

CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR



CYNGOR DEFNYDDWYR



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## Consumer Council for Water

Appointment of Local Consumer Advocate -  
Northern Committee

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### Information pack for applicants

**RETURN APPLICATIONS TO:**

Andrew Spence  
Consumer Council for Water  
Victoria Square House  
Victoria Square  
Birmingham  
B2 4AJ  
Email: [andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk)

**Please note date for interviews:**

Committee	When	Where
Northern	17 June 2019	Newcastle

The closing date for receipt of applications is:

**5.00pm on Friday 10 May 2019 at the very latest**

**CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR WATER  
APPOINTMENT OF NORTHERN LOCAL CONSUMER ADVOCATE  
2019**

**INFORMATION PACK**

**Introduction**

The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) is the watchdog for water in England and Wales. We provide a strong voice for water and sewerage consumers, so the water consumer's voice is heard by Governments, regulators and importantly, the water companies.

We also provide a direct service to water consumers. CCWater supports consumers with complaints that water companies have not handled, or dealt with in a prompt or fair way. We take up consumers' complaints if they have tried and failed to resolve issues with their water companies.

CCWater was set up as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) on 1 October 2005 and is jointly accountable to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and to the Welsh Government.

CCWater is governed by a Board, and has committees in England and Wales that engage with water companies locally.

**CCWATER'S FUTURE**

In April 2011, Cabinet Office announced that all non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) in existence following the reforms brought about by the [Public Bodies Act](#) would have to undergo reviews at least once every 5 years.

These reviews have 2 purposes:

- to provide a strong challenge of the continuing need for individual NDPBs, both their function and their form
- where it is agreed that a particular body should remain as an NDPB, to review the control and governance arrangements in place to ensure that the public body is complying with recognised principles of good corporate governance

CCWater is likely to be reviewed again in 2020 by its sponsor department, Defra.

# CCWATER LOCAL CONSUMER ADVOCATE'S (LCA) ROLE

## The Role of the Local Consumer Advocate

Local Consumer Advocates are formally committee members, but are referred to as LCAs. They are allocated to the Committee that serves the consumers of their local water company.

The primary role of a Local Consumer Advocate is to:

### Work with CCWater colleagues

- Advise and inform the Board (see relationship diagram, p10) on key consumer issues and be a presence for the [CCWater Board](#) in the region.
- Work with the local team to achieve CCWater's objectives as set out in our [Forward Work Programme](#).
- Review customer complaint cases about local water companies when asked.
- From time to time members may be engaged, selectively, on policy development work with members of other committees and CCWater policy staff.

### Work with Water Companies

- Work with the local team made up of Policy Manager(s) and Consumer Relations/Complaint Handling staff, to monitor water company performance and to liaise with, influence and negotiate with water companies.
- Ensure customers' views are at the heart of the water companies' strategies and operations.
- Work at the local level on key water consumer issues, using the policy positions established by the CCWater Board.
- When necessary, conduct assessments of water companies' complaints and debt handling procedures to identify good practice and to improve poor performance.

### Work with Stakeholders

- Develop local stakeholder relationships with key agencies and organisations whose decisions will have an impact on water consumers.

### Work with Consumers

- Working with customers & consumer groups on local issues, taking up issues and ensuring the company's services meet consumers' expectations.

Local Committee Chairs are responsible for leading, developing, motivating and communicating with their LCAs to help them fulfil their roles. They are the bridge between the Board and their committee.

LCAs are primarily focused locally on representation and advocacy of water consumers. CCWater engages LCAs selectively on wider issues across Wales and in England where they have particular expertise. This can be task focused, such as on debt matters, or price review groups.

## **REQUIREMENT**

CCWater wishes to recruit a new LCA for the Northern Committee, representing the customers of Northumbrian Water plc.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT**

To be eligible for consideration you will need to live or work in, and therefore be a customer of a water company allocated to the Committee, namely Northumbrian Water, Yorkshire Water and United Utilities. The Northern Committee also has responsibility for customers of Hartlepool Water. We would like to encourage applications from customers of Northumbrian Water. Hartlepool Water is not a part of the Northumbrian Water Group. We encourage all applicants, but particularly welcome applicants from individuals with commercial and business experience, experience of consumer representation and knowledge of the needs of both household and non-household customers.

### **Time commitment**

Local Consumer Advocates' appointments are part-time and require a commitment of 4 days per month. This can include representing customers at a water company Customer Challenge Group (CCG) and attendance at sub-committees. Most CCG meetings are held in Peterborough.

Exceptionally, the commitment may increase by a day or two per month beyond the norm, where work is required on the Price Review process. This will be remunerated. LCAs will be expected to attend training events.

### **Appointment term**

Appointments are likely to be for a period of between 3 years and 5 years.

### **Remuneration**

LCAs are remunerated £4,510 per annum for this part-time public appointment. Additional remuneration will be available if an LCA was allocated to a water company Customer Challenge Group (subject to approval by Defra). There will be no right to a pension or gratuity on termination. This appointment does not create an employment status between CCWater and the LCA for the purposes of employment law, particularly in respect of unfair dismissal and redundancy payments. As LCAs are appointed to be part of a Committee, the role does not involve being based in an office, although there will be occasional meetings at locations within the committee's area and in Birmingham. LCAs can reclaim travel and subsistence and other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, necessarily incurred on CCWater business, in line with CCWater's Travel and Expenses policy.

### **Communications Allowance**

LCAs are expected to be able to communicate effectively (including electronically) with CCWater. In recognition of the additional costs incurred LCAs receive an annual Communications Allowance of £100 to cover all electronic and postal communication costs. This includes all:

- mobile and landline telephone costs (except business calls made from hotels when staying overnight on CCWater business);
- all costs for faxing or emailing including provision of the equipment, consumables e.g. paper and ink and any associated telephone calls or ISP costs;
- all postal costs including photocopying, postage and packaging, courier or special delivery costs.

Communications Allowances are taxable and the amount will be ‘grossed up’ to cover tax and National insurance implications and paid with monthly remuneration.

## **Travel**

When LCAs are travelling the first consideration should be to use the most appropriate and economic form of service taking into account business needs. We encourage the use of public transport in line with our sustainable development policy. Standard class travel only is permitted.

## **Conflict of interests**

To ensure that LCAs are seen to be independent of the water companies, they are not allowed to hold shares or have an active financial or other interest in any of the regulated water companies in England and Wales. Any appointees who hold shares would have to sell them before the appointment can be confirmed.

## **Serving on Public Bodies**

LCAs will also be required to show commitment to the Seven Principles of Public Life, as drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, (the Nolan Committee) see Annex A, and agree to abide by CCWater’s Code of Practice.

## **Code of Practice**

Copies of the CCWater’s Code of Practice for LCAs and letter of appointment that set out the full terms and conditions of service are available on request.

## **Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

We aim to be an Equal Opportunities Employer, intending to make sure that there is equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.

We have undertaken a programme of diversity training for all staff to help understand the concept of diversity and how it compliments equal opportunities. It also provides an understanding of the implications of the legislation, for working with colleagues and customers.

All applications receive equal treatment regardless of sex, race, age, disability, religion, marital status or sexual orientation. Selection for a post will be based on merit.

## Data Protection

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (2016), your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with us and will be stored in manual and electronic files. Any data about you will be held in completely secure conditions, with restricted access. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies where there is a legitimate purpose for this.

## **SELECTION PROCESS & HOW TO APPLY**

Whilst these appointments are not regulated or monitored by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA), selection will be carried out in accordance with the principles of OCPA's Code of Practice on Public Appointments and with regard to the Seven Principles of Public Life. One of the key principles is that selection is based on merit and with the aim of achieving a balance of relevant skills and backgrounds.

All applicants are asked to provide

1. a statement explaining how they meet the essential and desirable criteria
2. an up to date curriculum vitae.

Those who best fit the essential and desirable criteria (see Annex B) will be invited to interview.

Interviews are scheduled to take place at the following date/location

<b>Committee</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
Northern	<b>17 June 2019</b>	Newcastle

Reasonable traveling costs will be refunded - please contact Andrew Spence **beforehand** for authorisation and further information.

The process will be overseen and evaluated by a selection panel including the local Committee Chair, an Independent Board member, a Regional Manager and an HR representative. The selection panel will identify and interview those who most closely fit the job specification.

At each stage the selection panel will have regard for the need for balance in terms of diversity, skills and experience as well as the spectrum of business and domestic.

## **Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)**

We are committed to the employment of disabled people. We guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. To be eligible for the guaranteed interview scheme you must have a disability or long term health condition. The disability could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under the scheme.

Please ensure you send

1. your statement explaining how you meet the essential and desirable criteria
2. an up to date curriculum vitae
3. a completed Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire
4. a completed Political Activity Questionnaire

and return them by post or email to the Membership Manager Andrew Spence [andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk) at The Consumer Council for Water, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B2 4AJ by **5.00pm on Friday 10 May 2019** at the latest.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

Email applications will be acknowledged automatically. Applications received by post will be acknowledged within 10 working days. If you have not received a response, please contact Andrew Spence by email at [andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:andrew.spence@ccwater.org.uk) or phone on 0121 345 1053/1064.

We will let you whether or not you are to be selected for interview. For those selected, we will confirm all details relevant to the interview, including date and venue. We expect to be able to let you know within 14 days of the interview whether you will be recommended to CCWater's Board for appointment.

**The Seven Principles of Public Life****Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

**Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands

**Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## LCA INTERVIEWS 2019 CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration for appointment, you must be a customer of a water company allocated to the Committee in England you are applying for.

You will be appointed as an individual not a representative of any organisation.

### ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

#### **Communication**

- *Be an open-minded strategic thinker, able to bring their own experience to bear on issues under discussion.*
- *Possess good interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people.*
- *Connections with Local and Community networks in the local or regional area.*

#### **Relationship Building**

- *Bring demonstrable experience of the various interests, needs and views of different types of consumers.*
- *Be able to demonstrate experience of working as a member of a team in a professional, voluntary or social capacity.*
- *Be able to constructively challenge the opinions of others, work to achieve a shared consensus and accept collective responsibility.*

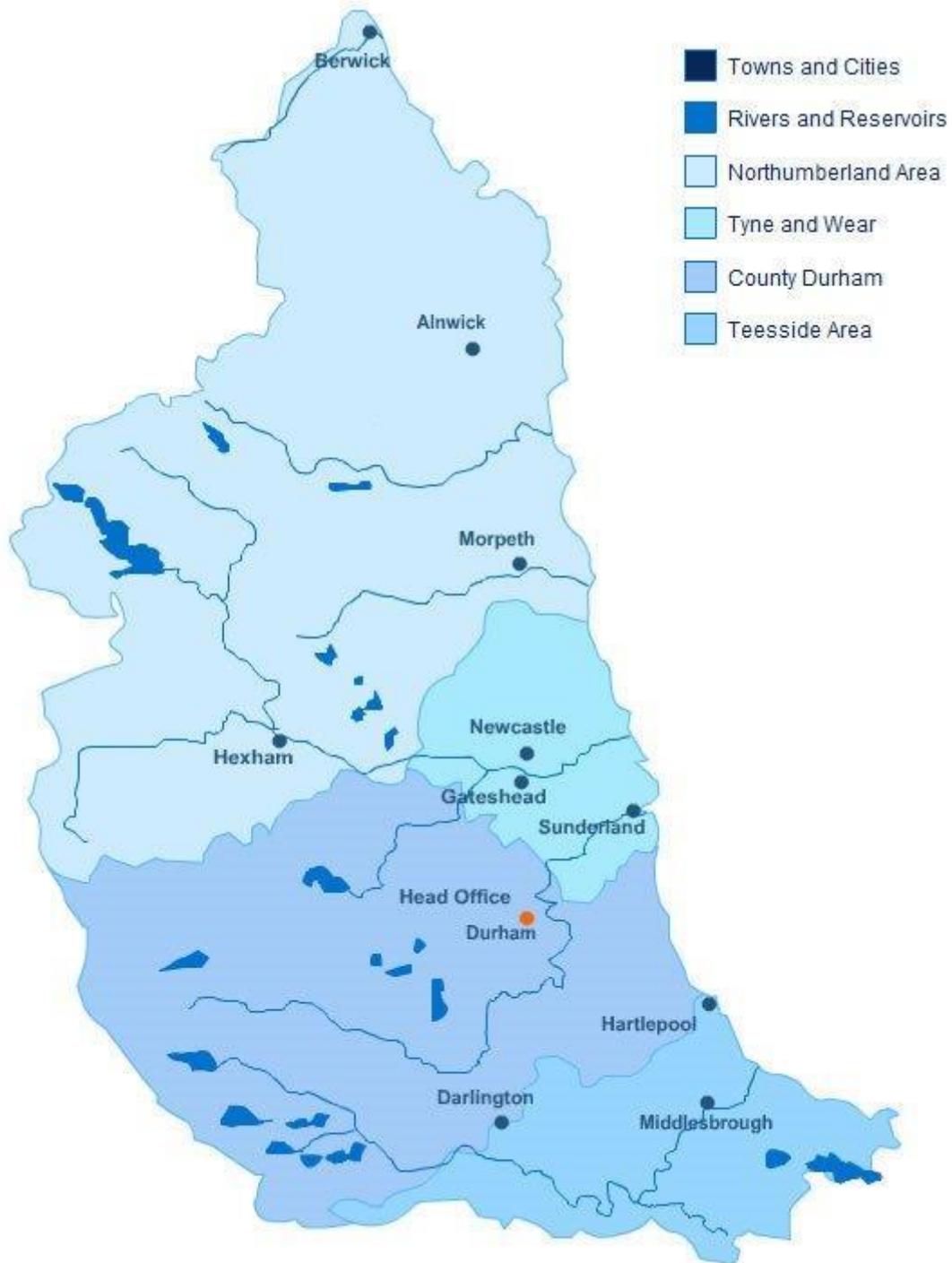
#### **Delivering Results**

- *Be able to demonstrate a passion to represent water consumers' interests.*
- *Be able to bring demonstrable expertise and display the ability to make a significant contribution to CCWater.*
- *Be able to display a keen interest in consumer affairs and/or the provision of high level of consumer contact and the need to deliver excellent service.*

### DESIRABLE CRITERIA

- *An understanding of how a regulated business should engage with stakeholders and customers.*
- *Ability to undertake research and present findings effectively*
- *Understanding of commerce & business and the needs of both household and non-household customers.*
- *Knowledge of/or interest in the Water Industry or utility regulation.*
- *Understanding of the needs of consumers whose circumstances make them vulnerable.*
- *Expertise in sustainable development or environmental Issues.*
- *To be a customer of, and therefore live or work in, the area covered by Northumbrian Water (of which Hartlepool Water is not a part)*

# MAP OF AREA COVERED BY NORTHUMBRIAN WATER



NB Hartlepool Water is not a part of Northumbrian Water.

# CCWater Relationship Diagram

