis of their expertise and interest in the areas to be covered. They are members in an individual capacity rather than as representative of any particular organisation. The purpose of the panel is to: - challenge and provide advice to Ofwat on regulatory assumptions that impact on all companies' business plans and price limits; - inform Ofwat's decisions on methodology for the price review and subsequent determinations. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20150624091829/http://ofwat.gov.uk/future/monopolies/fpl/customer/prs_web20120410cap
	Group Water Schemes in Rural Ireland National Federation of Group Water Schemes	2010	Ireland	Water	Customer Reference Group	Questions around consumer experience	The Federation's role is to bring together the network of over 400 Group Water Schemes in Ireland. One key role is to build their capacity in engaging with their consumers, and thereby establish greater community involvement. To date most of their deliberative work has had an educative focus, particularly within schools, engaging local communities with the relationship between water supply and wider environmental and land use concerns. http://www.nfgws.ie/About-the-NFGWS
	Open for	2016	England	Water	General	Consulting	The purpose of this research was to gauge the experiences of customers in

	Business: Lessons for the Non-Household Retail Water Market in England Consumer Council for Water				Deliberative Workshop	on policy options	the Scottish non-household water retail market so that their views could then be used to help inform those designing, and operating within, the new English market – the ultimate objective being the best possible delivery of retail services to meet customers' expectations. This research comprised three breakfast events (covering 38 non-household customers from across Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh and the surrounding areas) and 17 individual in-depth interviews. The first location, Glasgow, was run as a pilot, to test the discussion guide and materials with respondents. The sample was designed to cover a wide cross-section of non-household water customers including public and private sector; various sizes; water usage; single or multiple sites; and rural and urban locations. Participants were categorised according to whether or not they had switched to a new retailer or renegotiated their contract with their existing retailer. http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/08/25/open-for-business-lessons-for-the-non-household-retail-water-market-in-england-based-on-customer-experiences-in-scotland/#more-8264
	A Tide of Opinion: the Customer Voice within the Price-Setting Process Consumer Council for Water	2015	England and Wales	Water	General Deliberative Workshop	Consulting on policy options	This research was commissioned to enable the Consumer Council for Water to make informed decisions about how customers' views are best heard within the regulatory process by identifying which practices have most legitimacy in customers' eyes; how CCGs should be formed and governed; and the role of the Consumer Council for Water in the process. http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/A-Tide-of-Opinion-the-Customer-Voice-within-the-Price-Setting-Process.pdf
	Research into Threshold of Acceptability Consumer Council for Water	2013	England and Wales	Water	Focus Group	Consulting on policy options	At the stage of the price-setting process when water companies were about to test the acceptability of their business plans, the Consumer Council for Water held 6 deliberative focus groups with household customers to attain their views on what they felt would be an appropriate threshold for acceptability. http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Research-into-threshold-of-acceptability.pdf
	A Deliberative Process for Water Management Selwyn-Waihora Zone Committee	2012	New Zealand	Water	General Deliberative Workshop	Consulting on policy options	The aim of the project was to set policy limits on the amount of agricultural nutrients acceptable in the catchment waterways using a participatory process involving a range of different stakeholders with different goals and values for the region. http://ifsa.boku.ac.at/cms/fileadmin/Proceeding2014/WS_1_7_Bewsell.pdf

27	**Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government** Accenture Institute for Health & Public Service Value.	2009	South Africa and Australia	Infra-structure / Public Service	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Broad, horizon-scanning exercise	The Accenture Global Cities Forum was a multi-city, worldwide study into how members of the public define "public value" and what they expect of government. The Institute for Health and Public Service Value designed the study as a series of citizen panels in a number of world cities. Each Forum involved 60 to 85 local residents randomly selected to represent the city's demographics – providing strong, qualitative insight into what people think about government and public services and how they judge public value.
28	**Mapping Options for Tackling Climate Change** University of East Anglia	2012	England	Climate Change	Deliberative Mapping	Consulting on policy options	The purpose of the project was to test how deliberative mapping could be used to inform climate change policymaking. The specific research aim of the deliberative mapping exercises was to gain an understanding of how public views on geoengineering proposals compared against other options for tackling climate change. A deliberative mapping process was run with 13 socio-demographically representative citizens from Norfolk and 12 sector experts to understand their views on geoengineering proposals compared against other options for tackling climate change.
29	**Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Planning** City Council of Vancouver	2012-2013	Canada	Local Planning	Citizens Assembly	Broad-horizon-scanning exercise	The Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly was proposed following a neighbourhood planning process in which local residents had felt that their concerns and priorities had not been sufficiently recognised and acted upon. It was intended to provide a means for residents to express their concerns and priorities about their neighbourhood and to articulate a vision for its future. Specifically, the assembly aimed to do three things: - to set out the values and principles shared by Grandview Woodland residents; - to lay out the vision for future of the neighbourhood - to decide on a 30-year development plan for Grandview-Woodland.
30	**NHS Citizens Assembly** NHS England	2015	England	Health	Citizens Assembly	Broad-horizon-scanning exercise	NHS Citizens Assembly was part of a wider national programme designed to give the English public a greater say on healthcare matters and feed into high-level NHS England decision-making. Specifically it aimed to help provide: - citizens and organisations with a direct, transparent route for their voices to reach NHS England decision-making processes; - the NHS England board and others with a new source of evidence and opinion on the NHS; - the public with an open accountability mechanism to feed back

						on the work of NHS England, and the opportunity to participate in the work of the organisation.
31	**Postal User Needs Qualitative Research** Ofcom	2012	UK wide	Postal Service	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Broad-horizon-scanning exercise	Research was conducted amongst general public, postal consumers and business customers to assess the extent to which the market for the provision of postal services in the UK is meeting the reasonable needs of users in relation to the universal postal service, with a specific objective to obtain an informed consumer view on use, needs and social benefits of the current postal service. The study fed into a wider body of research carried out by Ofcom, which allowed them to fulfil their duties under the Postal Services Act 2011, to carry out an assessment of the extent to which the postal market is meeting the reasonable needs of users of postal services.
	Building Trust: Making the Public Case for Infrastructure Confederation of British Industry	2014	England	Infra-structure / Public Service	General Deliberative Workshop	Broad-horizon-scanning exercise	The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) commissioned research with the public to understand better their views on infrastructure. The research used a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and aimed to help the CBI understand how to engage the public in the 'infrastructure debate'. https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/publications/1662/Building-Trust-Making-the-Public-Case-for-Infrastructure.aspx
	Ispy Post-Pay Consumer Research Report Vodafone	2010	Ireland	Telecoms	General Deliberative Workshop	Consulting on policy options	The key objective of this consumer research was to explore, evaluate and optimise a range of propositional ideas developed by Vodafone for Consumer pre-pay and post-pay segments. As part of the deliberative event, interactive voting was used to poll participants before and after discussions, with each respondent using a handheld voting device. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report – included in evidence pack entitled "3. Ispy Post-Pay Consumer Research Report".)
	Model of Behaviour Change Office of the Victorian Fire Services Commission	2012	Australia	Public Safety	General Deliberative Workshop	Consulting on policy options	The project aim was to identify the scope of behaviour change interventions that could be used to influence public behaviour in relation to hazard safety, as well as more effective means of informing and persuading the public on safety matters. A day-long inter-agency deliberative event involving 40-50 senior government officials was held in order to test and refine the model as well as checking it for agency usability. The final output was a best-practice model of behaviour change applicable to all hazards and all emergency management agency contexts, which was used to support the implementation of the Bushfire Safety

						Policy Framework. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report – included in evidence pack entitled "4. Model of Behaviour Change - Victorian Fire Services".)
	Recreational Water Safety Consultation Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	2012	Canada	Public Safety	Repeat Structured Dialogue	Consulting on policy options	This research aimed to understand better the various aspects of recreational water safety through the expertise of the stakeholder community, and to present, discuss and deliberate on each of the coroner's recommendations for improving water safety. Four consultation sessions were conducted with stakeholders across the province. In the interest of encouraging stakeholder participation, sessions were held both in person and online. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report - summary was assessed but report is not available)
	All Hazards Behaviour Change Research Project Brisbane City Council	2016	Australia	Public Safety	General Deliberative Workshop	Broad-horizon-scanning exercise	The aim of the deliberative research event was to gather stakeholders from different organisations with an interest in preparedness for hazards, to start a discussion about what people are or are not doing, why, what should they be doing and what is likely to make them do so – in order to maximise behaviours, actions and engagement to create a community that is prepared for severe weather events. The project involved a literature and secondary data review, deliberative event with stakeholders involved in disaster management, and deep-dive ethnographic research with 20 residents and 5 businesses. A four-step behavioural science research process was used to design a systematic approach – Motivation, Ability, Physical and Social – to understanding behaviour. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report - summary was assessed but report is not available)
	Innovations in Community Engagement Department of Sustainability and the Environment (DSE)	2016	Australia	Engagement	Participatory Strategic Planning	Questions around consumer experience	This project involved design and conduct of collaborative planning workshops in 3 areas. Each workshop brought together representatives from three different stakeholder groups: regional DSE staff; members of the public and special interest groups that have previously participated in engagement activities with the DSE; and members of the wider community who have never taken part in DSE consultation activities. In each of the collaborative planning workshops, participants discussed the strengths and shortcomings of DSE's current approaches to consulting and engaging the community, then worked through ways to improve engagement activities and approaches. (Ipsos MORI unpublished report - summary was assessed but report is not

						available)
	Community Engagement for Bushfire Management Department of Sustainability and the Environment	2016	Australia	Engagement	General Deliberative Workshop	Consulting on policy options	This project involved the design and conduct of deliberative events at which members of the public were invited to discuss and evaluate a range options for community education and engagement around planned burning. As part of the exercise, participants were taken through a series of 'real life' exercises in which they were exposed to various methods of engagement (Inform, Educate and Collaborate). (Ipsos MORI unpublished report - summary was assessed but report is not available)

CASE STUDY 1
PUBLIC VIEWS ON DECARBONISED HEATING TECHNOLOGIES

Commissioning body / Owner:	The Committee on Climate Change
Industry sector:	Energy
Method type:	Online deliberation
Date:	2016
Geographic location:	United Kingdom
Type of policy question:	Consulting on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

The project aimed to explore, with members of the public, the role that government could play in supporting the households to reduce carbon emissions from heating. These findings were intended to make up part of the Committee on Climate Change's evidence base for advice to the UK Government on low-carbon heating.

The project was also intended as a means of testing Sciencewise's online Sounding Board methodology, envisioned as a means of undertaking deliberative public engagement in circumstances in which time and resources are constrained. Specifically, the intention was to ascertain whether an online Sounding Board format could be effectively used to gain public input on challenging science policy issues in less time and for less money than a face-to-face deliberative exercise.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Sciencewise designed and ran 2 online workshops involving 17 participants from a broad range of age groups, geographical locations and educational backgrounds.

Participants were divided up into 2 cohorts that met twice: an information session introducing low-carbon heat technologies and climate change policy, and a longer deliberative session with more time for public input.

The dialogue took the form of an audio conversation between participants, moderated by a facilitator, and was accompanied by slides, visual cues and polling exercises. Experts from the Committee on Climate Change were also on hand to present information to participants and to answer any relevant questions that arose in the course of discussion.

Participants were paid £60 for 2.5 hours of online engagement.

IMPACT

The Committee on Climate Change felt that, while the Sounding Boards had failed to identify any big issues that they were not already aware of, there were a number of useful insights provided about the kind of information people want and need when considering taking up low-carbon

technologies. They also observed that possibly the greatest value of the discussions had been in relation to monitoring how the public responded to new information.

This suggests that the direct influence of the sounding board's findings on policy are likely to be fairly minimal. In terms of influencing the Committee on Climate Change's (and other public bodies') approach to public engagement, however, the Sounding Board is likely to have greater impact.

By demonstrating the possibility of undertaking deliberative public deliberative engagement relatively quickly and cheaply, the Sounding Board may encourage more public bodies to use engagement to inform policy development.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The total budget for the project was £27,791.

The project demonstrated to the Committee on Climate Change that the Sounding Board methodology is a viable, cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to face-to-face deliberative engagement.

While this is considerably cheaper than an equivalent face-to-face public engagement exercise, this lower cost comes at the expense of the quality of the deliberation and slightly more superficial discussion of the issues. Despite this, the Committee on Climate Change considered the project to have been value for money.

EVALUATION

The Sounding Boards were evaluated positively by the Committee on Climate Change. Both analysts involved in the project stated that they would use the Sounding Board methodology again.

While the Committee on Climate Change staff acknowledged that the process had allowed for less in-depth discussion than an equivalent face-to-face deliberative process, this observation was balanced by the relatively low cost of the process.

LEARNING

Perhaps the biggest learning from the Sounding Boards was that it is difficult to replicate the depth and quality of face-to-face deliberative engagement techniques online – and that there is therefore a trade-off between cost and speed, on the one hand, and quality and depth, on the other. In addition to this, the discussion produced various useful pieces of information about public views on low-carbon heating technology, including:

- That people generally wanted more communications of the direction of travel from government relating to energy and climate change policy.
- That people are very concerned about the practicalities of low-carbon heat technologies.
- The kind of information people want and need when considering the uptake of low-carbon heating technology.

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CASE STUDY 2
CONSUMER FIRST PANELS

Commissioning body / Owner:	Ofgem
Industry sector:	Energy
Method type:	Citizens Advisory Panel
Date:	2009 (ongoing, refreshed annually)
Geographic location:	Great Britain (multiple locations)
Type of policy question:	Consulting on Policy Options
	Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product

PURPOSE

The Consumer First Panel is part of a broader body of research carried out by Ofgem to help them better understand the experiences of a wide range of consumers, including business consumers and more vulnerable groups.

Examples of previous research objectives that they have used the Consumer First Panel to address include:

- Identifying the information needed to equip customers to make informed consumer decisions when engaging with the energy market;

- Identifying consumer expectations and understanding of the work of Ofgem;

- Understanding consumers' views on the current structure of tariffs and gauging initial reactions and understanding of potential models for new tariff structures;

- Consumers' views and understanding of privacy issues surround the roll-out of smart meters;

- Understanding consumers' expectations of the non-financial support provided by suppliers and distribution companies to vulnerable and potentially vulnerable consumers.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The Consumer First Panel consists of 60-100 domestic energy consumers who meet 3-4 times a year to discuss energy related issues and feed into Ofgem's policy-making. Membership of the Panel is refreshed annually.

Panels cover a range of different issues but tend to focus on complex challenges within the energy sector where 'top of mind' responses from consumers would be of limited value. Through the Panel, Ofgem can listen to the considered views of a diverse range of consumers and use this insight to inform its policy making processes.

Panel structure and method
The Panels are refreshed yearly, and for each panel 60-100 consumers are drawn from four to six locations across Great Britain. Panelists participate in 3-4 workshops, carried out in each of the locations, over the course of the year. Panelists are recruited to be reflective of GB energy consumers in terms of: gender; age; ethnicity; socio-economic group; tenure; fuel poverty;

disability; energy supplier; employment status; family status; urban/rural residences. They also reflect a range of different consumer behaviour in the energy market, e.g. those who have and haven't switched their energy supplier.

Each workshop lasts 3 hours, facilitated by 2-3 moderators.

Each workshop has a clear objective to inform 1-2 specific decisions or policies and will involve a variety of different activities. The first session of each Panel year usually includes a broad discussion on the energy sector which acts as a 'temperature check' on issues that are already on consumers' radar.

Where a deliberative approach is taken, this will usually involve an issue being discussed by participants first, then a presentation of balanced information by moderators based on stimulus materials provided by Ofgem, followed by further discussion. Usually this will take place within a single workshop but sometimes an issue will be reconvened to give panelists time for reflection.

Participants are paid a monetary 'thank you' for each workshop they attend. This helps encourage a diverse range of people to participate, including those who need to cover caring or travel costs.

IMPACT

Findings from the Consumer First Panel regularly inform Ofgem's decision-making by helping them to understand the priorities, views and experiences of consumers.

For example, the Consumer Panel has helped inform:

- Ofgem's reforms to the energy market that have aimed to promote competition by encouraging consumer engagement with the market and support better decision making, e.g. through reviewing supplier communications, tariff structures and the process of switching suppliers;
- Early scoping work on any consumer protections needed to support the Government's mandated smart meter roll-out;
- Ofgem's review of suppliers' Priority Services Registers, which was published alongside their Consumer Vulnerability Strategy;

The Consumer First Panel has also helped shape Ofgem's consultations with the energy industry, suppliers, environmental groups, and government to help represent the views of, and protect, consumers in the energy market.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

In interview Ofgem did not disclose the annual costs of running the Panel as this varies from year to year, but noted that they consider the panel approach to be value for money.

In particular, it was noted that having the panel reconvene over a fixed period of time, was cheaper than commissioning ad hoc research projects.

EVALUATION

The Consumer First Panel is considered a successful model by Ofgem, with their outputs having been regarded as highly useful and providing a valued input to policy and decision-making.

Ofgem's internal team stated that they were generally satisfied with panels and the quality standards of the commissioned research agencies.

They noted in interview that that the deliberative elements of the workshops were crucial in providing more than 'top of mind' responses. Specifically, the deliberative sessions were found to work well in allowing Ofgem to disseminate complex information to consumers and in return receiving informed, considered views on topics with which participants may not have been previously familiar.

It is apparent to the research team, however, that, given the short amount of time allocated to deliberation at some of these events, it is difficult to determine how effectively participants have been able to absorb and use the new information in their discussions, and therefore to what extent it has influenced their views.

LEARNING

Over the 7 years Ofgem has been running Consumer First Panels a number of learning points have been identified, including:

- That it is important to not attempt too many things in a single workshop. Instead Ofgem now tries to limit the agenda to a small number of focused objectives each time to avoid overburdening participants and to ensure outputs are manageable, meaningful and relevant.

- Because each panel reconvenes regularly it would be possible to ask participants to do 'homework' or background reading between sessions to allow issues to be explored in more depth during the sessions. However, this needs to be balanced with the risks of overburdening participants and/or leading them to a point where they become 'expert' (and therefore atypical of consumers) over the course of a year.

- That it has been useful to invite policy colleagues along to observe these events and hear consumer views first hand, to help them better connect with consumer perspectives and how they could be applied to the policy challenge.

- The importance of providing accurate and accessible information. In these workshops the transfer of new information is done by the facilitators, using stimulus materials drafted in conjunction with Ofgem. While Ofgem has found this to work well most of the time, it can mean that the facilitators may not be able to explain complex issues fully or respond to participants' questions.

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Research interview – available in evidence pack under 'CAS Interview - Case study 2 - 251016 – Confidential'.

CASE STUDY 3
BIOENERGY DIALOGUE

Commissioning body / Owner:	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
Industry sector:	Energy
Method type:	Distributed Dialogues
Date:	September 2012 to December 2013
Geographic location:	UK-wide
Type of policy question:	Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The dialogues were undertaken to help ensure that the views, concerns and hopes of the public were taken into account as BBSRC explored the potential for scientific and technological advance in one of its priority areas – bioenergy.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

In collaboration with academics, science communicators and the New Economics Foundation, BBSRC developed a toolkit of resources to be used by BBSRC-funded researchers and other interested groups in the dialogue events. The toolkit included:
- Guidelines for running an engagement event;
- A set of 'futures scenarios' and associated discussion materials;
- A Democs card game.[55]

They also produced a feedback form to capture what happened at the events. It included specific questions on the:
- Views and opinions of participants;
- Demographics of participants;
- The event itself and the process of the dialogue - for example, how the materials were received;
- Perceptions about what the impacts of the dialogue might be.

