

Minutes

Customer Advisory Panel

When: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Wednesday, 17 July 2019

Where: Waimakariri meeting room - Orion - 565 Wairakei Road

Attendees: **Caroline Shone**, CEO Community Energy Action; **Simon Templeton**, CEO Age Concern; **Pat McEvedy**, Selwyn District Councillor and farmer; **Tania Wati**, CEO of Mahaanui Kurataiao; **Janetta Skiba**, Director of Nursing / Education Coordinator at Rural Canterbury; **Matthew Mark**, CEO/City Missioner at Christchurch City Mission; **Elizabeth Soal**, CEO Irrigation NZ; **Tim Baker**, Burwood and Coastal Community Board; **Michelle Sharp**, CEO Kilmarnock; **Michaela Blacklock**, GM, Canterbury Employers’ Chamber of Commerce; **Geoff Ball**, Managing Director, Hagley Windows and Doors

Orion: **Rob Jamieson**, CEO; **Steve Macdonald**, GM Infrastructure; David Freeman-Greene, GM Commercial; **Linda McGregor**, External Engagement Lead; **Dayle Parris**, Regulatory Manager; **Paul Deavoll**, GM Customer and Stakeholder; **Charles Lake**, Control Systems Manager; **Jessalee MacLean** (*Minutes*)

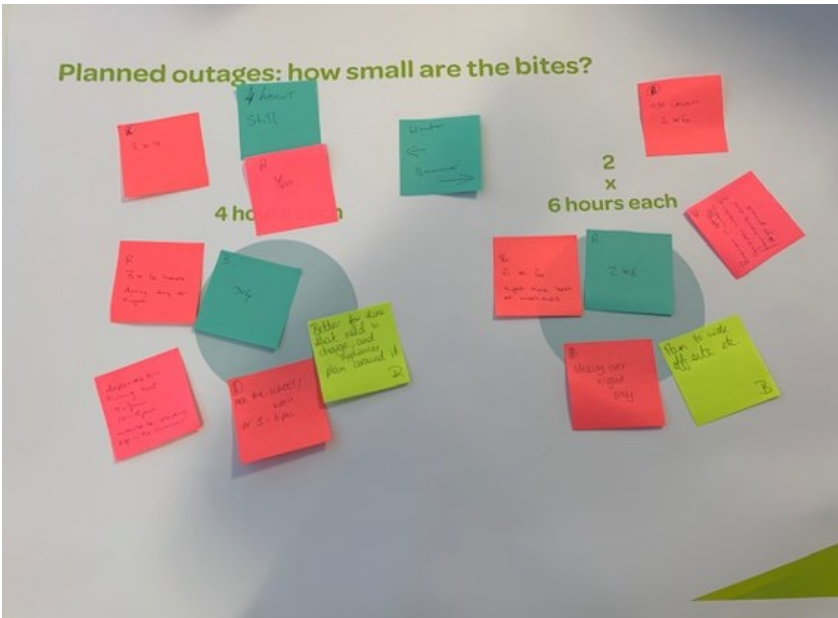
Apologies: **Danny Wilson**, Head of Operations & Commercial at Meridian; **Narottam Royal**, UC Student

