

# **INDICATIVE PRIMARY WHOLESALE CHARGES 2020/21**

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Board Statement  
of Assurance

## **NORTHUMBRIAN WATER LIMITED**

### **BOARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE FOR INDICATIVE WHOLESAL CHARGES 2020/21**

The Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) Board has overseen the development of the indicative wholesale charges for 2020/21.

The latest wholesale charging rules, issued under sections 66E and 117I of the Water Industry Act 1991, were published by Ofwat in December 2018.

The wholesale charging rules state that each undertaker should publish an assurance statement no later than the time of publication of its final wholesale charges confirming that:

- a) the company complies with its legal obligations relating to the indicative wholesale charges it has published;
- b) the Board has assessed the effects of the new charges on water supply and sewerage licensees (as a whole or in groups) who are retailing wholesale services and on customers occupying eligible premises (as a whole or in groups) and approves the impact assessments and handling strategies developed in instances where bill increases for licensees (as a whole or in groups) who are retailing wholesale services to eligible customers and on customers occupying eligible premises (as a whole or in groups) exceed 5%;
- c) the company has appropriate systems and processes in place (including up-to-date models and data) to make sure that the information published about its indicative wholesale charges is accurate; and
- d) the company has consulted with relevant stakeholders in a timely and effective manner on its indicative wholesale charges.

The purpose of this statement is to clearly state that NWL has satisfied these requirements.

#### **Governance and Assurance**

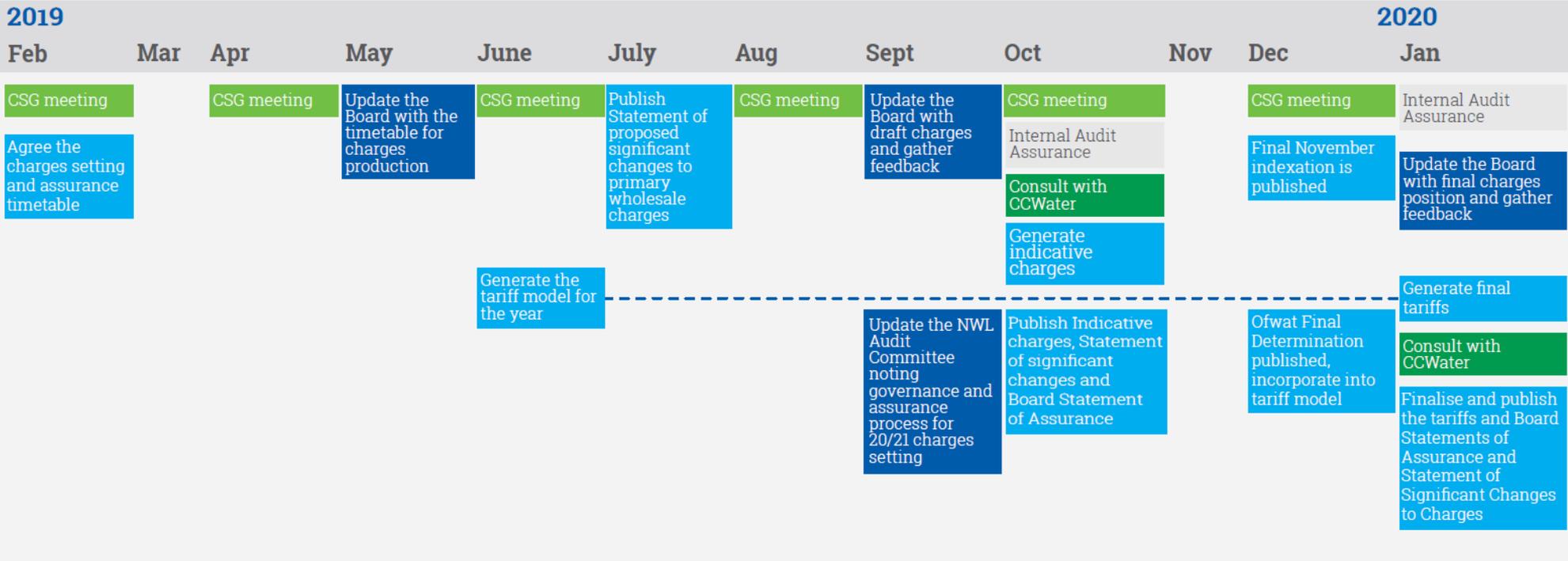
We closely monitor the rules published by Ofwat and ensure that all changes are incorporated into our charges publications. In order to do this we have strong governance arrangements and assurance processes which have been applied to the development of these charges throughout the year, and are summarised below.

- A specific quality assurance procedure sets out the process to be followed in setting charges each year, and is reviewed annually to ensure that any necessary changes to the approval process are incorporated. This assurance builds on the work and recommendations previously carried out on our charges model by our external advisors.
- The NWL Internal Audit department has reviewed our assessment of compliance and confirmed that input data from Company systems and the calculation of allowed revenues are robust.
- NWL engaged Ernst & Young LLP (EY) to perform testing of the logical operation of certain financial models prepared by, or on behalf of, NWL to generate its proposed tariffs. The scope of EY's work was determined by NWL and EY is only responsible to NWL for their work.
- The Charges Steering Group (CSG) chaired by the Finance Director, comprising a sub-group of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), including the Customer Director, the Assets and Assurance Director and the Corporate Affairs Director along with senior managers from various disciplines within the business, met several times in the year to discuss charging policy, strategy and governance. Any significant decisions and matters arising have been reported to the ELT and as required to the Board.
- We have consulted with CCWater on our indicative wholesale charges. CCWater did not highlight any areas of concern that would require us to change our processes or our assumptions for the charges for 2020/21.

#### **Development of charges**

We have a well-established timetable for the production and approval of our tariffs and charges schemes and schedules and this is incorporated into our Assurance Plan for the year. The charges have been developed through the following process:

# DEVELOPMENT OF CHARGES



## 2019 Price Review

The Board would like to draw to your attention to the fact that these indicative primary wholesale charges are subject to a greater level of uncertainty than usual due to the timing of the 2019 Price Review. The Final Determination, which will confirm our final wholesale allowed revenue, is not due for publication until December 2019. We have therefore set our indicative primary wholesale charges using a reasonable expectation of the allowed revenues that we will receive drawing on the Draft Determination published in July 2019 and incorporating subsequent representations that we have made to Ofwat. We anticipate that the final wholesale charges are likely to differ by more than an indexation variance to the indicative primary wholesale charges and we will include an explanation of material movements within the final Board Statement of Assurance to be published in January 2020.

### Summary

The strong governance and assurance arrangements that have been applied in the development of the charges provide the Board with a sound basis to confirm that:

- a) NWL's charges for 2020/21, as set out in its published indicative wholesale charges schedule, comply with our legal obligations;
- b) We have assessed the effects the new charges have on water supply and sewerage licensees (as a whole or in groups) who are retailing wholesale services and on customers occupying eligible premises (as a whole or in groups) and can confirm that there are no instances where bill increases to licensees (as a whole or in groups) who are retailing wholesale services exceed 5%;
- c) NWL has appropriate systems and processes in place (including up-to-date models and data) to make sure that the information published in the wholesale charges schedule is accurate; and
- d) NWL has consulted with relevant stakeholders in a timely and effective manner on its wholesale charges.

**Signed on behalf of the NORTHUMBRIAN WATER LIMITED Board**



**CHRIS JOHNS**  
Finance Director