The project included an afternoon training session for researchers interested in running a dialogue, and a pilot event the next day to test the materials, start to collect findings and give those who attended the training a chance to practise.

In total, researchers and other groups ran eleven public dialogue events between January and September 2013 as part of the project. The BBSRC received 162 participant feedback forms and 35 organiser feedback forms.

Participant selection was down to the organisations running the individual dialogues and participants were not paid for their time.

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[55] Democs (Deliberative Meetings Organised by Citizens) is a deliberation method that takes the form of a card game that enables small groups of citizens to learn about and discuss complex scientific, political and ethical issues. Democs was created by the New Economics Foundation in the early 2000s due to growing interest in engagement with the public through deliberative practices.

IMPACT

The findings of the dialogue largely supported what BBSRC already understood about public views and values on bioenergy rather than revealing new insights. As such it has had little impact on their approach to bioenergy policies.

The external evaluation noted that the most significant impacts of the Bioenergy Dialogue will probably be on BBSRC's practice around public engagement and dialogue. It further highlighted that this influence is likely to go wider than BBSRC itself: by the time the evaluation was written, BBSRC had already used the experience to contribute to two projects relating to the future shape of public engagement in the EU.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The project had an allocated total budget of £137,000, but there was a significant underspend.

Even at its allocated budget, the cost was lower than the cost of many more traditional dialogues. (For example a previous BBSRC dialogue on synthetic biology – which involved roughly the same number of participants – cost almost three times as much.)

EVALUATION

BBSRC's evaluation of the project highlighted both areas that had worked well and those that needed improvement. It praised both the number of members of the public and number of researchers who took part, and suggested – as noted above – that this had been achieved for a comparatively small amount of money.

LEARNING

Learning identified during the evaluation of the project includes:

- Not controlling participant selection meant the views expressed in the project could not be generalised to a wider audience;

- Recruiting participants had taken longer, and required considerably more effort, than anticipated;

- The materials had been too complex for the length of the events;

- Event organisers would have benefited from clearer guidance or training on facilitation;

- Engaging stakeholders earlier would have had a number of benefits (such as increased buy-in and earlier identification of the facilitation skills gap).

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CASE STUDY 4
WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT IN SCOTLAND

Commissioning body / Owner: ClimateXChange

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Citizens Jury

Date: 2013-14

Geographic location: Scotland (three locations)

Type of policy question: Consulting on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

The direct purpose of the three Citizens Juries was to develop a set of criteria by which decisions regarding onshore wind farms in Scotland could be made.

The questions each of the Juries addressed was: *'There are strong views on wind farms in Scotland, with some people being strongly opposed, others being strongly in favour and a range of opinions in between. What should be the key principles for deciding about wind farm developments, and why?'*

The project however also had a dual purpose, being to test the effectiveness of deliberative techniques – and Juries specifically – as a means of engaging the public with a contentious policy area.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

In recognition of the contested nature of the 'facts' around wind farms and that people often have entrenched/deeply held positions – there was felt to be a need to create a space for the (perhaps less informed) public within this debate. While survey data existed on this matter it was felt that there was a need to get underneath this to better understand the considerations / perceptions (and sometimes misperceptions) that underpin public views, and thus the Jury method was chosen.

Three Citizens Juries were held simultaneously in three locations, one close to an existing wind farm (Aberfeldy), one with a wind farm proposed nearby (Helensburgh) and a third with no existing or proposed wind farms (Coldstream).

Each Jury process itself was divided into three stages: an information stage, a reflection stage and a deliberation stage.

For the information stage, Jurors were brought together for a day-long workshop, in which they were introduced to the process and were taken through some of the issues by a series of expert witnesses.

Following this, Jurors were sent home for the 2-3-week reflection stage. During this time, Jurors were given an information pack containing further information on wind farms and energy policy. In addition to this, Jurors were informed of expert witnesses' responses to any questions that had been raised at the information day that had not immediately been answered.

Finally, Jurors reconvened for the deliberation stage, which took the form of another day-long workshop. Here, Jurors worked together to marshal the information they had acquired over the previous weeks and develop an agreed set of criteria for making decisions about wind farms in Scotland.

A total of 47 Jurors took part in the exercise. In addition to being chosen according to where they lived, participants were also selected on the basis of their education, gender, age and income.

Jurors were paid £90 per day.

IMPACT

Despite the very rich data produced through the process, there is no evidence that the Scottish Government has directly used the findings of the research to inform wind farm policy. This may be because it was not directly attached to a specific policy-making process when it was undertaken, as it was in part designed as an experiment in process, and there was some scepticism expressed at the time as to what the approach added to more traditional methods of consultation and the hard data that can be obtained through surveys.

In the longer term, the project's evaluators and the staff involved have suggested that the project's greatest impact will lie in having provided a very detailed account of a particular Citizens Jury process – the existence of which may encourage public bodies to use the process in policy development. Indeed there is evidence to suggest that officials from other parts of the Scottish Government and elsewhere have begun picking up the report and showing an interest in the methodological lessons.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The total cost of the project was £28,055, with each individual Jury costing £9,352.

The evaluation report suggests that this was considered value for money: that, despite the relatively high cost, it was an expense that was justified in some circumstances, and that this had been one of them.

Staff interviewed in relation to the project also noted that, while the project had been costly, it provided value for money in terms of the richness of the data. It was also noted during the interview that it could have been done more cheaply had it not been for the fact that they collected more data and undertook more analysis than was strictly speaking necessary, because this was explicitly a research project and not a part of a 'live' consultative policy process. The data are still being used by a wide range of researchers.

EVALUATION

The project was found to be successful with regards to both of its objectives.

In terms of the aim of developing an understanding of the principles that the public would want to see applied to decision-making about wind farms in Scotland, all three Juries managed to develop an agreed set of principles, with many of the same principles and issues being raised in each location. A caveat to this is that, in one of the Juries, agreement, but no real consensus, was reached.

The deliberative quality of the events was assessed as good: with evidence of Jurors having learnt about the topic and related debates, engaged with others' perspectives and revised their own opinions during the process. Through this, a richness of detailed information about public perceptions and their process of opinion-forming was generated.

The project was also evaluated as successful at demonstrating the viability of the Citizens Jury model as a means of public engagement. Participants involved reported feeling that the model had allowed them to have an informed and inclusive discussion on a complex set of policy issues.

More generally, the evaluation report concluded that the project has shown how Citizens Juries can be an ideal space for making contributions to policy-making on complex and contentious issues.

LEARNING

- The project's evaluation report identified various challenges encountered in the practical running of the Juries that will be of interest to anybody planning on using the format. These included the need for break-out spaces for small groups, the need for facilitators to ensure that individuals do not inadvertently end up dominating discussions and the challenge of engaging people in a relatively technical topic in a short period of time.

- In the research interview the importance of having a dedicated and expert Stewarding Board engaged throughout the planning phase of the project was stressed as having been vital to the success of the project.

- More generally, the Juries raised a set of interesting questions about how best to frame the scope of discussion within a Jury process. In this case, for example, Jurors seemed to be frustrated by having to approach the question of wind farms in quite narrow terms. However within the 2 day framework it would have been unlikely that there was enough time to have a detailed, fully deliberative conversation about options for energy generation had it been considered more holistically.

- In the research interview conducted for the project, it was noted that there could have been improvements made in relation to how the input of the expert witnesses was managed. It seems, in retrospect, that the experts may have had different ideas / preconceptions / opinions about Citizens Juries, and could have benefited with being briefed more on the process, their role etc. at the outset to ensure a more common understanding.

- The 3 Juries clearly demonstrated that citizens from all types of backgrounds can meaningfully get involved in discussions addressing complex policy issues when they are adequately supported to do so as part of an inclusive and engaging process. It was further noted in the evaluation reports that, by the end of the process, Jurors demonstrated an excellent grasp of the key complexities of the issues relating to the topic.

- It was noted however that the organisers could maybe have done more at the outset of the Juries to describe the existing framework for decisions around wind farm developments (i.e. more contextual information), so that Jurors did not just come up with content that was already in place, but rather were able to take it further and develop it.

- It was also noted in the evaluations that the Juries that worked best, in terms of their deliberations and decision-making processes, were those where there was the most diversity of initial views on the topic.

- There were challenges encountered in recruiting demographically representative Juries, across multiple quotas, with trade-off having to be made between getting correct levels of representation for various groups.

- A final challenge noted was the importance of whoever is organising the jury appearing neutral and impartial to participants, giving them confidence that their views will be accurately reflected in the findings.

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Research interview conducted for this report with a member of staff from ClimateXChange, who had been involved in the project.

CASE STUDY 5
TRAJECTORIES FOR CARBON EMISSION REDUCTIONS

Commissioning body / Owner: Committee on Climate Change (CCC)

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Citizens Jury

Date: 2013

Geographic location: England (Greater London)

Type of policy question: Consulting on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

The purpose of the dialogue was to inform the development of the Committee on Climate Change's advice to the UK Government regarding its 4th Carbon Budget. Specifically, it was intended to provide evidence about the feasibility and costs of the budget and about the potential technology mixes that could be used to meet the budget.

The outputs the research was intended to produce were information about:

- Public understanding of the challenges presented by climate change globally;
- The public's views on the acceptability of the risks of climate change, compared with the costs of global action;
- Public views on the UK's role and responsibility regarding global action to mitigate climate change;
- Public understanding of, and attitudes towards, the effects of action on UK energy bills;
- Public understanding of, and attitudes towards, the wide implications of UK action;
- Whether the public thinks that the case for UK action has changed significantly since the fourth carbon budget was legislated for in June 2011.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The design for the workshops was based on a Citizens Jury model, but adapted to meet the specific needs of the project. This 'quasi-Citizens Jury' method was chosen because it was considered the best way to share information and deliberate on complex information in a short space of time and within a tight budget. Specifically, it was believed that the method would avoid information overload in the early stages, and allow for a deeper, more detailed discussion of the issues.

The research took the form of three panel discussions held in London over the course of four days in October 2013. The same 25 members of the public – who had been selected to be representative of the population in terms of gender, life stage, social grade, religion and ethnicity – attended each of the events.

The first two events were in the evening and the final event was on a Saturday. Each event lasted between 3 and 3½ hours.

Before the first event, public participants were provided with4 short 'think pieces' to introduce them to the challenges around carbon emission reduction before they considered them in the 3 face-to-face sessions – the first two focusing on the information and the longer Saturday session dedicated to deliberation in small groups.

This final event culminated in a session where a selection of participants presented, on behalf of their group, a series of recommendations to the CCC attendees. After each presentation, one of the CCC experts responded directly to these recommendations.

The whole dialogue process, including preparation of materials in collaboration with a project Oversight Group, took place within a six-week timescale.

Participants were compensated for their time.

IMPACT

The dialogue had a very specific result in the form of its input into the CCC's advice to the UK Government on the 4th Carbon Budget, which was published in December 2013. The report from the Jury process was published in parallel on the CCC website as an annex to the main report.

The research is referenced in the CCC's main advice to the Government, while the panel's six key recommendations are also outlined in full in a supporting Technical Report.

Beyond this, however, the immediate impacts of the research on the CCC are likely to be subtle and gradual. A key reason for this is the fact that the findings from the research largely supported the CCC's overarching narrative on climate change emissions reductions (i.e. that transition is possible at reasonable costs and the UK should retain its leadership role internationally). If the research results had questioned specific measures or challenged the overarching narrative, then the impacts may have been more apparent.

The CCC point to the project influencing internal discussions about future research needs, potentially arguing for a stronger role for assumptions about behaviour change in future assessments, and flagging potential public concern about specific technologies (e.g. shale gas, Carbon Capture and Storage). It is also likely to inform other forthcoming reports to the Government and Parliament.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The project cost £43,500 in total, with Sciencewise co-funding to the tune of £21,700.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the project was broadly positive, with the evaluation report noting that the dialogue was effectively designed and delivered overall, with numerous elements of good practice that are not necessarily present in other dialogue projects.

It also noted the positive dynamic at the events, in particular the openness of the discussion between participants as peers as well as with stakeholders in the room. Finally, it was suggested that these successes were all the more impressive in light of the extremely challenging timescale constraints.

One of the factors that seems to have limited the impact of this project, however, was the relatively small number of participants involved in the process and the geographical focus around Greater London. There was a sense that the findings could have been more persuasive had 3 or 4 Juries taken place in different areas of the country.

LEARNING

Despite being judged as successful overall, the project encountered various challenges, many of which stemmed directly from the tight timescales under which it was operating. Of these challenges, the evaluation report specifically mentioned that:

- The tight timescales precluded input from external organisations.
- There was a desire among participants for more direct engagement with stakeholders in the room, rather than through the facilitators.
- While the style of dialogue was effective at creating a participant-led agenda, it is likely that a slightly more directed final session, which was linked back to some of the CCC's original questions for the research, could have delivered some more specific outcomes.
- More effort needed to be taken to ensure that participants were clear on the purpose of the project, as this needed to be clarified several times.

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CASE STUDY 6
INQUIRY INTO THE ECONOMICS OF ENERGY GERNERATION

Commissioning body / Owner:	The Public Accounts Committee of the New South Wales Parliament
Industry sector:	Energy
Method type:	Citizens Jury
Date:	2012
Geographic location:	United Kingdom
Type of policy question:	Consulting on policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

In 2012, a Citizens Jury process was used for the NSW Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Inquiry into the economics of energy generation. The objective of the process was to produce an agreed community view on "the potential for, and barriers to, development of alternative forms of energy generation in New South Wales."

2 Juries, one in a rural area and one in urban Sydney, were run at the same time. The remit of both Juries was quite clear, with participants asked to: *"agree on an order of preference, barriers to adoption (including financial aspects and public perception issues) and recommended course of action with regard to alternative forms of energy generation in NSW."*

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Both Juries met four to five times over a 10-week period between June and August 2012.

Prior to the first meeting, a background document was circulated to Jurors which contained summaries of any submissions that were presented to the Government's internal committee (PAC). The New Democracy Foundation (who designed and funded the Jury process) also made a call for submissions by relevant and interested parties, including companies, public interest groups and academics. Over the course of their time on the Jury, participants were also able to request information or appearance from experts of their own choosing.

Each Jury had approximately 30 participants. These were drawn from responses to invitations sent to 8000 randomly selected citizens in the Sydney and Tamworth regions. With invitations sent to a sample size of 4,000 citizens in each area, a smaller random selection was drawn from the positive responses to match the demographics of the community.

Jurors were not compensated for their time.

IMPACT

The Jurors produced a Citizens Report presenting their conclusions, and the reasoning behind them, for the Public Accounts Committee.

The outcomes of the deliberations surprised some Members of Parliament, many of whom had assumed that everyday citizens would not be interested in complex policy issues and would be

primarily concerned with keeping energy prices low. However, the process revealed citizens' concern, their willingness to get involved debating complex issues, and their interest in participating in governance.

The report by the Juries was extensively relied upon by the Public Accounts Committee in its report. Several of the specific recommendations made by the Juries were incorporated into the 24 recommendations made by the Public Accounts Committee and presented to Parliament for final approval.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

No information on the cost of this project was available.

EVALUATION

This process enabled Members of the Parliamentary Committee to hear a broader set of perspectives than they would normally hear from and was, as such, welcomed by the Public Accounts Committee and the Government of New South Wales more broadly.

Many of the recommendations that emerged from the Juries' deliberations were considered quite innovative. The NSW Government expressed its support and gratitude for the efforts of these two community groups.

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CASE STUDY 7
CONSUMER ATTITUDES TO SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES AND CHARGES

Commissioning body / Owner: Consumer Focus

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Deliberative workshop

Date: 2012

Geographic location: United Kingdom (Reading, Glasgow and Cardiff)

Type of policy question: Consulting on policy options to inform how policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

Research was commissioned by Consumer Focus to explore consumers' views on major challenges faced by policy-makers in the energy market. The goal of the research was to understand consumer priorities regarding preferences and trade-offs and whether their energy bills should be used to fund energy efficiency policy goals.

The four key research questions posed by the deliberative research were:

- Is the public willing to pay levies to fund UK Government energy policy goals?

- What criteria should be used when setting de-carbonisation priorities?

- Is the balance of contributions between consumer, energy companies and tax payer right?

- Who are the winners and losers?

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The project used a variety of approaches including desk research, workshops and internet surveys to achieve its goals. The four projects were:

- Deliberative research into consumer attitudes to social & environmental taxes and charges;

- Consumers' willingness to pay social and environmental charges (online and face-to-face surveys);

- Impact of future energy policy on consumer bills (secondary analysis);

- Past and future trends in environmental and social levies (secondary analysis).

These four projects collectively detail energy customers' historic and future financial contributions to energy policy goals and their views about having to make these contributions.

For the deliberative component of the research, which is the focus of this case study, 3 workshops were carried out, with around 30 participants at each. Respondents were recruited to ensure an even representation in terms of environmental motivation, experience of fuel poverty, urban/rural and socio-economic group.

Each workshop included plenary sessions and small group work – there were separate groups for three consumer segments – environmentally motivated, experiencing fuel poverty and the general population. Facilitation was carried out by the research team and members of Consumer Focus.

The workshop began with an electronic vote to determine participants' initial awareness and attitudes towards energy policies. Facilitators introduced the objectives of the workshop and the challenges facing energy policy. These were then discussed in groups. An energy quiz was also carried out to pass on information and gauge levels of awareness.

For the following session, participants were shown a PowerPoint presentation, before taking part in a group discussion on government proposals to address challenges facing energy policy and the projected impacts on consumer bills. Participants were also shown a short television programme on 'The Cost of Going Green'. Following this session another electronic vote took place to assess participants' responses to the issues discussed in the first two sessions.

The final session involved a PowerPoint presentation and discussion about the existing levies on energy bills and the levels of profitability in the industry. A final electronic vote was carried out to gauge how views had changed compared with the start of the workshop.

Participants were paid £150 each for taking part in the workshop.

IMPACT

The deliberative component of the research achieved its stated objectives of providing a good sense of how members of the public react to various scenarios regarding the environmental and social subsidies on energy bills.

However, there was a feeling amongst some who had been involved in the project that the impact of the research was limited by the fact that deliberative exercises did not tell policy-makers much that they did not know already.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The relatively high cost of the deliberative component was noted by members of staff interviewed, although the amount was not disclosed.

It was felt that while there may have been cheaper ways of getting the information produced, the deliberative workshops had been valuable as a means of illustrating this information to stakeholders.

EVALUATION

While the project was evaluated as successful in terms of its stated objectives, there was a feeling that the exercise had not produced new information. In addition to this, there was a feeling that due to the lack of direct involvement of the energy policy team from Consumer Focus, the workshops had been unable to address the kind of issues that might have had an influence on policy.

It was also commented that the quality of the narrative report from the workshops was poor, limiting how it could be used.

LEARNING

One key lesson to be drawn from this case study is that, without the direct involvement or guidance of policy-makers, deliberative workshops are not guaranteed to produce information that is sufficiently relevant to have an impact on policy development.

SOURCES

Research interview (on-line) conducted for this report with a member of staff from Citizens Advice, who had been involved in the project.

Vaze, Prashant and Hewett, Chris. "Who Pays? - Consumer Attitudes to the Growth of Levies to Fund Environmental and Social Energy Policy Objectives." Consumer Focus, December 2012. http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/government-issues/social-policy/consumerfocus/144329Who-pays.pdf.

CASE STUDY 8
ENERGY 2050 PATHWAYS: A PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Commissioning body / Owner: Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: General Deliberative Workshop

Date: 2011

Geographic location: England

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The aim of the overall project was to enable people to make their opinions heard to the Government on how the UK should reach its 80% emission reduction target by 2050.

One aspect of the project was a series of 3 different deliberative dialogue events in a range of rural, metropolitan and urban contexts. These were designed to engage local community leaders (in this case defined as councillors, elected representatives, business representatives and third sector leaders) in an informed deliberative dialogue about the choices and trade-offs on the route to 2050. The question asked in the workshops was: *'How should the UK meet its legally binding greenhouse gas emissions reduction target?'*

A secondary aim of the workshop was to pilot and develop a front-end for the 2050 Pathways Calculator (an online game format for exploring these issues which is discussed in Case Study 9).

In addition to finding out what community leaders' views on the issues were, the ultimate goal of the workshops was to encourage community leaders to initiate further dialogues within their own communities.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The workshops were designed to allow participants to experiment with various pathways towards a low-carbon future. The three workshops differed in design and length in order to determine which approach was most effective (e.g. varying the number of participants per computer and number of experts on hand).

Workshop participants were presented with a range of information about complex issues and were able to make informed comments and choices, based on debate with other people, being able to consider issues from other people's perspectives and having the opportunity to discuss and ask questions to 'experts'.

Each workshop included the following core sessions:

- Introductions including to the 2050 target and to how the 2050 Pathways Calculator works;
- An opportunity for participants to explore the 2050 Pathways Calculator;
- Introduction to, and group discussion around, the four 'Big Themes' to consider when creating a pathway to the 2050 target;
- A final session to create a pathway that participants were happy with, and which they would like to see implemented.

86 community leaders took part in the deliberative workshops – 40 at the London event, 27 in Cumbria and 19 in Nottingham. 12 experts also participated in the events (with between 2 and 6 attending on each occasion).

IMPACT

At the end of the process a report 'Energy: how fair is it anyway?' was produced, which presented participants' views on different energy sources and outlined recommendations for future energy use.

The outcomes from the workshops contributed to the debate around the options for achieving the UK's carbon targets and delivering the low-carbon economy, and were presented to senior decision-makers.

One concrete outcome is that, as a result of the workshops, a toolkit was developed for schools to enable further dialogue about climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy. This toolkit included the My 2050 Calculator (discussed in Case Study 9) which was piloted in the workshops.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The total cost of the whole project was £163,000. However, information is not available about what proportion of this total was devoted to the deliberative events.

EVALUATION

The workshops did promote an informed deliberative dialogue amongst community leaders in the pilot areas, which gave DECC a good understanding of the views and priorities of key community leaders and representatives on priorities for managing carbon targets.

Workshop participants were very positive about the group discussions and rated discussions between participants as one of the best aspects of the workshop they attended.

Participants were also very positive about using the Calculator and engaged with it well. They felt that the 2050 Calculator helped to stimulate thinking about energy and climate change issues, and the options and trade-offs required to meet the 2050 target.

LEARNING

Most of the learning from the project for DECC has come from participant feedback and includes that:

- The information provided to participants about the issues was of a very high quality – particularly that contributed by experts. Participants described expert help as "knowledgeable", "professional", "essential" and "diplomatic".

- Many participants felt they would have liked more information and the opportunity to prepare before workshops. Giving participants the opportunity to prepare may have helped them to feel less rushed when completing activities during the workshop.

- Participants also commented about the level of knowledge they felt they needed to have to participate in the workshops. It seems that a challenge in the design of the workshops was pitching them at a level which suited most participants' level of knowledge

Many of the shortcomings, however, stem directly from an initial lack of clarity about the purpose of the workshops and the breadth of the objectives. It seems that the tension between the need to test the Calculator and to engage in rich deliberative dialogue about the issues was not properly resolved in the workshop planning.

SOURCES

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http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Publications/SWEnergy-2050-PathwaysFINAL.pdf.

CASE STUDY 9
MY 2050 SIMULATION GAME

Commissioning body / Owner: Department of Energy and Climate Change

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Online Deliberations

Date: 2011

Geographic location: England

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The purpose of this online tool was to facilitate public engagement with issues relating to climate change and energy by giving users the opportunity to come to a considered conclusion on such issues in a way that is visually engaging and easy to understand. The My 2050 Simulation was the prototype for the My 2050 Pathways Calculator, and was tested in series of deliberative workshops with community leaders (see Case Study 8).

The objective for the development of the game was:

> *"to develop [a game that] engages, informs and consults the user about the twin challenges of climate change and energy security, and provides strategic energy and policy options for them to consider.... The aim is for this to contribute to a wider aim to embed digital deliberative tools in the communications and engagement strategy of DECC, and the whole of Government's energy and climate change policy".*

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The My 2050 Simulation was used in the workshops referred to in Case Study 8 to involve participants in working, individually or in small groups, to agree a preferred pathway for meeting the UK's Carbon reduction targets.

My 2050 is based on real-world data and enables users to develop their '2050 world', finding their preferred way of meeting the 80% emissions reduction target while keeping the lights on. It visualises the changes this may imply for our homes, our cities and our countryside. It has a function for users to share and compare their 2050 world with those of others. It also has a feedback function so that users can share their 2050 world with DECC, providing their opinions on the best way to meet the target.

DECC described how the tool works as follows:

> *"The tool presents you with three charts, describing the demand for energy, the supply of energy and the greenhouse gas emissions for the UK. Below the charts are a list of sectors. For each sector of the economy, four trajectories have been developed, ranging from little or no effort to reduce emissions (level 1) to extremely ambitious changes that push towards the physical or technical limits of what can be achieved (level 4). These are indicated by four numbered boxes.*
>
> *If you click on a number, then that trajectory is selected and the charts recalculate – this calculation may take up to 30 seconds. If you move your mouse over the*

levels, a box will appear describing what that choice represents. You can find out more about each sector and what the changes would mean in practice by clicking on the name of each sector – these will display a short summary introducing the sector and explaining the levels and choices available.

Where there are letters (A, B, C, D) instead of numbers this means the trajectories within this sector represent different scenarios, rather than levels of effort. For example, we could derive energy from biomass (a lump of wood) in different ways – we could leave it as a solid fuel, or turn it into a liquid or a gas."

IMPACT

The feedback from piloting the online tool in the workshops was used by Delib to develop the 'My2050' Pathways Calculator – a more visually attractive version of the My 2050 Simulator aimed at a wider audience.

The game was launched and opened up to the public in March 2011. Over 10,000 pathways were submitted in 26 days and there were 50,000 users in total.

The main objective of the game was to prompt interest in the questions and issues. However, the game also produced a lot of information about the considerations that those who took part brought to bear on their decisions, along with interesting information on the different priorities and approaches of different demographic groups.

This data, plus the results of the deliberative dialogues, have provided useful evidence in support of the common themes identified via the 2050 Pathways Calculator. The engagement programme has increased DECC's understanding of public views on energy and climate change, and their levels of emotion and ownership over those views. The informational outputs generated by the game informed the findings of the broader 2050 Pathways public engagement project.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The total cost of the whole project was £163,000. However, information is not available about what proportion of this total was devoted to the online work.

EVALUATION

The process was effective in generating engagement with the issues dealt with by 2050 Pathways and in generating information about the reasoning for people's choices in the game.

Evaluation data shows that workshop participants were very positive about using the calculator and engaged with it well. In interviews with workshop participants, the 2050 Pathways Calculator was described as a useful tool to stimulate participants' interest in the issues and the debate.

- Post-event evaluation feedback from all three workshops shows that the majority of evaluation respondents agreed with the statements "I found the calculator easy to use" (62%) and with the statement "I enjoyed using the calculator" (81%).
- It also shows that the majority of participants across all workshops agreed that the calculator helped them:
  - to learn something they did not know before (94%);
  - to think more clearly about these issues (88%);
  - to arrive at their own preferred solution for "how I would meet the 2050 target" (67%).
- Interviews with participants during the evaluation of the project, however, suggests that some participants had some difficulty using the calculator. Those who found it easy to use tended to feel this was due to their pre-existing knowledge of energy and climate change issues and a relatively high level of IT literacy.

- Some participants said they would like to have been more prepared for the workshops, to help them use the calculator more effectively and discuss the issues in more detail.

Overall, DECC considered My 2050 to have been extremely successful.

Though the game cannot be strictly considered deliberative, it did yield many of the informational outputs that might be hoped for from a traditional deliberative engagement process. Whether this information can be treated similarly is doubtful, however.

LEARNING

My 2050 gave users the opportunity to reach a considered conclusion on the issues by presenting information in a way that is visually engaging and easy to understand.

- The people who submitted worlds were younger than average, which suggests the simulation was an effective method for reaching a younger audience.

- The simulation also proved that it could be a very useful tool for a wider deliberative process, either through prompting people to use it in a collaborative way or by embedding it within a workshop.

The project evaluation report also listed a range of things that could be done better in the future including:

- Embed My 2050 in other contexts – These might include social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook), online tools such as webinars and face-to-face activities such as deliberative workshops.

- Encourage interaction – If this functionality is not designed into the game in future, a forum could be created for players to debate their worlds with other users and experts (or perhaps encourage such debate in existing forums).

- Prompts for discussion – My2050 provides limited opportunity for participants to listen to others, or share and develop their views. It could however be developed to include prompts in My2050 for users to discuss their worlds with family members and friends, and then to re-consider their choices after these discussions.

- Many people completed the simulation as a game or a challenge, but results could potentially have been different if this had been used as a policy consultation exercise.

SOURCES

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Commissioning body / Owner: The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Citizens Advisory Panel

Date: 2009

Geographic location: United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

Type of policy question: Consulting on policy options to inform how policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

The research was intended to gauge the public's views on carbon emissions and energy savings at a community level, in order to make fully informed policy decisions in response to the proposals in the Climate Change Bill. More specifically, the objective was to establish the bases upon which the public would be prepared to take up measures to save energy, reduce carbon emissions and increase use of renewables.

To this end, the research was interested in understanding the triggers for behaviour change in domestic energy use, including:

- What makes individuals shift from inaction to action?
- What makes individuals shift from piecemeal to household action?
- What makes householders shift from household action to community-level or collective action?
- What makes people get involved in mass action, at a national or cultural level?

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Ipsos MORI used a free-find door recruitment method to set up Citizens Forums in nine neighbourhoods across England, Wales and Northern Ireland – involving over 250 people (c.30 in each location).

Members of these took part in a series of deliberative events over the course of three months. Events were moderated by Ipsos MORI staff and involved contributions and presentations from policy-makers and experts (including for example, those from the Welsh Assembly, DECC, Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Transport).

Each Forum took part in four phases:

1. In the first phase, participants attended a workshop and were presented with information about new energy technologies, with range of energy and technology experts on hand to explain how the technologies in question worked and to answer any queries. Participants discussed which technologies or measures would work best for their houses and neighborhoods. Trade-off exercises were used where participants were asked to make hypothetical decisions about which technologies they would prefer.

2. In the second phase, which took place over the course of weeks, participants were given a range of tasks to carry out in their homes/local area. The research team interviewed participants at home about how they used energy in their homes (these interviews were

filmed). Some participants visited low-carbon exemplars, others interviewed neighbours (peer interviewing) and some completed an energy diary reflecting on their homes and behaviour.

3. The third phase brought participants back together with other stakeholders, such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to discuss their thoughts around the policy options having learnt about and viewed some of the new technologies. Stakeholders then presented information on certain issues which was followed by more paired exercises and group discussions. Stakeholders and experts were on hand to answer any questions raised by participants.

4. For the fourth phase, a final event was held in London to provide a summary of the findings from each of the three phases and an opportunity for three representatives from each of the nine forums to come together and discuss their recommendations with stakeholders and policy-makers. The themes and findings from the first three phases were presented to those in attendance using videos and PowerPoint presentations, followed by plenary discussions. Attendees were then split into groups to discuss the findings.

The Secretary of State for the Environment then addressed the attendees on the importance of the research. This was followed by group discussions on the key recommendations from the research. Finally, a plenary discussion took place where groups fed back their overall thoughts.

Participants were paid £100 for each stage of the process.

The project ran for seven months in total (from January to July 2009).

IMPACT

Two reports were produced off the back of the deliberative workshops: a 20-page summary report and a 100-page full report. A list of phased recommendations was also produced.

The reports were accessible and policy-focused. There was very wide and effective communication of project findings to a large number of stakeholders, both within and outside DECC.

The findings from the workshops fed into the following policies:

- Trials of pay-as-you-save.

- The roll-out of smart meters.

- The Renewable Energy Strategy, particularly public engagement around large-scale renewables and the 'green challenge'.

- The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, particularly the case for pilots and learning on the ground.

- DECC's public sector announcement (because the findings from the householder dialogue were used to argue the need for a strong set of announcements).

- The Low Carbon Transition Plan, particularly the Low Carbon Communities Challenge Fund. This initiative built directly on recommendations in the report and came about in response to calls from householders for local exemplars and an interest in community-level solutions that emerged during the process.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

While information on the cost of the project is not publically available, the positive evaluation of the project, along with its substantial impact on policy, suggests that it was considered value for money.

EVALUATION

The project was broadly evaluated as successful, with the evaluation of the final report noting that:

- Householders enjoyed taking part, despite the level of commitment needed to take part in the four phases. This was largely due to excellent rapport with the Ipsos MORI staff and well-structured events.

- Low dropout rates throughout the project demonstrated that householder engagement can be maintained for longer than standard public dialogue projects, provided they are well structured and facilitated.

- The dialogue had positive impacts on householders' attitudes such as their willingness to accept a wind turbine in their neighborhood and the responsibility attributed to individuals and communities. They attributed such changes to site visits as well as discussions.

- The dialogue led to the creation of a strong network of stakeholders. This came about through DECC's project manager openly and pro-actively seeking input alongside the more traditional working group.

- Householders' trust that the dialogue would make a difference was boosted through the presence of government ministers at events and exceptional communication after events.

LEARNING

Despite the generally high quality of the project, some difficulties were encountered, and the following lessons learned. In particular, the evaluator's report noted the importance of using techniques for making discussions inclusive and for recording them systematically.

It was also commented that an effective model for direct dialogue between stakeholders and householders seems to involve informal discussions with a small number of stakeholders at householder events, rather than more formal meetings with larger numbers of stakeholders.

More positively, it was noted that dialogue projects can act as an excellent opportunity for building stakeholder networks, provided that a variety of approaches to engagement are used, both formal and informal.

Similarly, another positive lesson to be drawn from the project is that reports setting out a clear agenda for action help to ensure that dialogue findings are translated into policy.

SOURCES

Rathouse, Kathryn, and Devine-Wright, Patrick. "Evaluation of the Big Energy Shift." *Final Report to DECC and Sciencewise-ERC, Sciencewise-ERC, St Albans*, 2010. https://ukccsaa1.miniserver.com/system/files/publications/ccs-reports/DECC_LC_198.pdf.

Sciencewise. "The Big Energy Shift." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/the-big-energy-shift/.

Unpublished internal research and evaluation by Ipsos MORI

CASE STUDY 11
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STRATEGY

Commissioning body / Owner: The Government of Nova Scotia Department of Energy (DoE)

Industry sector: Energy

Method type: Participatory Strategic Planning

Date: 2009

Geographic location: Canada (Nova Scotia)

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

Two Participatory Strategic Planning processes were undertaken in Nova Scotia to feed into the area's strategic planning around sustainable energy. In both cases the client was the Government of Nova Scotia Department of Energy (DoE) and the independent facilitator was the Faculty of Management, Dalhousie University.

The purpose of the first process was to develop a new institutional framework for electricity energy efficiency. The second developed a strategy to increase renewable energy generation in the Province.

In these processes participants came together over a number of sessions to:

- Agree the principles, goals and objectives for the planning process;
- Develop scenarios for the future;
- Develop scenarios further through learning from expert presentations and commissioned papers;
- Discuss scenarios through dialogue sessions (written submissions also encouraged and discussed);
- Present policy recommendations to the Government.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

In both processes, a multiple-stage dialogic methodology was used, which included the following elements:

- The identification and inclusion of stakeholders, and the establishment and agreement of principles, goals and objectives with stakeholders;

- Development of plausible scenarios for the future, and the elaboration of these scenarios through expert presentations and commissioned papers;

- Iterative discussion of the work that had taken place so far through a number of formal dialogue sessions;

- Independent assessment of stakeholder trust in the process, and developing recommendations (opinion surveys conducted after each formal dialogue session);

- Presentation of draft policy recommendations back to stakeholders, followed by the presentation of the recommendations to government and, finally, the enactment of these recommendations by government.

These processes ran over a three-month period from January to April 2008 and involved a total of 40 citizens.

IMPACT

In both processes, stakeholders significantly contributed to development of strategic plans concerning sustainable energy.

The outcome of the first process was the recommendation of a charge on electricity consumers equivalent to 5% of electricity costs and the establishment of a 'performance-based' independent agency to maximise the impact of energy conservation measures. These measures were legislated by the newly elected Government of Nova Scotia in 2009.

The second process resulted in recommendations for changes in institutional arrangements, financial incentives and technological options. The Government responded directly to many of the recommendations and made some policy commitments as a result.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

While no specific information is available on the cost of the project, its substantial impact on policy, and the fact that it was repeated, suggests that it was considered value for money.

EVALUATION

Academic literature written about the project has been optimistic about the quality and durability of the policies developed through the deliberative processes. It has also gone on to recommend the extension of similar processes to other provincial jurisdictions, citing it as a good method of overcoming many of the difficulties of establishing consensus on effective responses to climate change.

LEARNING

In addition to this substantial impact on policy, one of the major successes of the project was that it demonstrated that it is possible to involve citizens in strategic planning processes around complex issues such as energy planning.

The review of the project also emphasised the value of the process being seen as politically neutral, and kept free from the influence of campaigning and lobby groups, to ensure that it retained the support of decision-makers from across the political spectrum.

SOURCES

Adams, Michelle, Wheeler, David and Woolston, Genna. "A Participatory Approach to Sustainable Energy Strategy Development in a Carbon-Intensive Jurisdiction: The Case of Nova Scotia." *Energy Policy* 39, no. 5 (May 2011): 2550–59. doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2011.02.022.

CASE STUDY 12
CUSTOMER ADVISORY PANEL

Commissioning body / Owner: Southern Water

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Consumer Reference Group / Customer Forum

Date: Ongoing

Geographic location: England

Type of policy question: Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product

PURPOSE

The Southern Water Customer Advisory Panel is an example of a Consumer Challenge Group established by the mandate of Ofwat, and discussed in more general terms in case study 15. The panel was formed in order to:

- Monitor delivery of the six priorities identified in the business plan and provide assurance these are being met;

- Ensure that Southern Water's 26 customer promises are being kept;

- Advise and provide scrutiny of Southern Water's customer and stakeholder engagement programme, impact assessment and customer research.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The panel of 8-10 members was selected to provide a wide range of knowledge and experience of the issues affecting customers within Southern Water's region of operation, the water sector, the UK utilities sector, and the wider economy.

The Customer Advisory Panel produces an annual report presenting its assessment of Southern Water in these areas. In addition to this, the panel's views and recommendations are communicated transparently to the Board, customers, stakeholders and the wider community, as the minutes of its meetings are made publically available on Southern Water's website.

IMPACT

While it is difficult to judge the panel's impact on particular points of policy, the panel has enjoyed support from senior management, despite there being no current mandate from Ofwat for it to exist. This suggests that it is seen as a useful method for providing oversight and holding Southern Water to account.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The cost of the Customer Advisory Panel is unclear from available information.

EVALUATION

Despite never having been formally evaluated, the Southern Water Customer Advisory Panel enjoys the support of senior staff at Southern Water and is clearly valued independently of the initial mandate from Ofwat to establish the panel.

This suggests that it is an effective means of establishing accountability for Southern Water's engagement, customer promises and business plans.

LEARNING

One thing that should be noted regarding the Customer Advisory Panel is that it does not engage a wider group of consumers except through publication of recommendations and minutes.

SOURCES

Southern Water. "CAP Members." Accessed October 25, 2016. https://www.southernwater.co.uk/cap-members.

CASE STUDY 13
CUSTOMER FORUM

Commissioning body / Owner:	Water Industry Commission for Scotland, Consumer Focus Scotland & Scottish Water
Industry sector:	Water
Method type:	Consumer Reference Group / Customer Forum
Date:	2011 - 2015
Geographic location:	Scotland
Type of policy question:	Across all types of Policy Questions

PURPOSE

The Customer Forum is an independent entity, responsible for identifying and understanding customers' priorities and seeking to get the best outcome for customers. It was created through an agreement between the Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS), Consumer Focus Scotland and Scottish Water.

Its goal was to give the customer a stronger voice in the Strategic Review of Charges process by negotiating with the supplier, on behalf of the customer, to ensure that a fair price is set and that the customer has an input into decisions on spending priorities.

The Customer Forum was set up in September 2011 with three aims:

- Working with Scottish Water on its programme of customer research to establish what are the customers' priorities for service-level improvement and the level of charges set;

- Understanding and presenting to the regulator and to Scottish Water the customers' priorities;

- Seeking to secure the most appropriate outcome for customers based on these priorities.

In October 2012 the Forum was additionally asked to seek to agree a Business Plan with Scottish Water, consistent with Ministerial Objectives and with guidance notes that WICS would provide. If agreement could be reached, the Regulator indicated they would be "minded" to accept that agreement as the basis for the final determination of charges.

The purpose of the Forum therefore became both wider and more empowered: to ensure that the settlement reached in the 2014 Strategic Review of Charges reflected customers' views on the water and wastewater service, and that Scottish Water's spending priorities for the future were in line with customer expectations.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The Customer Forum is a lay challenge group whose eight members were selected to bring a wealth of skills and professional experience from many walks of life: including consumer affairs, the water industry, the environment, public policy, business and academia. Its role is to ensure that the customer's voice is part of the regulatory process and at the heart of key decisions

A key part of the focus of the Forum was on customer research and the uses that this was put to within the development of water industry policies. The intention was that the Forum would work with Scottish Water on a programme of quantitative and qualitative research to establish customers'

priorities. However, delays in establishing the Forum meant that Scottish Water had to start this research before the Forum members were appointed. Their role then became to assess the quality and scope of this research and how it was being used.

The Forum also had a remit to conduct whatever other research it thought was necessary, independently of Scottish Water. It commissioned its own research specifically to explore affordability and willingness-to-pay issues, and other related topics.

IMPACT

The Forum constantly questioned Scottish Water's assumptions and proposals, asking: Why is what you are proposing in the interests of customers?

The interview conducted to support this case study revealed a supplier very keen to improve its relationship with customers, to build a stronger understanding and to ensure customer views were listened to, heard and acted on. The Forum became the principal vehicle for helping guide this process of improvement. The Forum however was able to revisit some of these fundamental questions and agreed with the independent evaluation of their role and impact by Littlechild that, as a result, they have 'seen astonishing changes in the attitude and approach of the company'. Littlechild's evaluation also credited the Customer Forum with achieving significant improvements in Scottish Water's understanding of what consumers want.

In his evaluation report Littlechild noted that 'the sense at a working level is that the company would not have been willing to concede so much in the way of price, and the regulator would not have been able to make the case for as many customer benefits, as the Customer Forum was able to achieve.'

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

There was no financial information about the Customer Forum found publically.

In interview it was noted that the Forum's costs were essentially limited to a daily fee for the Chair and each of the Forum members for preparation and attendance at meetings, the costs associated with creating their website, and the costs for the employment of part-time policy support for periods when they employed someone for that purpose. The costs were regarded by all to be minimal, relative to the impact the Forum was perceived to have delivered.

No formal value for money study was conducted.

EVALUATION

The independent evaluation report stated that the 'Customer Forum process has been one of the most innovative, successful and encouraging developments in UK utility regulation'.

The research interview showed that members felt they had all added value to the process and had a significant impact on behalf of consumers, despite it being a demanding and challenging role. When quoted in the evaluation report, appointees to the Forum noted that they thought the Forum was breaking new ground, and better able to discover and mobilise customer opinion than previous models. They felt it offered an opportunity to get a more effective customer perspective into a monopoly supplier, increase transparency and change relationships between customers and the supplier.

It was also noted that, since working with the Forum, Scottish Water's understanding of what customers want appears to have radically improved: 'Its presentation of its thinking – in its 25-year vision and its business plan – is considerably more customer-friendly than before.'

LEARNING

- It would have been advantageous to set up the Forum earlier in the Review of Charges process to enable members to gain a more thorough understanding of the sector before

being thrust into meetings and negotiations. This also would have enabled the Forum to have an explicit input into the design of Scottish Water's research programme, and would have avoided the need to carry out additional research.

- It is interesting to note, however, that the Chairman placed particular value on the research that was carried out by the Forum directly, and felt that the Forum would not have credibility unless it had actually spoken to customers directly.

- Despite this it was noted that the Forum had to exercise rather more judgement on behalf of customers, as opposed to advocacy based on evidence, than they might initially have expected. It was noted in the research interview, however, that in doing so members imposed very rigorous standards on themselves in relation to being able to justify and defend the judgement calls they made. In future, however, it seems that members would like to see the capacity of the Forum to undertake its own consumer research, or to request independent research, to be expanded.

- There is a risk that lay challenge groups like this may become 'expert' over time if their membership is not regularly renewed. It was acknowledged in the research interview that members' questions may have become less challenging as they developed a wider and deeper understanding of the industry context, and became more accepting of the reasoning and arguments put before them. This however has to be balanced with the fact that, as their knowledge increased, they were also able to focus their points of challenge effectively on those areas that they were least satisfied with.

- The strong support of all the involved parties, especially WICS, Scottish Water, Consumer Focus Scotland and the Scottish Government, was critical to the Forum's success. It was noted in the research interview that these strong links, and the knowledge that they were undertaking something bold and new, gave everyone involved added incentive to work genuinely in the hope of reaching agreement.

- It was also particularly noted in the research interview that not only was the engagement of officials important to the success of the Forum, but also that the support of senior management (in this case the CEO of Scottish Water) was vital. His support set a tone within the company that ensured that the Forum's input was treated as valuable, rather than an irritation, to their wider objectives.

- A lack of dedicated resources proved somewhat limiting, and considerably more responsibility was put on the Chair than anticipated. While an initial choice was made not to have full-time support staff who might displace the views of Forum members, in practice the Forum sometimes struggled, in their opinion, to give Scottish Water the best, intelligent, subtle, thoughtful and timely feedback.

SOURCES

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Customer Forum "Customer Forum" Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.customerforum.org.uk/

Research interview with member of the Customer Forum – available in evidence pack under 'CAS Interview - Case study 13 - Confidential'.

CASE STUDY 14
FLOOD-RISK COMMUNICATIONS DIALOGUE

Commissioning body / Owner: The Environment Agency

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogues

Date: 2013-15

Geographic location: United Kingdom (Oxford, York, Leicester, Newtown, Skegness)

Type of policy question: Questions about the consumer experience of an existing service/ product

PURPOSE

The dialogues were intended primarily as a means of examining different approaches to informing the public about flood risk. The aim was to generate practical outputs (messages, materials and approaches to the use of different media) designed to increase awareness, encourage engagement and improve responses to flood risk.

The project's specific objectives were to:

-   Review the current issues surrounding flood risk communication and lessons learnt from other countries or disciplines;

-   Co-create, with members of the public, ways of helping individuals and communities to understand flood risk better, to link risk to appropriate action, and to feel empowered to take action;

-   Help agencies adopt a consistent approach to conveying risk and likelihood, enabling them to join up their subsequent activities;

-   Produce recommendations from members of the public and stakeholders on resources which are likely to result in positive changes to how people think and act in response to flood risk.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The project began with the establishment of an oversight group (made up of representatives from Environment Agency; Met Office; Hampshire County Council; Red Cross; Public Health England; Cambridge University; Welsh Government; Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS); Lancaster University; Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra); Northumbria University; National Flood Forum; the Cabinet Office; a local authority councillor; Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG); and Natural Resources Wales.

This group was involved in undertaking a literature review and a mapping of current flood risk communications. They also hosted a design and development workshop for key stakeholders to identify areas of focus and discussion before any engagement with the public took place.

Following this, a series of public workshops were held, in Oxford and York, where people had experience of flooding in their homes, and Leicester, Newtown and Skegness, areas where there were high risks of flooding. Participants were recruited to be broadly representative of the populations in these areas.

The workshops in each location began with a mid-week evening introductory event, followed by a full-day workshop the following Saturday. High staff / expert ratios at these workshops (1 expert for every 3-4 participants) meant that not only could most questions be answered immediately, but also that staff were able to capture rich and robust comparable data in each location. The findings from these workshops were then discussed by the oversight group, which agreed plans for a reconvened workshop (November 2014).

The reconvened workshop brought together 28 public participants (between four and six from each of the five earlier locations) with representatives from Public Health England, the Red Cross, the National Flood Forum and the Environment Agency. This workshop was designed to produce more concrete recommendations to take forward.

A final oversight group meeting was then held to review the final report and develop an initial action plan, which was then worked up further by the Environment Agency and the delivery team. A detailed dissemination plan was then developed and delivered.

The process involved a total of 95 public participants, 18 stakeholders and 27 experts. The project took 26 months, and ran from November 2013 till December 2015.

Participants were not paid for their time.

IMPACT

The outputs from the project included a detailed case study, an evaluation report, a project report, a project summary, a literature review and an action plan for implementing the findings of the project.

The project had already started to impact on Environment Agency mapping and flood information systems before it was concluded. By the time of the reconvened workshop the Environment Agency had taken on board many of the project messages and specific findings in mock-ups of flood-risk maps and communication materials (fliers, personal flood plans and so on).

Further actions started when the research aspect of the project ended in February 2015. These included work to improve website access and information, revising flood maps, linking the work to post-flood review recommendations, and flood awareness work by Natural Resources Wales. A plan to implement the outcomes from the dialogue project was also developed, which detailed extensive further planned actions.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The external evaluation of this project noted that partners had assessed the project as value for money and provided an interesting criterion for this assessment, namely that:

> 'It would only require 12 households (that is, 1 per cent of those involved in dialogues, all of whom live in high flood-risk areas) to take preventative action (for example, signing up to Floodline, fitting property-level protection measures such as air brick, toilet valves or flood skirts, and moving their possessions upstairs in the event of a flood) to avoid flood damage in a major flood event to recoup project costs. While the evaluation was not able to collect robust quantitative data on actions taken, anecdotal evidence from participants suggests that at least this percentage had the intention of taking action individually or collectively. However, such benefits will not be tested until the time of a major flood in their area.'

EVALUATION

The successful framing and design of the dialogue reflected a well-resourced scoping stage and realistic timetable.

Unforeseen slippage in the project timetable, in part due to severe flooding in the winter of 2013/14 and in part due to difficulties in recruiting a mix of 'flood-risk' and 'flood-literate' participants within very specific postcode requirements, does not seem to have caused a problem overall. The delay was considered to have been worth it to get the right locations, experts, public and materials.

The methodology was seen as robust by government, academic and NGO stakeholders. The Sciencewise brand was seen as helpful, as was the scale, location and number of events. This meant that policy-makers were left feeling that they had heard from a broad cross-section of the public, including some of the hardest to reach.

Dialogues were well-structured and delivered in a warm, stimulating atmosphere. The carefully designed participant journey, and high ratios of facilitator/rapporteur and experts to participant, led to very productive sessions.

While the objective of helping agencies adopt a consistent approach to conveying risk and likelihood, was not met specifically through the dialogue process, key stakeholders agreed that they were now more able and enthusiastic about working together to implement the messages and findings of the dialogue through a joint action plan.

LEARNING

A realistic timetable and an engaged oversight group were vital to the project's impact. However it was noted in the evaluation that, while it was instrumental to the success of the project, running a large oversight group over a long period of time presented challenges in terms of management, coordination and maintaining continuity.

In addition to this, the following lessons were learnt from the project:

- The extended scoping period was useful in allowing a comprehensive literature review which fed into an imaginative design and variety of stimulus materials.

- The project faced challenges regarding recruitment against very specific requirements. Though this led to the recruitment phase taking longer than had been anticipated, it did not adversely affect the project.

- Capturing public views, before and after information was provided, worked well in demonstrating to participants and policy audiences the journey which they had been on, and how knowledge and attitudes had changed.

- Being able to demonstrate at the reconvened event that the agencies were already beginning to implement recommendations from local events generated high levels of trust among participants in the usefulness of the process.

SOURCES

MacGillivray, Anna and Livesey, Hilary. "Public Dialogues on Flood Risk Communication - Evaluation Report." The Environment Agency, December 2015. http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Uploads/Publicdialoguesonfloodriskcommunication-evaluationreport.pdf.

Sciencewise. "Flood-Risk Communications Dialogue - Case Study." Sciencewise, 2015. http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Uploads/SWiseCommRiskCSv3.pdf.

CASE STUDY 15
CONSUMER CHALLENGE GROUPS (CCG)

Commissioning body / Owner:	Ofwat
Industry sector:	Water
Method type:	Consumer Reference Group / Customer Forum
Date:	2014 - onwards
Geographic location:	England and Wales
Type of policy question:	Across all types of policy questions

PURPOSE

CCGs are panels of stakeholder representatives that exist to scrutinise and challenge water companies' public engagement and policy planning activities.

They were established in the run-up to the 2014 Price Review, when water regulator Ofwat mandated that each water company establish a CCG to provide scrutiny of the latter's business, and price and service plans.

The underlying motivation for the creation of CCGs was Ofwat's desire to ensure that water companies set their business plans with reference to the needs and priorities of customers, the public and other key stakeholders. CCGs are therefore not intended as a public engagement mechanism themselves, but rather as a means of ensuring that water companies undertake and use the findings of public engagement to influence decision-making.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Despite mandating for their creation and setting their broad objectives, Ofwat left the terms of reference for individual CCGs down to the discretion of the water companies. Given this, there is some level of variation in the means by which CCGs are used to inform and scrutinise policy.

In most cases, the CCG panel meets regularly, before feeding back to both to the water company and to Ofwat. In many cases, the chair of the CCG will have a direct link to the board of the water company, ensuring that the topics discussed and issues raised in CCG meeting are heard at board level.

In the run-up to the 2014 Price Review, CCGs were used to focus primarily on how well water companies had engaged with consumer on customer priorities, and how well this information had been reflected in companies' business plans.

Water companies are expected to tailor CCG membership to reflect their customer bases and the demographics of the populations that they serve. Where there are issues that are of peculiar relevance to a water company, the membership of its CCG is expected to have members able to scrutinise them.

IMPACT

In the run-up to the 2014 Price Review, challenges from CCGs did result in revisions to water companies' approaches to customer engagement.

In addition to this, the fact that many CCG chairs had a direct link to the water company's board, and that many non-executive directors would attend CCG meetings, led to considerations of customer

engagement and customer perspectives being discussed more frequently by senior policy-makers in water companies.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Many of the factors that affect the cost of a CCG from the perspective of a water company – such as whether panel members are paid and the extent to which the water company can run CCGs using its pre-existing public engagement resources – vary on a case-by-case basis. As such, it is not possible to make generalisations about the cost of CCGs to water companies.

It is, however, worth noting that Ofwat does not currently require water companies to have CCGs in place. The fact that none of the water companies has chosen to disband its CCG could therefore be seen as evidence of their perceived value for money.

The cost to Ofwat is similarly difficult to estimate, due to the fact that many components of overseeing CCGs are intertwined with pre-existing mechanisms and processes.

In terms of value for money, Ofwat staff members interviewed in the course of this research indicated that they considered CCGs to have been value for money, despite reasonably high costs associated with certain activities.

It was also mentioned that the value of CCGs to Ofwat lies to a large extent in the fact that they are now considered to be an integral part of the regulator's overall strategy and its move towards an outcomes-based approach to regulation.

EVALUATION

CCGs have generally been evaluated favourably, with evidence to suggest that Ofwat, water companies and the Consumer Council for Water regard them as adding value to consumer engagement.

Value to water companies
In between the 2014 Price Review and the 2019 Price Review, Ofwat has not mandated that water companies have CCGs in place. The fact that all water companies have chosen to hold onto their CCGs, rather than temporarily disbanding them, might be taken to suggest that they are of some value to water companies. Likewise, water companies have been using CCGs to play roles that they are not mandated to play, such as demonstrating customer assurance and challenge in the delivery of their business plans. Again, this could be taken as evidence of CCGs' value to water companies.

Value to Ofwat
In the interview conducted for this research, Ofwat employees stated that they would definitely evaluate CCGs as a successful initiative, and reiterated how, partly as a result of their success, CCGs are considered by Ofwat to be an integral part its overall regulation strategy.

Ofwat staff also mentioned the revisions of companies' approaches to customer engagement that have taken place as a consequence of CCG scrutiny, along with the cultural changes to policy-setting that CCGs have brought about.

Value to the Consumer Council for Water
In its assessment of the 2014 Price Review, the Consumer Council for Water concluded that CCGs had been a step forward in giving stakeholders a platform for challenging company business plans, and that they were generally very effective in challenging company proposals.

The Council found that CCGs were typically most effective in analysing and challenging how companies were engaging with customers and using this evidence to build plans. It did find, however, that some CCG members with non-water industry backgrounds struggled at times to cope with the complexity of the subjects under discussion, and the time commitment over a long period.

LEARNING

Despite overall positivity about CCGs and their place, Ofwat were able to list various challenges encountered, and considerations about how CCGs might be run more effectively in the future.

It was observed that some water companies had been keen for Ofwat to be more prescriptive about the role of CCGs, and were uncomfortable with the long leash upon which they were put. Relatedly, it was noted that more resources and support could have been provided for water companies who were less clear about how best to make use of CCGs. Specifically, it is important to provide CCGs with information as quickly as possible to enable them to scrutinise water companies' plans effectively.

In a sentiment that was echoed by the Consumer Council for Water in its comments about CCGs, Ofwat also observed that, in future, more effort to demonstrate the independence of CCGs should be made.

Finally, it was observed that the panel format can lack flexibility, with it being difficult to get a CCG panel together quickly to respond to a particular policy challenge or question. As a result of this, Ofwat is now experimenting with the idea of complementing a standard panel with other mechanisms for assembling groups of stakeholders and experts on a more ad hoc basis.

SOURCES

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Ofwat. "Customer Challenge Groups." *Ofwat*. Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/regulated-companies/price-review/2019-price-review/customer-challenge-groups/.

Research interview with staff from Ofwat – available in evidence pack under 'CAS interview - Case study 15 - 191016 – Confidential'

CASE STUDY 16
FLOATING THE IDEA – HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMER VIEWS ON WATER MARKET REFORM

Commissioning body / Owner:	The Consumer Council for Water
Industry sector:	Water
Method type:	Deliberative Focus Groups
Date:	2015
Geographic location:	England
Type of policy question:	Consulting on policy options to inform how policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

In 2015, the UK Government announced its intention look into introducing competition into the housing water retail market in England. As the organisation with the statutory duty to protect the interests of water consumers, the Consumer Council for Water wished to develop a better understanding of consumers' views on these potential changes.

The focus groups were intended to gain a nuanced understanding of the views and concerns of household customers regarding the potential opening up of the market to competition. In particular, the Consumer Council for Water was keen to understand the public's views on the ramifications of competition, its benefits and pitfalls, and to get a better understanding of factors that might affect whether households switch supplier.

The specific research objectives of the focus groups were:-

- to gauge household customer appetite for water market reform;
- to assess motivating factors and barriers to engaging in a reformed water market; and
- to gauge views and opinion on the considerations regarding wider market change.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The Consumer Council for Water was aware of the complex nature of the subject matter, and was therefore keen to use a technique that would adequately capture the nuances of consumers' views.

SYSTRA Ltd was therefore commissioned to run nine focus groups in each of the water and sewerage areas in England.

The focus groups were an hour and a half each. During the session participants were given progressively greater levels of information about the issues under discussion, allowing the facilitators to assess how views changed in response to exposure to new information.

Each focus group consisted of a short introduction, in which facilitators would assess how participants felt about competition, and their level of knowledge and awareness of water and sewerage services. The remaining time would then be spent talking more directly about participants' attitudes and preferences regarding competition in the provision of household water. Throughout the process, information was delivered in small chunks (rather than all at once), enabling facilitators to get a clearer impression of what was influencing participants changing views.

In addition to this, participants were polled though shows of hands at various stages in the process, and were encouraged to express both their opinions and the reasons for holding them.

The project operated under very tight timescales, with five months between its inception and the publication of the final report.

Participants were not compensated for their time.

IMPACT

The findings of the research were presented in a report published in 2016. This report also drew on quantitative survey and a series of interviews with vulnerable water consumers. In addition to this, a regional breakdown of the findings was also published.

The Consumer Council for Water used the findings from the report, and from the focus groups themselves, to inform its policy input to Ofwat's assessment of the costs and benefits of a competitive household water retail market.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

In an interview conducted for the purposes of this research, staff from the Consumer Council for Water stated that they considered the focus groups to have been value for money: they had fulfilled their objectives in allowing the Council to develop an informed response to Ofwat regarding the introduction of competition to the water market.

Staff also mentioned how learnings from the focus group are still being used to inform the Consumer Council for Water's organisational policy on household competition, and are expected to be drawn on for the foreseeable future.

EVALUATION

The project was evaluated positively by the Consumer Council for Water, who were pleased that it had delivered the outputs required within challengingly tight timescales.

LEARNING

The project encountered various challenges typical to deliberative exercises of this nature: the challenge of conveying complex policy debates; of couching information in terms that customers can easily understand and engage with; and holding the attention of participants with little or no prior interest in the subject matter.

In overcoming these perennial challenges, the Consumer Council for Water stressed the importance of good, professional facilitation and of piloting the discussion plan in order to identify and weed out components that are not working.

SOURCES
Research Interview with staff members from the Consumer Council for Water – available in evidence pack under 'CAS Interview - Case study 16 - 201016 – Confidential'

Robertson, Evelyn and Le Masurier, Paul. "Floating the Idea: Household Customer Views on Water Market Reform in England." Systra, May 2016. http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CCWater-Household-Competition-Report-FINAL-20160517.pdf.

CASE STUDY 17
PUBLIC WATER FORUM

Commissioning body / Owner: The Commission for Energy Regulation, Ireland

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Consumer Reference Group / Customer Forum

Date: 2015 onwards

Geographic location: The Republic of Ireland

Type of policy question: Across all types of policy questions

PURPOSE

The Water Services Act 2014 called for the establishment of an independent consumer consultative forum, to be known as the Public Water Forum, to feed directly into the activities and work of Irish Water and the Commission on Energy Regulation (CER), the economic regulator of Ireland's public water system.

Its primary purpose is to represent the interests of the public and water consumers in the development of public water policy, to ensure that investments in Ireland's water infrastructure are in the best interests of the public, that consumers receive a quality service and that the environment is protected.

The Forum has a general remit of engaging the voice of the consumer in interacting with Irish Water and the Commission for Energy Regulation, it also has the specific remit of commenting or contributing on any policy or domain which it considers relevant to the interests of such consumers.

Specific issues that the forum focuses on include:

- Drinking water;
- Waste water treatment;
- Affordability;
- Sustainable financing of the water infrastructure on an ongoing and long-term basis with particular reference to the issues of cost recovery;
- 'Polluter pays' principle;
- Optimal organisational and governance structure for safe, efficient and secure provision;
- Education and public engagement regarding the public water sector; and
- Environmental and health issues.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The Forum meets on a regular basis (every 2 months at present) to discuss and debate issues relevant to the public water sector in Ireland.

Where there are specific issues that require examination in detail, the Forum may create working groups to undertake focused work on the issues and report back to the Forum.

From time to time, the Forum may issue documents setting out its views or recommendations in relation to certain aspects of the public water sector.

The Forum also has a role in responding to consultations held by both Irish Water and the Commission for Energy Regulation. Where such consultations are held, the Forum will consider the issues being consulted upon and deliver a formal response to the consultations.

Panel composition and recruitment

The Forum is made up of 32 members in total plus a Chair, and all members participate voluntarily (although expenses are paid). The CER provides a secretariat role to the Forum.

Under legislation, The Commission for Energy Regulation was given the job of recruiting the members of the Forum. In September 2015 the recruitment campaign began, supported by significant media interest and advertising.

The domestic members were to be selected to be representative of Irish society generally – balanced in terms of gender, age and region, and reflective of the urban and rural population. Domestic consumers were invited to submit a written application to become a member of the Public Water Forum. The application form included basic demographic information but did not ask about their qualifications or motivations. Approximately 250 applications were received.

A total of 20 domestic members were appointed for a period of 3 years from the applications received (and a 100-person reserve panel to allow for drop-out.) The selection of members was carried out randomly (literally drawn from a box) but was carried out in a way that would ensure that they were representative of Irish society generally. The selection process was independently verified and the 20 domestic members meet the following criteria:

- At least two people from each age category;
- At least five men and at least five women;
- At least three people from each location category;
- At least five people from an urban location and five from a rural location; and
- At least five registered Irish Water customers and at least five unregistered people.

Organisational members were recruited at the same time as the domestic members and there is one organisational member from each of the following sectors (recruited through direct contact and advertisement):

- The interests of the consumer;
- The interests of those persons providing or occupying social housing;
- The interests of those persons owning or occupying private rented housing;
- The interests of the member organisations of the Community and Voluntary Pillar;
- Those with a disability;
- The interests of the environment;
- The interests of industry;
- The interests of agriculture and rural affairs;
- The interests of tourism and recreation;
- The interests of the education sector;
- The interests of the group water sector; and
- The interests of the trade union movement.

Participants are not paid for their involvement.

IMPACT

The primary role of the forum is to respond to government, industry and regulator consultations as the voice of the consumer.

Since the Forum was established in December 2015, however, there has been significant upheaval in the water sector in Ireland as a result of the February 2016 elections. This led to a suspension of water charges and the appointment of an expert committee to review the situation and report in March 2017. This means that it has been particularly difficult for the Forum to plan an effective programme of work.

In the interim, however, the Forum has been using the time to increase members' knowledge of the issues and challenges faced by the industry and has submitted a response on behalf of consumers to the CER Consultation on Irish Water's Performance Assessment.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The Public Water Forum had an initial budget of €206,368 for 2016 to cover operation and establishment costs however there has been no agreement of an annual budget.

No information on whether the Forum is considered value for money is available.

EVALUATION

The initial goal was to establish a diverse and representative forum able to speak on behalf of the wider consumer body and that has been successfully achieved. Given the circumstances outlined above, however, it is too early to make any definitive assessments of the Forum's ability to influence water policy directly.

It was suggested in the interview that it will be a challenge for this group to develop ways of working together which will be able to respond effectively as a collective voice of the consumer, when there are so many different and competing perspectives involved (including the voice of business which has many different priorities from domestic consumers). It was noted in the interview that the discussions in which the Forum engages are highly deliberative. It seems to the researchers however, that ensuring this is reflected in the formal outputs the forum generates e.g. in a collective response to a consultation, will be challenging and may result in responses becoming blander and more high-level than the discussions that actually took place.

Further, while it is expected that domestic members will provide valuable insight around charging policies, expectations of service, affordability etc., it is currently difficult to see how they are going to be able to engage in the much more complex and technical /financial debates about infrastructure demands and cost recovery without a significant investment of time and resources into learning.

LEARNING

Despite being relatively new there are a number of lessons emerging from the experience of setting up and convening the Forum that are relevant to this study.

- While the diversity of the group is one of its strengths, it is also a complication. The Forum's Secretariat already recognises the challenges it faces in presenting information to the Forum, given the different levels of understanding and technical ability exist among the group.

- While there appear (from the figure above) to have been considerable financial resources given to support the Forum in the first year, the lack of an independent Secretariat means that the process of distilling the disparate views expressed in relation to a consultation into something resembling a collective voice falls to the Chairperson (due to the potential conflict of interest in CER fulfilling this role). While the current Chair is very experienced, with expert knowledge of the industry, he is also participating in a voluntary capacity and thus has limited time to devote to this potentially complex task. This highlights that there may be a need for an independent resource to facilitate discussions and help draw out conclusions at times.

- While the terms of reference for establishing the Forum have been very clear that the domestic customers are there to participate in the process as individual consumers (rather than representatives of a constituency) this can be difficult to reconcile with the other members of the Forum playing a representative role. Already questions are being asked

about whether this is an effective structure for the Forum, or whether each group would be able to have a more useful input separately[56].

- It is also interesting to note that, although this was not their intended function, members of the Forum are beginning to envision a role for themselves in relation to public education, outreach and engagement.

SOURCES

Research interview with staff from the Commission for Energy Regulation – available in evidence pack under 'CAS Interview - Case study 17 - Confidential'.

Public Water Forum. "Public Water Forum." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.publicwaterforum.ie/.

———. "Public Water Forum Meeting – 31st August 2016 - Presentation Slides." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.publicwaterforum.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Meeting-No-4-Presentation-Slides.pdf.

[56] It was interesting in this respect to hear, during the interview, about a model that CER has in the past used to engage with representative groups to try to get more input from a domestic consumer perspective into their formal consultation processes. In the pre-consultation phase they have invited members of representative groups (including those now participating in the Forum) to sessions designed to inform them about upcoming consultations and policy proposals with the intention of encouraging them to respond on behalf of those they represent. They have found however that, while the groups have been keen to listen and give their views during the meetings, this approach has not led to an increase in formal, written responses. This has been taken to indicate a lack of resources, rather than a lack of interest, on behalf of these groups and may therefore signal difficulties in terms of their ongoing participation in the Forum as well.
 It is also worth noting here that, of the members who have had to be replaced since the Forum was established, most have been those fulfilling a representative function rather than individual, domestic consumers.

CASE STUDY 18
WHAT FLOATS YOUR BOAT?: APPLECROSS - FIRHILL BASIN CANAL CORRIDOR MASTERPLAN

Commissioning body / Owner:	Scottish Canals
Industry sector:	Water
Method type:	Participatory Strategic Planning
Date:	2014
Geographic location:	Scotland
Type of policy question:	Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership Action Plan highlighted the regeneration potential of the canal corridor between Applecross Basin and Firhill Basin, and its adjoining neighbourhoods.

Working with partners and local communities along Scotland's canals, Scottish Canals have been focused on encouraging place-making that empowers local people, uses clever solutions for local challenges and supports the physical transformation of underused or derelict land in ways which delivers tangible benefits to the local community.

Responding to these three drivers, the charrette was commissioned to involve stakeholders and local community members in creating a vision for the area and translate this into a detailed Spatial Development Framework that could guide local regeneration.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

This research used a specific type of Participatory Strategic Planning process known as a charrette. A charrette is an intensive, design-led planning and engagement approach that allows residents, town planners, designers and other stakeholders to collaborate on a vision for development. It is a process that aims to merge opportunities and aspirations together to ensure that the proposals that emerge have a place-making focus, designed to have long term benefit for the local communities.

The 'What Floats your Boat' charrette was held over a 4-day period and included guided walks, presentations and group workshops designed to maximise participation, in a way that led participants and the team progressively from exploring and identifying key issues in the site area currently, to thinking creatively about the future.

- The charrette started with an introductory presentation that briefed attendees on the background and purpose of the event, and provided context from a Scottish Canals and Glasgow City Council perspective.

- Participants were invited to walk the site on 3 differing routes with members of the project / design team. Participants on the walking routes were briefed to consider the site in terms of its strengths, weaknesses and the opportunities that presented themselves. This was discussed on return to the charrette venue.

- On the afternoon of the first day a 'future scenarios' exercise was used to explore the possible outcomes for the area. This allowed participants, in group breakout sessions, to imagine a future that has already brought about change through a particular driver. The driver and subsequent envisaged change may or may not be desirable so the exercise also acted as a test bed for ideas, with feedback gathered from group sessions.

- The second morning of the charrette was a technical session that provided a specific opportunity for technical specialists and stakeholders to hear a presentation on the technical issues in the area, and to consider solutions. It features a headline technical presentation from a number of specialists, followed by two rounds of group work and a closing ideas exchange. In the group work, participants self-selected which of the two groups they would go to during the course of the morning. In the group sessions, participants were asked to establish a goal, short-term and long-term outcomes.

- Thereafter different scenarios of the future were tested, which in turn led to the production of a draft development framework and masterplan that the team presented on the final day.

Over 300 stakeholders and members of the local community participated over the 4-day period, with participants choosing which sessions they could/would attend.

Members of the public were not paid for their time.

IMPACT

The design-led outputs created through the charrette, and the iterative process they were subject to throughout, meant that the proposals produced through the engagement process were very quickly and easily able to be translated into a Spatial Development Framework for the area that sets out the development potential, connectivity enhancements, greenspace improvements and a high-level arts and cultural strategy. This will guide overall regeneration plans in the area.

Implementation funding has since been identified through the Vacant & Derelict Land Fund strategy. On the basis of this research a Planning Permission in Principle has been submitted for the derelict land.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

No information on costs for this project was available.

EVALUATION

The charrette appears to have been a very effective model for enabling experts, stakeholders and local residents to work together to arrive quickly at a community-led, but achievable, regeneration plan for a local area.

LEARNING

Scottish Canals' approach to engagement with their customers and other users of the canal system has transformed over the last 10 years from a technical to a place-making approach. While still underpinned by a strong ethos of engineering and pragmatic asset management, Scottish Canals have come to view the inland waterways as catalysts for regeneration in both urban and rural areas that are able to generate positive impact on health and communities. This has transformed the way that the organisation approaches engagement with its users, neighbours and stakeholders.

Specific learning from the charrette process includes:

- The engagement of over 300 people in 4 days is significant – although it must be acknowledged that it was a self-selecting group.

- The flexibility of the process design meant that local residents could participate at different times and levels of intensity depending on their interest and other commitments.

- The charrette provides a forum for ideas and offers the unique advantage of giving immediate feedback to participants and designers, through iterative spatial design plans developed throughout the process. This, importantly, allows everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

SOURCES

Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership "Woodside - Firhill - Hamiltonhill Development Framework and Applecross - Firhill Basin Canal Corridor Masterplan Informed by the 'What Floats Your Boat?' Charrette" March 2016 Accessed October 25, 2016. https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/regeneration/charrettes/woodside-firhill-hamiltonhill-charrette/

Scottish Canals "Corporate Plant 2014-2017: Building Stronger Communities" Accessed October 25, 2016. https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/corporate/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/Scottish-Canals-Corporate-Plan-2014-2017.pdf

CASE STUDY 19
SIGNIFICANT WATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES: ENGAGING THE PUBLIC ON THE BIG ISSUES AFFECTING THE WATER ENVIRONMENT

Commissioning body / Owner: Environment Agency

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogue

Date: 2013

Geographic location: England

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to carry out public dialogue on water management issues to ensure that public views and decisions were fed into River Basin Management Plans and other Water Framework Directive commitments.

The projects had four key objectives:

- To allow a sample of the public to engage on, deliberate and, alongside other evidence (such as environmental, technical, economic), feed into key decisions within plans for the water environment;

- To demonstrate an open and objective approach to river basin planning which can help create greater commitment to actions from business and other stakeholders;

- To encourage frank and evidence-based dialogue with the public on the cost and benefits provided by our water environment and how best to manage this environment into the future;

- To link across various water planning cycles (e.g. abstraction plans, flood risk plans) to ensure the Environment Agency has a customer focus.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Seven deliberative workshops were held across England, with around 20 members of the public attending each. Following these, a reconvened workshop was carried out, attended by 20 people who had attended one of the initial workshops. This was designed to enable participants to build on their thinking and knowledge from the first workshop session in order to deliberate further about the issues that were raised.

The initial workshops
The morning session of these workshops started off with a plenary discussion to identify participants' views, values and beliefs and what they felt were priorities in terms of managing the water environment.

This was followed by a Powerpoint presentation carried out by Environment Agency staff on the significant water management issues. Participants were provided with stimulus materials and given a chance to read through these and ask questions of the Environment Agency staff as appropriate.

The afternoon session split participants into two groups. Each issue presented earlier was discussed in turn, with time for reflection and additional input from the Environment Agency staff. A 'prioritisation exercise' followed where people indicated their level of interest in the different issues following the discussion.

The workshops concluded with four small group discussions to cover reflections on the discussion, to elicit initial thoughts from participants about ways to pay for necessary measures to address the water management issues, and think about willingness or otherwise to consider 'lifestyle choices' in the light of the issues considered.

The reconvened workshop
Participants began by discussing the challenges and benefits discussed in the first workshop. The materials from the previous workshops were re-introduced so people could remind themselves and refer to the content if useful.

The rest of the workshop was focused on working on 3 different scenarios which would help participants look at the dilemmas inherent in managing the water environment. A scenario was introduced via a PowerPoint presentation and participants were split into two groups, with each group deciding how they would allocate resources to address the problem. Each group worked through the 3 scenarios given. The groups then came back together to share and discuss results.

Finally, a representative from the Environment Agency took the opportunity to discuss any last questions arising from the day or previous sessions.

The project ran for 10 months and involved a total of 119 participants.

Participants were paid £65 per 6-hour workshop.

IMPACT

Findings from the individual workshops were used within the Environment Agency and have been disseminated through briefings to key teams and initiatives. However, it was felt there was a lack of decisive policy-related opinion generated in the workshops, which may limit the project's long term impact on policy.

Whilst feedback from the Environment Agency was positive about the value of the findings in influencing and informing their policy development, it is likely that the impact will be greater on the development of future consultation material and processes, than in the direct influence of policy.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The project was considered to have been value for money.

EVALUATION

An official evaluation of the project, carried out by Icarus Research, was broadly positive, finding the project to have been well designed, delivered and reported. The evaluators found the deliberative process to have been worthwhile and found that there were significant useful outputs, outcomes and learning. The process instilled substantially more confidence within the Environment Agency to work with the public as water management policy and practice develop at both a national and catchment level.