Item	Item overview
Welcome and Introduction	<p>Linda McGregor welcomed everyone to the meeting including new members: Michaela Blacklock, GM, Canterbury Employers’ Chamber of Commerce and Geoff Ball, Managing Director, Hagley Windows and Doors.</p> <p>Everyone was thanked for their attendance.</p>
Cover off actions, who we are and why we are here	<p>Paul Deavoll provided a brief update on topics discussed at the last meeting.</p> <p>Orion’s Powerful Future – Orion is shaping its targets for the rest of 2019 and out to 2025.</p> <p>Sustainability – Pip Newland distilled the feedback from the Panel into three key messages: keep it simple, keep it fair and keep it together.</p> <p>Orion app – Orion is not at the stage to embark on the app. Orion is trialling the option for text notification for planned power outages: before work starts, if there are delays and when the power is back on.</p>
<p>What’s top of mind for Orion right now?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Winter and what it means for us – CPP to DPP – Tree trimming campaign 	<p>Winter and what it means for Orion</p> <p>Steve Macdonald talked about how Orion’s highest electricity peak is in winter. Orion uses load management to reduce its investment on the network. Orion says it is not prudent to build a network for an annual peak of one hour. Typically Orion’s peak network loads occur at 7-9am and 5-7pm.</p> <p>Restoration of service to Orion’s network in the rural area is more challenging when the power goes off, compared to urban areas. Power lines and poles can be in remote rural areas where it’s not easy to get vehicle access and this can delay when the power can come back on. And re-routing options are fewer.</p>

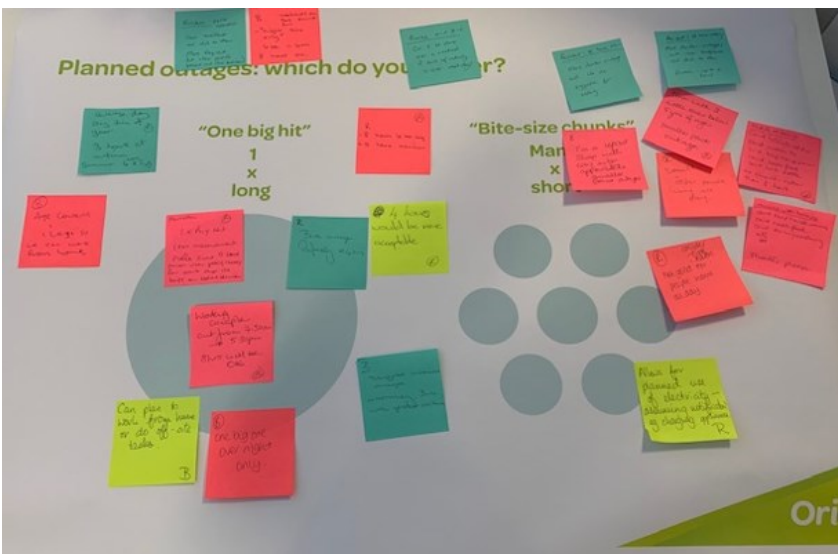
	<p>The Panel mentioned the highest power bill for families in winter can put them into debt throughout the year. Orion supports Community Energy Action (CEA) which provides education and practical solutions to help households conserve heat. The panel discussed examples of energy hardship, including people are using ovens for heating. Some residents do not realise there are different tariffs that can reduce electricity bills i.e. night rates.</p> <p>The Panel felt that education is key. A lot of people don't know how to live more energy efficient in their homes.</p> <p>ACTION: Orion to investigate taking a more proactive role in educating people on energy efficiency in the home.</p> <p>CPP to DPP David Freeman-Greene provided an update on Orion moving from Customised Price-Quality Path (CPP) to Default Price-Quality Path (DPP), set by the Commerce Commission. The CPP was set for five years to assist Orion to recover the cost of its earthquake recovery programme, which is now complete.</p> <p>The Commerce Commission (CC) is an advocate for Electricity Distribution Businesses (EDBs) seeking customer views to make sure EDBs are spending prudently on their networks, in line with customer's expectations.</p> <p>The CC looks at Orion's cost and its rate of return and the DPP sets Orion's revenue and quality performance for five years from 1 April 2020.</p> <p>The Panel asked if Orion was ready to move back to DPP. Yes, Orion is prepared for this. The Commerce Commission refers to Orion's Asset Management Plan as the key document that supports its case for proposed capital and operating Expenditure.</p> <p>Tree trimming campaign Linda McGregor presented on Orion's new tree trimming advertising campaign. 20 to 30 percent of power outages are caused by trees and vegetation coming into contact with Orion power lines.</p> <p>Orion is currently running a tree trimming campaign in <i>The Press, The Star, The Selwyn Times</i>, other smaller rural papers, on radio, online and via direct mail.</p> <p>Orion has received great feedback from the community. Increased calls to the Contact Centre and an increase from 80 to 800 views on its website.</p> <p>The Panel encouraged Orion to keep rolling with its tree trimming education campaign and keep it positive and encouraging rather than punitive.</p> <p>ACTION: Orion to distribute tree trimming flyers to Christchurch City Council and Selwyn District Council info centres.</p>
Tree regulation review	<p>Steve presented on the review of the current New Zealand wide tree regulations that state the responsibilities for lines companies and tree owners for managing trees near power lines.</p> <p>Orion spends around \$4m per year managing tree growth near power lines. Orion notifies customers when their trees get into the Notice Zone and Growth Zone, and pays for the first cut. Other EDBs take a different approach to how they manage trees near their lines. This act is up for review. Orion has a representation on the review panel. Orion would like to remove the provision that Orion is responsible for completing the first cut and increase clearances for the Notice Zone and Growth Zone. Trimming old trees that have grown around power lines, results in an unsightly and ineffective V or circle shape and the regulations do not let Orion to remove more of the tree.</p>