LEARNING

The evaluation found that the project would have benefitted from more time and focus at the start of the process to set out very clearly, and develop, a mutual understanding across the project partners and contractors about the desired outputs and outcomes of the initiative.

Moreover, there was a need for an iterative process at this stage to reference the project's objectives against the resources, time and expertise available and then to design a process that had the best opportunity to satisfy those objectives. This highlights some learning about governance, where there are different organisations with different objectives and levels of experience in public participation.

SOURCES

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CASE STUDY 20
LISTENING TO OUR CUSTOMERS

Commissioning body / Owner:	Scottish Water
Industry sector:	Water
Method type:	Deliberative Focus Groups
Date:	2012-13
Geographic location:	Scotland
Type of policy question:	Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product

PURPOSE

The objective of the research was to deliver information required to understand household and business end users' priorities for service improvement and relative valuation of benefits, in relation to improvements to elements of the water and waste services provided by Scottish Water.

More specifically, the programme of research sought to understand:

- Customers' priorities;
- Customers' perceptions and expectations of Scottish Water;
- Overall views of Scottish Water's service.

The research was used to help inform their subsequent Stated Preference survey.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Eight deliberative focus groups were carried out across Scotland with household bill payers. They were moderated by the Accent research team and Scottish Water staff. In addition to this, thirteen tele-depth interviews were carried out with a range of businesses who had very small to very large water and waste water bills, and with Licensed Provider representatives.

Focus groups
In advance of the focus group workshops, all participants were sent two leaflets with information on the services provided by Scottish Water.

The Focus Groups ran for 2 hours and began with initial warm-up discussions on the key issues. Participants were then asked to outline their priorities regarding water and waste services in order to gain an insight into their initial thoughts. For each of the subjects discussed, participants were then given a presentation, and time to digest the information and ask questions.

Participants were then split into groups – one for water and one for waste-water subjects. Discussions were then carried out in groups to understand customers' informed views regarding each service issue and gain feedback on individuals' views and values.

The entire project took place over the course of two years (in 2 phases) and involved a further:

- 11 on-line panel activities with household customers;
- Stated Preference survey interviews with 1000 household customers and 200 surveys completed on-line ;
- Stated Preference surveys with 500 business end users;
- 6 validation focus groups with household customers.

IMPACT

The information generated from the research was instrumental in informing Scottish Water's strategic direction and its Strategic Review of Charges 2014.

It was also seen as particularly effective in identifying a range of issues to explore further in subsequent quantitative research.

In addition to this, the project was considered to have been very useful in presenting customer experiences to stakeholders.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

While the total cost of the research project was £300,000, no information is available about the specific cost of the deliberative research.

It was evident from the interview conducted as part of this research that Scottish Water were pleased with its outputs and viewed the exercise as value for money.

EVALUATION

The research outputs were evaluated positively by Scottish Water and viewed as having been an important part of the overall project to inform the Strategic Review of Charges, giving new insight into customer views on complex issues that they had not previously considered.

While Scottish Water stated that they would use similar research methods in the future, it is notable that subsequent research conducted by the provider on similar topics has not used deliberative methods.

LEARNING

One challenge that Scottish Water identified when reflecting on the outputs of the deliberative focus groups was that, because they attempted to cover a wide range of issues, it was difficult to synthesise all of the findings and determine ways to address them.

There are various lessons Scottish Water have learnt from the delivery of the deliberative workshops, including that:

- It may be preferable to have fewer, more focused objectives and fewer issues discussed at events in order to produce more manageable output and outcomes.

- It is important to provide participants with sufficient information to encourage informed deliberation. It is equally important however to allow enough time to discuss new issues and information in depth. In the case of the deliberative focus groups, it is not clear if there was enough time for participants to grasp and consider new information fully.

SOURCES

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CASE STUDY 21
RIVER BASIN PLANNING STRATEGY

Commissioning body / Owner: The Environment Agency

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogue

Date: 2012

Geographic location: United Kingdom

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to bring the voice of stakeholders and the public into discussions about the River Basin Planning Strategy (which sets out how the requirements of the European Union Water Framework Directive are to be met).

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Five regional events were held, bringing together a broad range of stakeholders including farmers, wildlife organisations, water companies, port authorities and government agencies. In total, over 120 people attended the five events.

The question addressed at these workshops was that of how the requirements of the European Union Water Framework Directive should be met.

The discussions used Ketso, a trademarked methodology for structuring and delivering workshops. According to its creators:

> *"Ketso offers a structured way to run a workshop, using re-useable coloured shapes to capture everyone's ideas. Ketso is unique in that each part is designed to act as a prompt for effective engagement... Ketso is hands-on, with colourful shapes to capture and display people's ideas. Participants write their ideas and comments on re-usable, colour-coded 'leaves'. Everyone has a pen and leaves, so everyone can develop and add their ideas."*

IMPACT

The discussions that took place at the workshops informed the Environment Agency's strategic thinking regarding how to implement the European Union Water Framework Directive.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The cost of the project is not known. However, the positive evaluation of the project suggests that it was considered to have been value for money.

EVALUATION

The project was broadly evaluated as successful, with the structured format proving instrumental in encouraging open discussion between participants and Environment Agency staff.

LEARNING

Various interesting lessons can be drawn about the use of Ketso to structure a deliberative workshop geared towards a specific policy question. Amongst these, it is clear that the approach can allow for the active engagement of disparate actors, and that the highly structured questions worked well to engage participants with a new and complex subject.

It is also clear that, despite an imposed structure, the discussion sessions were interesting and allowed ideas to flow and develop.

SOURCES

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Ketso Ltd. "The Hands-on Kit for Creative Engagement | Ketso." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.ketso.com/learn-about-ketso.

CASE STUDY 22
DOMESTIC WATER AND SEWERAGE CUSTOMERS' EXPECTATIONS OF SERVICE

Commissioning body / Owner: Ofwat

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogue

Date: 2011

Geographic location: England and Wales (three locations in England and one in Wales)

Type of policy question: Questions around the consumer experience of an existing service/product

PURPOSE

The overall aim of the research was to assist Ofwat to realise its business goals, which include the following:

-   Establish which aspects of service matter most and least to customers;
-   Ascertain customer views of current standards and monitoring arrangements and whether these should change; and to test customers' appetite for risk;
-   Explore customers' appetite for involvement in shaping the future decisions that affect the industry; and
-   Understand whether the views of customers in Wales differ markedly from customers in England.

Specifically, the objective of the deliberative workshops was to gain an in-depth understanding of household water customers':

-   Expectations and aspirations for the services they get from their water company;
-   Perceptions of risk in relation to service failure and what the response should be when things go wrong; and
-   Interest and willingness to engage with their water company on issues that concern customers, including future periodic reviews.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Deliberative workshops were held in three locations in England (one in the North, one in the Midlands and one in the South) and one location in Wales. The workshops involved some 77 customers from five water and sewerage and five water-only companies.

The deliberative process was broken down into three stages:

Pre-deliberation (3 hours) – in which participants worked in groups of ten to discuss preliminary questions about water provision and the extent of existing engagement between them and providers.

The focus of these discussions was on:

- identifying what factors result in a company being seen as 'a good company' and 'a company I can trust';
- identifying what constitutes good service across a range of markets including how services are delivered and how customers are treated, the consequences of poor or unacceptable service, and the extent to which companies engage with their customers, and the methods of engagement used;
- exploring how water and/or sewerage companies are currently perceived;
- exploring awareness and understanding of how prices are currently set in the water and sewerage sector, the extent to which participants are aware of, and took part in, the most recent price review and reasons behind this.

Deliberation 'homework' (1 week) – in which participants were given an information pack to take home and read, and were encouraged to think about three specific questions. Participants were also encouraged to do their own research around the questions.

Deliberation (3 hours) – The aims of this session were to:
- establish what customers would like to see change or done differently in the future in terms of the services delivered by water and sewerage companies and the way they treat their customers;
- establish what should happen when their water and sewerage company fails to deliver aspects of service or deliver them in a way that is not acceptable to customers and to see if this varies according to the nature of the problem;
- establish the extent to which customers want their water and sewerage companies to engage with them in order to establish their needs and the most effective ways of doing this, including the next price review exercise.

Here participants worked in groups of ten to discuss their views on the homework questions and then went into smaller breakout groups to develop 'water company policies' covering customer service, service failure and customer engagement. This was followed by a plenary session in which the smaller groups presented their water company policies to one another.

Twenty participants were recruited for each workshop. Recruitment quotas were applied to ensure that the sample was broadly representative of the general population, in terms of age, socio-economic grade, life stage, housing tenure, ethnicity, responsibility for water bills, water company, type of supply and size of bill.

The project lasted roughly three months, with the fieldwork undertaken in January and early February 2011 and research reports being published in March 2011.

Participants were paid £120 for the 2 workshops.

IMPACT

The findings from the deliberative research fed into a number of projects being undertaken in support of Ofwat's Delivering Sustainable Water Strategy.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

No information is available on the overall cost of the project.

EVALUATION

Very detailed findings were produced by the deliberative workshops and were laid out in the report 'Domestic Water and Sewerage Customers' Expectations of Service - Deliberative Research Findings' referenced below.

As these findings answer the research question comprehensively, the process was clearly effective in generating detailed information about the public's views and priorities regarding water service provision.

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- A clear division of the outputs wanted from the discussions between the two sessions enabled this research to generate evidence on customer experience of existing services, as well as new policy and implementation ideas based on blue-sky thinking.

- The week-long break between sessions allowed participants to read and digest further information, and to consider questions in advance, making the second session quite productive within a limited time period.

SOURCES

Creative Research. "Domestic Water and Sewerage Customers' Expectations of Service - Deliberative Research Findings (Volume 1)." Creative Research, March 2011. http://www.creativeresearch.co.uk/uploads/files/Service%20expectations%20service%20failure%20engagement.pdf.

Creative Research. "Domestic Water and Sewerage Customers' Expectations of Service - Deliberative Research Appendices (Volume 2)." Creative Research, March 2011. http://www.creativeresearch.co.uk/uploads/files/Service%20expectations%20service%20failure%20engagement%20appendices.pdf.

CASE STUDY 23
CITIZENS ADVISORY FORUM ON LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Commissioning body / Owner: Living with Environmental Change (LWEC)
(now known as Research and Innovation for our Dynamic Environment)

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Citizens Advisory Panel

Date: 2010

Geographic location: England (Bristol)

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to pilot an in-depth, but cost-effective, approach to public engagement. It was intended as a means to feed public attitudes and values into the LWEC strategic decision-making process. This was in order to demonstrate not just that the public voice is important and should be heard alongside the voices of other stakeholders, but also how the public voice could be included. Specifically, the project was supposed to:

- Inform the strategic development of LWEC's research by helping to identify research priorities and commenting on strategic aims for the programme; and

- Identify areas of particular public concern about environmental change, so that the commissioning and communication of research by LWEC, and its partners, can take account of the needs and concerns of society.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

In July 2010 the Living with Environmental Change (LWEC) partnership commissioned OPM to run a Citizens Advisory Forum to ensure that the public voice was considered within LWEC's strategic decision-making processes around research into environmental change.

Three Forum sessions focused on different issues: -

- Research into flood risk management;
- Research into adaptation to environmental change; and
- Decision-making and governance in response to environmental change challenges.

Each of the three Forum meetings was slightly different in design, but all were facilitated by the delivery contractors and had input from expert speakers. The Forum sessions were designed to be deliberative, enabling members to engage with the information provided in writing and by experts, and to discuss the issues in depth among themselves.

Information was provided to the Forum members in a variety of forms:

- Pre-session briefing (2-3 pages), sent to all participants in advance, to introduce the topics and concepts in each session and the key questions they would be considering;

- Briefing sheets during the sessions; and
- Expert speakers (seven in total across the three sessions), who made presentations and also participated in the small group working (answering questions and providing information, rather than leading or directing discussion).

The process involved 18 members of the public and 7 experts, and ran for a 15-month period from May 2010 till July 2011.

Participants were paid £50 a day for the three days.

IMPACT

At the time the project was evaluated, there was no evidence of the process having had direct influence on LEWC's future research policies. Strong indications, however, were identified from evaluation interviews with LWEC network members about where the Forum's findings would be going and how they might be used in the future.

These indications include the fact that:

- Some LWEC Partners had already used the results of the Forum discussions in their work or had clear plans to do so.
- There were several specific areas identified where LWEC Partners expected there to be influence on future research policies: around governance and regulation, the Water Strategy and flooding.
- The Forum was also expected to have an impact on the development of LWEC's public engagement strategy.

However, not all members of LEWC shared the same view, with some interviewed for the evaluation report not expecting the Forum to have a major influence on future strategic directions for research at all, for example: '*We'll be looking at them [Forum results] but I'm uncertain how much they will be used … it was a reminder of how little the public really know about these issues. For LWEC it's more tricky – nothing came out that I thought 'yes, we needed to know that'.*

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The total cost of the project was £30,450.

The project was intended as a quick and cost-effective means of introducing public engagement and dialogue into the priority-setting process. There is evidence to suggest that the project was successful in this regard, and that it was therefore considered value for money. Nonetheless, some problems were caused by the tight budget, and there was the feeling amongst those involved in the programme that extra money could have enabled the project to achieve significantly more.

EVALUATION

As a pilot for demonstrating the viability of the model, the project was evaluated as a success, having convinced some initially sceptical figures in the LWEC of its value and having demonstrated the potential value of public engagement.

One interviewee for the evaluation report summed it up by saying: '*We were able to get the views of people on key topics. It was very useful and showed that people were able to engage with the topics. They can answer questions where we don't have the evidence to know what the public think … If you know what you want to ask you can get some very clear answers.*'

LEARNING

Despite its overall success, the project faced various challenges. These present valuable lessons for those thinking of replicating the model and include the following:

- The credibility of the results can be undermined if those using them feel that the number of public participants is too small – and potentially affects the likelihood and desirability of the results being taken seriously in a policy context. However, if the aim of the process is to provide information and inspiration to decision-makers, rather than detailed research evidence, small numbers appear to be less of a barrier.

- The question of the right number of people to involve in any particular engagement exercise is dependent on its purpose, the context and other issues. The feedback here suggests that the number involved here (13 - 18 depending on the session) may have been insufficient to gain maximum credibility for the results for LWEC policy leads.

In addition to this, the project demonstrated that:

- It is far more effective if those using the results of public dialogue can attend and observe public discussions first-hand, as well as receiving reports of results. Public participants also value meeting decision-makers face–to-face.

- Close links need to be established between the design of the Forum sessions and the potential for influence on future decision-making on research policies. The people who will use the results of public dialogue must be involved in the identification and framing of topics for the Forum to discuss, and in the design and drafting of questions for the public, from the start and extensively throughout.

- Information provision, through written materials and expert speakers, needs to be carefully managed so that the appropriate information is provided in ways that enable public participants to use it. In this case the information was presented by the facilitators (rather than experts) and the implications of this were discussed in the evaluation report:

    'One of the implications of this approach was that it led to the contractors [facilitators] presenting the information themselves in many cases, and for the written information to be branded by them. This does have implications for the process, as it is normally expected in public dialogue that the contractors will be responsible for delivering the 'process' and the commissioning body is responsible for oversight of the 'content'. In this case, those boundaries became blurred. The separation of content and process in this case was not crucial but, on more contentious topics, these boundaries can become vital in participants (and others) trusting that the process has not been biased by the commissioning body: the facilitator may need to be seen to be entirely neutral and ensuring the process is fair and balanced. It is for these sorts of reasons that it is usually seen to be good practice for the information on content to be separated from the process management.'

SOURCES

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CASE STUDY 24
METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE SEWERAGE STRATEGY

Commissioning body / Owner: Melbourne Water

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogue

Date: 2009

Geographic location: Melbourne, Australia

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

Overall, the aim of the project was to inform the development of the 2009 Melbourne Metropolitan Sewerage Strategy, with qualitative insights into the current sewerage system in Melbourne, and what the community wishes to do about sewage management into the future.

More specifically, the research sought to describe the community's awareness, knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviours in relation to sewage and sewerage, covering:

- Expectations of sewerage services – exploration of current and likely future expectations. The latter was addressed using the future scenarios, to explore and understand expectations and potential behaviours regarding the possible impacts of the features of each of these scenarios on economic, social and environmental aspects of sewerage and sewage management, production, infrastructure and associated services.

- Community behaviours – exploration of how people are currently behaving regarding water use, household purchasing behaviour, contaminant use and recycling activities; as well as exploring these parameters within each scenario.

- Willingness to pay – preliminary exploration of general willingness to pay for sewerage services currently and under each scenario.

- Assessment of variations in attitudes and behaviours by segments of the community and customers – considering a range of aspects, covering behavioural, attitudinal, socio-economic, ethnic, demographic, and geographic variables.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The project involved two initial scenario development stages, through an Expert Workshop and a Water Cycle Workshop.

The Expert Workshop involved researchers from Ipsos-Eureka, along with various water experts and stakeholders, to share insights into customers and the Melbourne community in terms of the current situation, and discuss likely reactions to the series of future scenarios.

The Water Cycle Workshop involved a number of key personnel from across government, water retailers and private organisations. Ipsos-Eureka presented the key findings from the Expert Workshop at this event in order to assist attendees in understanding potential attitudes and behaviours under each scenario.

Following on from these initial scenario development stages, two deliberative events were conducted with members of the public; one on the Western side of Melbourne and one on the Eastern side, with participants who lived within or close to the 2030 Urban Growth Boundary.

Event design: The schedule for the sessions comprised:

- Initial collection of existing individual knowledge, attitudes and behaviours via interactive polling.

- Round-table facilitated discussions of the current situation (for each event, participants were seated at four separate tables each comprising a mix of 9-10 people).

- A half-hour information provision session about the sewerage system and associated issues and opportunities.

- A full group ranking of the priorities for the system.

- Within the context of a 5½-hour workshop it was decided that, to allow people sufficient time to consider the different scenarios fully, each table would spend 50-60 minutes considering and discussing one particular scenario. Participants were asked to play an invisible observer role and describe what they thought the people there (including different groups within the community) would be thinking and doing in relation to the water and sewerage cycle. This was undertaken by way of working through a series of worksheets in relation to generally living in Melbourne, expectations of the sewerage system, water sources and uses, household appliances and products that are disposed of via the sewer.

- Following these in-depth discussions, two representatives from each table spent around 5 minutes presenting their scenario, and the outcomes of their discussion, to the rest of the participants, after which time the whole group cast their votes on a series of questions about the scenarios. An important distinction is that at this stage participants were asked to imagine that they had awoken to find themselves actually living in that world/scenario, at their current age, rather than just being observers.

- A review of key questions from the first interactive polling session to see whether and how sentiment may have changed.

- A final round-table discussion on people's experiences and take-outs from the day, concluding with participants individually writing their own message to government for the Strategy.

Recruitment and attendance: Participants were recruited by specialist research recruitment agency Cooper Symons & Associates, according to strict specifications to ensure representation from an appropriate mix of the community in the research. 40 participants were recruited to each event. 39 attended the first one and 38 attended the second, thus in total, 77 people participated.

Participants were paid $220 (Aus.) for the 5½ -hour workshop.

IMPACT

The information generated by the project was used to inform Melbourne's water and sewerage infrastructure strategy.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

While no information is publically available on the cost of the programme, or whether it was considered value for money, the project clearly produced the information that it was intended to produce, which suggests that it is likely to have been considered value for money.

EVALUATION

The overall quality of the research was very good.

The deliberative nature of the event allowed participants to respond to questions throughout the session as they were exposed to various stimuli (including expert presentations, small group discussions and scenario-imagining exercises) with the result that the researchers were able to record their changing opinions over the course of the day.

Moreover, it appears that the healthy monetary incentive helped to ensure that an excellent mix of the community was represented in the research. Importantly, the research participants enjoyed the deliberative events, and took the sessions very seriously. Feedback received from participants indicated that they found the sessions interesting and informative, and that they sincerely appreciated having been asked for their opinions.

LEARNING

In addition to valuable information regarding the public's views on water and sewerage issues, it is also possible to draw valuable lessons from the research about the use of deliberative exercises in informing policy-making.

It was clear, for instance, that the approach of having participants immerse themselves more fully in one particular scenario was a more meaningful and appropriate method than if each participant was required to consider all of the various parameters of all four scenarios, as it allowed time for the scenarios to be explored in greater depth.

It was also clear that some objectives of the research, such as gaining a better understanding of the community's willingness to pay for the sewerage services, was hampered by participants' superficial prior understanding of the issues in hand. The lesson here is that in such circumstances, specific proposals and options, such as different fee structures assigned to potential sewerage services and solutions, and potential government policies and regulations, need to be presented to participants in order to aid their ability to provide more useful and meaningful feedback.

SOURCES
Internal Ipsos MORI research (not publically available)

CASE STUDY 25: CITIZENS JURIES ON WATER MANAGEMENT

Commissioning body / Owner: Various

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Citizens Juries

Date: 2003 - 2007

Geographic location: The Netherlands

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

Three Citizens Juries took place in the Rhine basin area between 2003 and 2007.

1. A test case funded by the European Commission to gauge the usefulness of Citizens' Juries in drafting water basin management priorities. Participants discussed what priorities the Government should set for water quality in Lake Markermeer.
2. To feed into the regional land-use planning process.
3. To explore priorities for managing urban water streams in Utrecht.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The first Jury took place at the end of 2003 and over the first few months of 2004 in the city of Lelystad. This consisted of 14 members and discussed the priorities that the Government should set for water quality in the Markermeer, a lake in the central Netherlands. The European Commission funded the Jury as an experiment to assess the usefulness of the method in the drafting of water-basin management plans as required by the Water Framework Directive, 2000/60/EC. The experiment was not connected to a real-life policy process, although policy-makers at the provincial level and the National Water Management Authority enthusiastically collaborated.

The second Jury took place at the end of 2004 and during the first half of 2005. It was organised in the same manner, with the notable difference that its recommendations fed into the regional land-use planning process for the province of Flevoland. This is a legally required plan, which also addresses water management. The Jury was commissioned by the provincial Parliament that formally had to adopt the plan. The second process was also more extensive, taking place in three different rounds over 7 months, rather than the 6 weeks allotted for the first Jury.

The third Jury took place in the city of Utrecht in the summer of 2007, and addressed priorities in managing urban water streams. This Jury was initiated under an EU-funded study of adaptive water management, and was supported by the regional water board and the municipality of Utrecht. The Jury consisted of 15 residents from the city of Utrecht who were active over a period of 4 months.

All 3 Jury processes included the following monitoring and evaluation elements:

- Pre- and post-Jury questionnaires – these were aimed at measuring various issues. In the first Jury, the emphasis was on the normative priorities of the Jurors.

- Post-Jury evaluation with the Jurors.

- Pre- and post-Jury cognitive mapping with the Jurors.

- Ex-post evaluation of the Jury process – with the commissioning bodies and Jurors by the organising team.
- Independent ex-post evaluation of the Jury process.

The first Jury consisted of 14 members. The second Jury was sub-divided into three separate sub-Juries, each consisting of 12 to 14 residents from the three zones of the province of Flevoland. The third Jury involved 15 participants.

Participants were not compensated for their time.

IMPACT

All three Juries agreed upon a set of priorities that decision-makers could use to inform policy, which were written up into reports.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Information on the cost of the project, and whether its commissioners considered it value for money, was not publically available.

EVALUATION

The project was deemed successful in light of its effects on participants, but was felt to be less useful for government actors, with decision-makers feeling that the Juries did not contribute much in the way of new evidence or policy ideas.

As the research interests of the organising team shifted from the first to the third Jury, the data that was gathered also changed. Because of this, a very interesting avenue for research, a systematic comparison of the three Juries, which would greatly enhance the external validity of our findings, is not possible.

Jury members were taken on a learning journey and their values and priorities evolved, however, decision-makers felt their own learning throughout the process was limited.

LEARNING

Various challenges were faced by the three Juries, all of which raise interesting points for those looking to use the Citizens Jury format to inform policy-making.

One problem encountered was that not all interest groups were able to send a representative to the Jury proceedings. This was a problem particularly for environmental NGOs (second Jury) and for agricultural interest groups (first Jury), both interests without strong local organisations in Flevoland.

In the second Jury, the fear of Members of Parliament of losing control over the policy process was an inhibiting factor.

The relationships between the various authorities were also an inhibiting factor in all three Jury examples: Public officials are careful when it comes to making statements about the policies of other authorities, or about policies that have been developed collaboratively. In such cases, it is hard to get their honest opinion about certain policy ideas as their statements may upset the status quo.

Interestingly, politicians with different positions on the issues all saw the Juries' recommendations as supporting their views.

SOURCES

Huitema, D., C. Cornelisse, and B. Ottow. "Ecology and Society: Is the Jury Still Out? Toward Greater Insight in Policy Learning in Participatory Decision Processes—the Case of Dutch Citizens' Juries on Water Management in the Rhine Basin." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol15/iss1/art16/.

CASE STUDY 26
CENTRAL REGION SUSTAINABLE WATER STRATEGY

Commissioning body / Owner: Department of Sustainability and Environment (Australia)

Industry sector: Water

Method type: Structured Dialogue

Date: 2006

Geographic location: Victoria Central Region, Australia

Type of policy question: Consultation around a specific set of policy options to inform how a policy might be delivered

PURPOSE

The aim of the research was to capture the attitudes and preferences of the general community within Victoria's central region towards proposed water supply and demand options and, on that basis, to inform the DSE's Sustainable Water Strategy for Victoria Central Region.

With this in mind, the specific objectives of the research were to:

- Examine the community's understanding of, and reaction to, a series of water options for the Central Region today and into the future (50 years from now), once exposed to future context-setting around the need to cater for population growth and climate change issues;

- Explore potential communication strategies likely to be needed in influencing acceptance of specific water options for the Central Region, particularly relating to current perceptions, perceived strengths and weaknesses of each option, as well as the response to key messages and any confusing elements or aspects on which people seek more information;

- Understand better the Central Region's mindset towards the future water options, and preferences in making up the anticipated shortfall in water supplies in 2055 based on current usage as well as population growth and climate change projections;

- Explore the Central Region's mindset towards restoring the health of rivers and the environment, and the amount of water both required to do so, within reason.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Five Community Engagement Forums were conducted across Victoria Central Region.

In recognition of the communities' limited understanding of options available, considerable time and effort was spent at the outset of the forums to provide appropriate contextual information and outline the options. This was done via a presentation. Subsequent sessions were as follows:

- **Initial sharing of reactions to water options** (full group).

- **Round-table discussion of options** at individual tables – each option rotated from table to table around the room giving all participants an opportunity to review each option in detail. Comments recorded on flip chart sheets.

- **Initial review of reactions to options** – flip chart sheets were pinned around the room and participants were invited to review and consider the responses of other tables and to discuss these with someone they hadn't already spoken with.

- **Second round-table discussions of options** – participants were given more detailed information on each option and their comments recorded as per the first round-table discussions.

- **Evaluation and wrap-up** – at the completion of the round-table discussions, participants were required to nominate their preferred combination of options to make up the 500 billion litre shortfall in water anticipated by 2055, and how they would distribute their preferred combination between the anticipated human usage requirement and the amount required to restore the health of rivers. A random selection of participants were asked to share their combinations with the whole group.

Each participant was also invited to complete a questionnaire over the course of the evening, allowing the researchers to explore and measure:
- Existing beliefs, in relation to water and climate change;
- Initial acceptability of each option and preferred options;
- Recommended options to avoid the anticipated 500 billion litre shortfall in 2055;
- Recommendations for the water gain to be dedicated to humans and to restoring the health of our rivers and the environment; and
- Acceptability of each option following the forum round-table discussions.

The entire process lasted for close to 6 months from early to mid-2006. Representatives of the Department of Sustainability and the Environment and some respective catchment authorities were present at each forum to respond to questions and to provide additional information.

The project involved 150 members of the public in total (with roughly 24-34 in each location). While recruitment was undertaken by market research company InfoNet to provide a representative sample, it s however possible for members of the public to register their interest in taking part in events like this on InfoNet's database, and thus there was possibly a level of self-selection within their sample.

Participants were paid $150 (Aus.) each for each 4-hour forum session.

IMPACT

Following the workshops, a full written report on the findings of the workshops was produced. This also included the public's preferred policy options. However, no further information on the report and its findings' impact on policy was available.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

No information was available, either about the cost of the project or whether it was considered value for money.

EVALUATION

The deliberative quality of the research appears to have been very good. There was substantial context-setting at the outset, considerable opportunities for participants to discuss and comment on all of the options in detail, to choose between these, and to adjust their choices in light of hearing others' views and additional information.

Moreover, the large sample size meant that results can be viewed as a strong indication of the views of the wider Victoria Central Region.

LEARNING

- The presence of staff from the various catchment authorities at each event seems to have added value as it meant that participants were able to ask direct questions and get an expert response during the events.
- The process displays an interesting use of written surveys during the event. Each participant had the opportunity to record their preferences in writing at the end of the workshop. This

meant that their individual views could be given equal consideration/weight in the post-workshop analysis of the data.

SOURCES

Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy: Community Research Forums (report not publically available)

CASE STUDY 27
EXPLORING PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Commissioning body / Owner: Accenture Global Cities Forum:

Industry sector: Public Services

Method type: Structured Dialogues

Date: 2009

Geographic location: 8 major cities worldwide

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The Accenture Global Cities Forum was a multi-city, worldwide study into how members of the public define "public value" and what they expect of government. The Institute for Health & Public Service Value designed the study as a series of citizen panels in a number of world cities. Each Forum involved 60 to 85 local residents, who were randomly selected to represent the city's demographics — providing strong, qualitative insight into what people think about government and public services and how they judge public value.

The primary objective of the project was to understand citizens' views on, and understanding of, the value that government should bring to their lives.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Participants across eight major cities worldwide were brought together for one-day citizen panels. Here, the Johannesburg panel is taken as an example.

The day was divided into five sessions, using a variety of research methods and techniques, including electronic voting, role play, facilitated group and plenary discussions. It involved 66 Johannesburg residents randomly selected to represent the city's diverse demography.

Session 1: Electronic voting and group discussion
Using electronic keypads, participants voted on a number of questions about the city, the social issues facing it and their expectations of government. The results of their voting appeared immediately on a large screen and prompted brief commentaries from participants and facilitators. Then, sitting in one of six groups of 10 to 12 people, participants discussed their thoughts about the quality of life in Johannesburg and their expectations of what government should be doing to preserve and improve people's quality of life.

Session 2: Role-play exercise
This session aimed to have participants begin considering the principles of public value in their own terms, but with only one perspective in mind. Working in the same six small groups, tables were each assigned one of three perspectives—that of public service user, citizen or taxpayer (distinctively coloured t-shirts were given to the tables taking on each of the three perspectives). Each group assumed their role to discuss their expectations of government, first in general terms and then—in smaller sub-groups of three or four—in more specific terms. Participants then developed a list of four or five principles that they believed should guide government action.

Session 3: Role play and debate

Participants were then divided into new groups, using the coloured t-shirts to ensure a mix of perspectives in each new group, to discuss the principles that they had developed in the previous session. Participants shared and debated their views on the principles of public value. Through this process, they identified any tensions among different expectations. After debate, compromise and agreement, the participants drew together a top set of five principles that reflect the integration of their different perspectives. To conclude the session, participants returned to their original Session 2 table and discussed the final principles they had agreed.

Session 4: Voting and group discussion

After a brief presentation from the event chair, groups considered the presentation in relation to one of the three key social issues that they had discussed in Session 3. At the end of the discussion, through electronic voting, participants rated the importance of each different statement as it related to the issues. People then considered, based on their own experience, how well government is performing in relation to each of the issues and, through electronic voting, rated government performance. The results of the two sets of questions—the first on importance and second on performance—were presented in the form of a radar chart showing the gap between the two scores for each question. The session concluded with a discussion of how the gaps could be narrowed.

Session 5: Discussion and final voting

In small groups of three or four, participants worked together to come up with a newspaper headline and story about what life should be like in the city in 2015. The group then discussed the biggest things that would have to change to make people's lives better and the role of technology in achieving the positive outcomes they described in their stories. Each group then briefly described their front page to the rest of the participants in a plenary session.

To conclude the event, participants voted on what they considered the three main priorities for making the city a great place to live, study and work. Finally, everyone used their electronic keypads to text their own personal "message to government."

IMPACT

The findings from the different city events are synthesised and provide a very rich picture of what people think about the role of government and public services, the issues that affect their lives and how they judge public value.

Findings from the panels are most often used by academics and other key stakeholders to influence global interpretations and strategies for building sustainable cities.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

While there was no information of the specific cost of the project, the fact that the methodology has been repeated on multiple occasions around the world implies that it was considered to have been value for money.

EVALUATION

The overall quality of the deliberative processes appears to have been excellent.

Participants were continually engaged and were gradually fed information over the course of the day. The methodology also appears to have provided participants with sufficient time and space to gain new information and to discuss in depth the implications of their new knowledge in terms of their existing attitudes, values and experience.

LEARNING

- Discussions throughout the course of the day, in different group settings, using different stimuli seem very well suited to enabling participants to reach a considered view, arrived at through careful exploration of the issues at hand;

- There was an interesting use of electronic voting pads throughout the day-long workshop which enabled researchers, as well as participants, to see how views were changing as the day progressed;

- More generally, the events were characterised by a good use of different approaches, which appears to have allowed participants to exchange and absorb information without over-reliance on long presentations from experts and policymakers; and

- The role plays seem to have been particularly effective at encouraging participants to look at issues from different perspectives.

SOURCES

Accenture. "Accenture Global Cities Forum - Exploring People's Perspectives on the Role of Government - Report from the Johannesburg Forum." Accenture, 2010.

CASE STUDY 28
MAPPING OPTIONS FOR TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Commissioning body / Owner: University of East Anglia

Industry sector: Climate Change

Method type: Deliberative Mapping

Date: 2012

Geographic location: England (Norfolk)

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to test how deliberative mapping could be used to inform climate change policy-making.

The specific research aim of the deliberative mapping exercises was to gain an understanding of how public views on geoengineering proposals compared against other options for tackling climate change.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

A deliberative mapping process was run with 13 socio-demographically representative citizens from Norfolk to provide an understanding of how public views on geoengineering proposals compared against other options for tackling climate change.

A group of 13 citizens and 12 experts, separated into two strands, simultaneously participated in a full-day workshop, following the same process of: -

- selecting and defining options to appraise;

- characterising a set of criteria against which they would appraise those options;

- scoring the performance of the options against those criteria; and

- assigning weightings to the criteria to indicate their relative importance.

The two strands joined together in a ½-day workshop midway through the process, allowing citizens the opportunity to question the specialists (and vice versa) and explore where there are areas of common ground.

Recruitment: 14 citizens from the Norfolk (United Kingdom) public were recruited from respondents to a 'topic blind' online recruitment survey about 'global environmental challenges', after which 1 participant was unable to attend, leaving 13. While the respondents were inevitably self-selecting, a range of selection criteria were employed to ensure a diversity of perspectives among those selected for full participation. As well as demographic information, the survey elicited respondents' perceived global issue of most concern. Respondents with environmental 'expertise' were excluded from recruitment, owing to such expertise gaining representation through the stakeholders in the specialist strand of the process.

Each participant received an honorarium (amount unknown) for his or her participation in the introductory workshop and the joint workshop.

IMPACT

The process aimed to map divergent perspectives but, in fact, a fairly consistent view of the different options emerged across both the citizens' and the specialists' deliberations. Both processes concluded with geoengineering proposals being outperformed by alternative mitigation techniques.

The researchers also noted however that, despite its small scale, the involvement of the public in this way opened the issue of geoengineering up to broader problem definitions, alternative options and diverse perspectives and criteria and, in doing so, revealed radically different views of option performance which will have important implications for future research and policy.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Information on the cost of the project was not publically available.

EVALUATION

The research process was successfully evaluated as having demonstrated that citizens can effectively engage in complex issues such as geoengineering and develop informed and considered judgements and that deliberative mapping is a workable means of guiding citizens to do so.

It was also evaluated as having provided new, relevant and useful information for researchers into geoengineering.

LEARNING

The review of this project suggests that:

- Deliberative Mapping is an effective technique for identifying differences in opinions and perspectives between experts and the public, and also for finding areas of common ground;

- The method is a useful way of inviting the public to develop their own, informed views on a complicated subject that is new to them, as it begins by establishing criteria through which options can be evaluated;

- Citizens can effectively engage in complex issues such as geoengineering in the context of tackling climate change, and their considered judgements were fully comparable with those of specialists;

- Deliberative Mapping's capacity to allow participants to frame the problem themselves, produced a broader diversity of resonant ways to frame the problem, from which to conceptualise the issue, than had previously been considered by experts;

- For participants 1 ½ days was not long enough –they felt they had gone through an intensive learning process, but expressed regret at not having more time or information to complete the appraisal.

SOURCES

Bellamy, Rob, Chilvers, Jason and Vaughan, Naomi E. "Deliberative Mapping of Options for Tackling Climate Change: Citizens and Specialists 'open Up' Appraisal of Geoengineering." *Public Understanding of Science (Bristol, England)* 25, no. 3 (April 2016): 269–86. doi:10.1177/0963662514548628.

CASE STUDY 29
GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

Commissioning body / Owner: Vancouver City Council

Industry sector: Neighbourhood planning

Method type: Citizens Assembly

Date: 2012-13

Geographic location: Vancouver, Canada

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

The Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly was proposed following a neighbourhood planning process in which local residents had felt that their concerns and priorities had not been sufficiently recognised and acted upon. It was intended to provide a means for residents to articulate a vision for the neighbourhood's future. Specifically, the assembly aimed to do three things:

- To set out the values and principles shared by Grandview-Woodland residents;

- To lay out the vision for the future of the neighbourhood; and

- To decide on a 30-year development plan for Grandview-Woodland.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

The process had 3 stages which were spread over a year: a learning phase (where participants heard factual evidence from experts), a consultation phase (where participants engaged with the wider community through a range of methods) and a deliberation phase (where participants reached their decisions through deliberative workshops).

To participate in the Assembly, one had to be over 16 and a resident or business or property owner in the Grandview-Woodland area. 500 people registered to join the Citizens Assembly, from which 48 participants were selected through a blind draw. The Assembly met for 11 days over the course of a year.

During its first phase of work, the Assembly heard from several dozen guest speakers who were selected to provide the Assembly with an orientation to both planning principles and technical considerations, as well as a nuanced appreciation for the issues facing the community. The City's lead community planner for Grandview-Woodland also played an important role by providing additional context and sharing the results of prior consultations with local residents.

During these first meetings, Assembly members also discussed the values that they believed should guide their deliberations and the development of their community. In late November 2014, the Assembly held the first of three public round-table meetings, to discuss their proposed values and other important issues, with local residents.

The Assembly then began its second phase of work: discussing potential directions and policies and proposing new recommendations. Here the Assembly's first task was to draft recommendations to inform neighbourhood-wide policies. To complement this work the City conducted its own series of workshops concerning each of the seven sub-areas in Grandview-Woodland. The purpose of these sub-area workshops was to invite input from all local residents on specific policies and land-use

proposals to feed into the Assembly's deliberations. The results of this exercise, which included an extensive range of new recommendations, were shared with the community for feedback during a second public round-table meeting in early March 2015.

A final set of meetings allowed the Assembly to integrate this feedback into a final set of recommendations for the area. Taken together, the Assembly's recommendations gave clear direction to the City Council on the policies that should guide the neighbourhood, and the land-use choices that best balanced neighbourhood concerns.

IMPACT

Over the course of the process, a general consensus about local priorities and the desired future of the neighbourhood was formed and a set of recommendations and an Action Plan reflecting this were produced and accepted by the City Council.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The Assembly process cost US$196,762.50.

EVALUATION

The project broadly achieved the outcomes it set out to achieve. Residents were able to use the process to develop and articulate a shared set of priorities, which they then successfully laid out in a formal plan.

In addition to this, the process was successful in fostering a greater sense of community cohesion and enfranchisement amongst Grandview-Woodland residents.

LEARNING

Three important lessons emerged from the Citizens Assembly, which are typical of this kind of process:

- First, it was clear that the community was more willing to accept and take part in a bottom-up planning process like the Assembly than they would have been responding to a consultation, for instance.

- Secondly, participants expressed unease about the non-binding nature of the process and made it clear that their trust would be lost if the plan developed though the process were ignored. The involvement of Council officers throughout was therefore very important to ensure that the recommendations made were realistic and achievable.

- Thirdly, as only a limited number of those interested in the process could be actively involved, it was important that the wider community had the chance to monitor and feed into the process. All Assembly meetings were therefore held in public, and videos of all presentations made to the Assembly could be viewed online. The public meetings held at different stages throughout the process to present the Assembly's progress and draft recommendations also provided an important link in connecting the Assembly with the community it worked to represent.

SOURCES

Rekayi Mohamed-Katerere, Zapuhlih, Augustin, Barrett, Jordan and Lavasidis, Alexandra. "Grandview Woodland Citizens' Assembly | Participedia." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://participedia.net/en/cases/grandview-woodland-citizens-assembly.

CASE STUDY 30
NHS ENGLAND CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

Commissioning body / Owner: NHS England

Industry sector: Healthcare

Method type: Citizens Assembly

Date: 2015

Geographic location: London, England

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

NHS Citizen was conceived as a national programme to give the English public a say on healthcare matters and to allow them to feed into high-level NHS England decision-making. Specifically, it was intended to give:
- Citizens and organisations a direct, transparent route for their voices to reach NHS England's decision-making processes;

- The NHS England board and others a new source of evidence and opinion on the NHS; and

- The public an open accountability mechanism to feed back on the work of NHS England, and the opportunity to participate in the work of the organisation.

The NHS Citizen method aimed to create a process that allowed citizens to deliberate on and select which issues should be filtered upwards and brought to the attention of senior decision-makers. The method combined:

- an online forum, in which members of the public could raise and discuss healthcare issues;

- a Citizens Jury, in which members of the public chose the 5 issues discussed on the online forum which they deemed to be the most pressing;

- a one-day Citizens Assembly, at which members of the public and senior NHS England decision-makers took part in a large-scale deliberative discussion on these five topics; and

- a learning programme, at which members of the public got the chance to feed back on the NHS Citizen process itself (and its delivery) in order to inform future iterations of the project.

On this final point, it is worth noting that the NHS Citizen project was intended as one of action learning, with the various components of the programme intended as pilots that would be improved upon through a process of continuous learning and self-reflection.

As such, the project was intended primarily to assess the role an Assembly format might have in a robust mechanism for public and patient engagement in the NHS in England. The aspiration was to run subsequent (successively more refined) Citizens Assemblies building on what had been learned from this pilot. Specifically, the objective was to determine how well such a format might:

- Raise the profile of the NHS Citizen project, increasing the number of networks who might engage though the project in the future;

- Enable members of the public and other stakeholders to articulate their views, concerns and lived experiences to senior NHS England decision-makers, including the board;

- Foster a sense of joint ownership and accountability for the NHS (described by some involved as a sense of NHS Citizenship) amongst those who took part.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Opening plenary - Participants were introduced to the lead facilitators and were taken through the aims and values of NHS Citizen, and the plan for the day. Participants were then invited to choose one of the five discussion groups to join for the rest of the day.

The morning discussion session – 'What is the situation now?'
Participants engaged in discussions on their understanding of the current situation. Table groups recorded their thoughts on flip charts throughout their discussions. At the end of the first session, table groups fed back their main observations to the lead facilitator.

The 1st afternoon discussion session – 'What might better look like in 2020?'
After lunch, participants re-joined tables and discussed what 'better' would look like in 2020. Following the discussions, one person from each group joined a group which fed back their ideas to the graphic facilitator. During this time, the other participants were invited to talk to participants they had not already spoken to, or to get tea and coffee.

The 2nd afternoon discussion session – 'What needs to happen to take this forward?'
In the final part of the group discussions, participants re-joined their table discussions, once again recording their thoughts on flip charts. In some groups, tables were invited by the facilitator to feed back three key next steps to the entire group. Where time allowed, an NHS England board member or policy lead gave some brief remarks, feeding back on his/her impressions of the discussion and what he/she would take away from the day.

The closing plenary
The closing plenary was a chance for representatives from each topic to feed back about their discussions to the wider Assembly. Three participants (including one NHS England board member or policy lead) from each group fed back to the Assembly on what had been covered over the course of the day, and how they personally felt at the end of everything.

Over 250 members of the public, stakeholders and NHS staff attended the Assembly, including the Chief Executive of NHS England, and numerous other members of the NHS England board. To ensure diversity, half the places for members of the public were given away on a 'first come, first served' basis, with the remaining places being recruited for directly on the basis of particular demographic characteristics.

IMPACT

The NHS Citizen Assembly was instrumental in raising the profile of the NHS Citizen project and in demonstrating the viability and the value of large-scale engagement processes in healthcare. While the Assembly failed to generate many policy recommendations of which NHS policy-makers would not have already been aware, many commented on the value of being able to have a direct conversation with service users, and being able to hear what things were like 'on the ground'. Conversely, many members of the public commented on what an empowering experience they had found the day, and on their improved knowledge and sense of ownership of the NHS.

The findings and discussions from the day were written up into a 35-page report. In addition to recording and summarising the discussions, this report also identified the various themes that emerged over the course of the day, thereby providing a valuable snapshot of the public's concerns, view and priorities regarding the five topics discussed.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The cost of the design, organisation, facilitation and production of materials for the Assembly was approximately £80,000. It is worth noting that the NHS Citizen Assembly followed a very particular

design process, with a heavy emphasis on partnership working and co-production with citizens that made it more labour-intensive and thus expensive than more top-down methods.

The cost of the venue, participants' expenses and other more practical matters were covered by NHS England and are not available.

EVALUATION

NHS Citizen was intended both as a mechanism for public engagement in NHS England policy-making and as a means to demonstrate the viability and value of sustained deliberative public engagement in the NHS.

The Citizens Assembly was broadly successful in these regards, having been very well run, designed and facilitated and having enabled various relevant (if not particularly detailed) conversations about important healthcare topics.

The Assembly was also very successful in raising the profile of NHS Citizen and in expanding its networks and reach to groups that would not previously have known or had the confidence to engage in NHS policy-making processes.

LEARNING

Despite its overall success, the NHS Citizen Assembly highlighted various interesting challenges, some of which were specific to the policy context and some of which are common to most Citizens Assembly events. Some of the most interesting lessons are as follows:

- **Citizens want assurances that their voices will be heard**
  Many citizens expressed concern at the absence of a formal structure binding NHS England decision-makers to act on the views articulated at the Assembly. While participants were assured that the NHS England board was there to listen and take account of their views, many were sceptical of the impact their involvement would have on NHS policy. Where influence over the policy process has been promised, efforts to demonstrate that views articulated at Assemblies are being recorded and incorporated into formal decision-making processes are very important.

- **Public engagement exercises can occasionally be uncomfortable for policy-makers**
  For some of the more controversial topics, NHS England policy-makers were occasionally put on the defensive by participants, with participants feeling conversely that the policy leads were not being completely open with them. While this phenomenon is not unique to Citizen Assemblies, the public nature of the events (the NHS Citizen Assembly was webcast) can aggravate it. As a consequence, it is very important to ensure that policy-makers are fully aware of what they are getting themselves into, and conversely, to ensure that participants are fully aware of who policy-makers are and what they are qualified to comment on.

- **The broad scope of some policy questions can be problematic for engagement exercises**
  Another challenge encountered at the NHS Citizen Assembly was that, due to the fragmented system of healthcare provision in England, many questions and issues raised by participants did not fall exclusively, or at all, under the remit of NHS England, meaning that policy leads were not in a position to comment or to promise changes. Where possible, the scope of the questions being dealt with should not be broader than the remit of the decision-makers involved in the process.

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CASE STUDY 31
POSTAL USER NEEDS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Commissioning body / Owner: Ofcom

Industry sector: Postal

Method type: Structured Dialogues

Date: 2013

Geographic location: London, Cardiff, Caernarfon, Belfast, Lisbellaw, Dunbar, Oban and Norwich (and Glasgow for some large business interviews)

Type of policy question: Broad horizon-scanning exercise to assess consumer views on wider policy objectives

PURPOSE

Research was conducted amongst general public postal consumers and business customers against a backdrop of media coverage and debate relating to the March 2012 announcements on the rise in the price of 1st and 2nd-class stamps.

The over-arching objective of the research was to assess the extent to which the market for the provision of postal services in the UK is meeting the reasonable needs of users in relation to the universal postal service, with a specific objective to obtain an informed consumer view on use, needs and social benefits of the current postal service.

The core research objectives within the over-arching project objective above were to:

- Elicit the needs of postal users in relation to the universal postal service, in particular understanding any gaps or over-fulfilment in current services;

- Understand the importance of elements of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) to all types of users;

- Understand the benefits of the universal postal service to individuals, to businesses and to society;

- Understand the impact of potential changes to elements of the USO; and

- Help inform policy on a sustainable universal postal service that meets users' needs.

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Eight workshops were conducted with around 20 participants in each. Two facilitators worked with one sub-group each in each workshop, and all events lasted around 3½ hours. The groups consisted of a mix of local residential customers and also small business customers to ensure that views generated reflected a range of user views. A broad cross-section of participants were recruited in each location. Quotas were set to ensure that participants covered a range of ages (from 18 to late 70s), genders, ethnicities, socio-economic groups, and high and low users of postal services.

To broaden the scope of the research and ensure a full range of customer groups were engaged, a series of four discussions with representatives of large and medium businesses were included separately. These were conducted in London, Belfast, Cardiff and Glasgow.

The research was designed to approach the issue of postal user needs from a series of different directions. Prior to the workshops, participants were assigned a task, where they had to write down how they used and what they valued most about the Royal Mail's postal service and, over the week before the workshop, to keep track of the mail they personally sent and received.

At the workshops, participants were asked:

- To describe their current usage spontaneously and explain what they thought their needs were from the service, both as senders and receivers of mail.

- Then to look at descriptions of the universal services, discuss each in turn and rank them according to which were 'essential' through to 'nice to have' and then through to 'do not need'. They then mapped these physically on a spectrum on the wall and came to consensus in each sub-group as to where different services should be placed.

- Then to listen to a presentation on the challenges facing the postal service, including the fact that postal use is in significant decline. The exception is the delivery of parcels, particularly internet orders, although this is an area where Royal Mail faces increased competition from courier companies. It was stated that this scenario was the primary explanation for the recent price rises, because when mail volumes decline, it costs more and more to send each item. Then to focus on the reality facing Royal Mail, to revisit their maps and change anything in the light of this.

- Then to look at five potential hypothetical future scenarios. These were put to participants in all strands of the research. The scenarios presented within the research were devised by the research teams at Ofcom and Ipsos MORI and presented purely as hypothetical scenarios that might meet users' needs from the universal postal service. Participants were given the opportunity to suggest ways to alter/amend each scenario to fit their previously determined model of 'essential postal services'.

- To consider what broader societal benefits the postal service might bring and to respond to several potential examples.

IMPACT

The information generated from the research clearly met the objectives of the research, allowing Ofcom to assess consumer use, needs and their perceived benefits of the postal service.

The study fed into a wider body of research carried out by Ofcom, which allowed them to fulfil their duties under the Postal Services Act 2011, to carry out an assessment of the extent to which the postal market is meeting the reasonable needs of users of postal services. The research allowed Ofcom to conclude that the postal market was meeting the reasonable needs of users and was highly valued by residential users and businesses across the UK. As a result of the research Ofcom concluded that it did not need to change the scope of the universal postal service.

COST AND VALUE FOR MONEY

No information on costs for this project was publically available.

EVALUATION

The deliberative quality of the research appears to have been very good. Participants were given ample opportunity to discuss their thoughts in both plenary and group settings, and a variety of approaches were used to stimulate discussion on the value of the universal postal service. New

information was fed to participants at appropriate occasions during the workshop and was not overwhelming.

The research met its objectives and allowed Ofcom to meet its legally required duty of assessing consumer needs.

LEARNING

Overall approach – the project had an effective impact upon policy and is a successful example of how to collect consumer views on the provision of universal services in a fairly short deliberative session (3.5 hours). The preparatory task set to participants before the workshop was an effective way of engaging them with the topic and generated thoughts and ideas before attending.

Recruitment and representation – the workshops effectively represented a broad cross-section of participants in terms of residential and business service use, rurality and employment status. In addition to the initial eight workshops, four more separate workshops were carried out with medium and large business customers, carried out as a 'breakfast session', using a shorter topic guide to ensure that the views of these busy stakeholders were taken into account.

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APPENDIX C - FEATURES OF DIFFERENT METHODS

Type of policy question

Deliberative engagement methods can be used to address an almost infinite range of questions at different points in the policy cycle.

Here the focus is on 3 general question types that the CFU agreed were those they were most likely to want to address in the context of their wider consumer research across the regulated industries.

These are:

> Throughout this Appendix the methods are scored using the following criteria:
>
> ✓✓   the method is **designed** to do this
>
> ✓   the method **can work** for this purpose
>
> 💣   The method is **not** designed to work for this purpose.

1. **Examining broad policy objectives / horizon-scanning** – wherein consumers are asked to examine the high-level objectives of a policy or policy programme and identify priorities, areas of interest and concerns. There may also be opportunities here to generate new ideas.

2. **Assessing policy options** – here the public is generally being asked to consider a more specific set of policy or implementation options. The purpose would usually be to prioritise them and/or identify areas of agreement and concern.

3. **Gaining consumer insight into existing practice** – in addition to reviewing aspects of service delivery the public may also be asked about their understanding of, and response to, existing priorities and practices.

PURPOSE	Broad policy objectives/ horizon-scanning	Assessment of policy options	Consumer insight into existing practice
Citizens Advisory Forums	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Citizens Assembly	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Citizens Jury	✓	✓✓	💣
Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Deliberative Focus Groups	✓	✓	✓✓
Deliberative Mapping	✓	✓✓	💣
Distributed Dialogues	✓✓	✓	✓
Online Deliberations	✓	✓	✓
Participatory Strategic Planning	✓✓	✓	💣
Structured Dialogues	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

The outputs sought from the deliberative research

There are a range of different outputs that may be sought from deliberative research including:

1. **Gathering intuitive responses or value judgements** – this involves collecting people's intuitive responses to the information provided and their reactions to the ideas of others on the topic.

2. **Generating new ideas/ blue-sky thinking** – methods that rate highly on this type of output are those that encourage creativity and problem-solving from participants.

3. **Understanding public reasoning on the acceptability of policy initiatives/ interventions** – methods that focus heavily on developing dialogue between participants and/or different stakeholders will tend to score highly in relation to this type of output.

4. **Consensus-building or agreeing recommendations** – deliberative methods that emphasise arriving at a collective position through negotiation and compromise will score well here.

OUTPUTS	Gathering intuitive responses	Consensus building or agreeing recommendations	Generating new ideas/ blue-sky thinking	Understanding public reasoning
Citizens Advisory Forums	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Citizens Assembly	💣	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Citizens Jury	💣	✓✓	✓	✓✓
Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums	✓	✓✓	✓	✓
Deliberative Focus Groups	✓✓	💣	💣	✓✓
Deliberative Mapping	💣	✓		✓✓
Distributed Dialogues	✓✓	💣	✓✓	✓
Online Deliberations	✓	✓	✓	✓
Participatory Strategic Planning	💣	✓✓	✓	✓
Structured Dialogues	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓

The type of participants needed

Choosing a recruitment target is key to determining an appropriate method.

1. **A self-selecting cross-section of the general public** – sometimes participation projects want to consult with an interested group of the public. While the aim would always be to make this group as broad and mixed as possible, their interest and willingness to get involved is the key factor in recruitment and selection.

2. **A representative sample** – A group constructed to match as, closely as possible, the demographics of the population you are consulting. It is also possible to construct a sample based on criteria directly relevant to the project, e.g. if looking at household energy efficiency measures, then a sample with a representative mix of home-owners, private tenants and those in social housing from across rural and urban areas might be appropriate.

3. **A specifically targeted group or groups** – This could be, for example, low-income earners, rural residents, the elderly, migrants, families with children etc. depending on the goals and context of the specific project.

PARTICIPANTS	A self-selecting cross-section	A representative sample	Targeted group(s)
Citizens Advisory Forums	💣	✓✓	✓
Citizens Assembly	💣	✓✓	✓
Citizens Jury	💣	✓✓	✓
Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums	✓✓	✓	✓
Deliberative Focus Groups	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Deliberative Mapping	✓	✓✓	✓
Distributed Dialogues	✓✓	💣	✓
Online Deliberations	✓✓	✓	✓
Participatory Strategic Planning	✓	✓✓	✓
Structured Dialogues	✓	✓✓	✓✓

Fine-tuning a short-list of options

Thera are a range of other factors which will affect the suitability of a method to meet the needs of a specific project including:

a) Ability to deal with complex and/or technical information

b) Depth of dialogue / deliberation

c) Likely number of participants involved

d) Ability to deal with conflict

e) Costs

f) Time required from participants

g) Involvement of experts in the process

> Here the factors have been scored as either :
> **L**   Low
> **M**   Medium
> **H**   High

INFLUENCING FACTORS	a).	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)	g)
Citizens Advisory Panels	M	H	M	M	M	H	M
Citizens Assembly	H	H	H	H	H	M	M
Citizens Jury	H	H	L	H	M	M	M
Consumer Reference Groups / Customer Forums	H	H	L	M	L	H	L
Deliberative Focus Groups	L	M	L	M	L	L	L
Deliberative Mapping	H	H	L	M	M	H	H
Distributed Dialogues	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
Online Deliberations	M	M	M	L	L	L	L
Participatory Strategic Planning	M	H	M	H	M	M	H
Structured Dialogues	M	H	M	h	M	L	M

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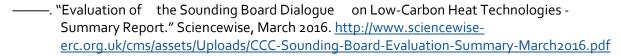Ipsos MORI. "Correct Tariff Research." Essential Energy, June 2016. (Unpublished)

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