	<p>The Panel mentioned it's difficult when it's a heritage tree, possibly there first, before the power lines. Orion does look to go across the road if there are significant trees already where it is placing new lines. Most of the newly built network is underground so this is becoming less of an issue.</p> <p>Orion asked the Panel: Should it push for penalties? Currently Orion doesn't push for penalties if a customer owned tree damages the network.</p> <p>The Panel endorsed and agreed that a no penalties approach should be maintained, otherwise it could lead to resistance and that doesn't build good relationships. They felt that more education would be better so it doesn't get to that point. But if there was a repeat offender then Orion could look at a different approach for that particular customer.</p>
Planned power outages: what's your preference?	<p>Dayle Parris mentioned that Orion would like to explore customer preferences for the duration and frequency of planned power outages.</p> <p>The Panel was asked: If there was a planned power outage would they prefer an eight hour outage during one day or a few smaller outages spread out over several days?</p> <p>There were mixed views on the preference for duration and frequency of planned outages. Many preferred to have one big outage over several small ones to "get it over with", and all want Orion to avoid times when people are getting ready to go to work or school in the morning, and coming home from work and preparing dinner in the evening: so 9-4pm seemed ideal. The Panel felt it was something Orion could consult with affected customers on, as it was different for different people, particularly businesses. They liked the idea of an opt-in planned outage notification by text, with updates as things progressed, or changed. See appendix A and B for sticky note on the board exercise results.</p>
The big EV question	<p>Charles Lake led the conversation on how Orion provides electricity to Electric Vehicles (EV) and how we might best manage the future impact on Orion's network.</p> <p>By 2021 it's expected that there will be more EVs charging on the network and on average it's around 35% more electricity needed per EV, over and above the usual household supply.</p> <p>The Panel was asked: Should Orion increase the capacity of its network or manage EV charging during peaks?</p> <p>The Panel did not support building a bigger network, and they encouraged Orion to explore customer or Orion managing staggered charging to even out the load, and avoid costly expenditure on the network which would end up being passed on to all customers. See appendix C for sticky note on the board exercise results.</p>
Heads-up on the next meeting discussion	<p>The next meeting is to be held in November. At that meeting Orion would like to talk about how the Panel's feedback has helped shaped Orion's work with temporary isolation and disconnections. And seek its views on some asset investment decisions.</p>
Wrap-up and close	<p>Everyone was thanked for making the commitment to be at the meeting for the afternoon and contributing the views of those they represented.</p> <p>ACTION: Orion to establish the agenda and timing for the next meeting in November.</p>

Appendix A:



Appendix B:



Appendix C:

