

Water Scarcity Group

Thursday 05 September 14:30 – 16:30

1. Chair's introduction

The chair led an introduction of attendees and provided an overview of how WSG members can work together to achieve our objective in Cambridge. MHCLG provided an update on the work of the department, noting the Minister's letter to local leaders in Cambridge and his upcoming visit to Cambridge.

2. WSG comms

WRE provided an update on comms for the group, providing a mock-up webpage and inviting comments from the group.

Action

- Continue to progress comms for the Water Scarcity Group.

3. Water company updates

Cambridge Water updated the group on the status of the behavioural change campaign, their efficiency programme and their plans for metering.

Anglian Water provided an update on their WRMP and highlighted key milestones for the Fens Reservoir and the Grafham Pipeline Transfer, including noting that the second consultation for the reservoir closed on 9th August 2024, with the third consultation phase due to take place next year.

WRE provided an overview of the letter they sent to Ofwat on draft determinations, which outlined a number of schemes important to Cambridge (including the Bacton and Mablethorpe desal, the Grafham to Bury St Edmunds transfer, Cambridge Water's efficiency programme and Anglian Water's leakage programme) that they believe require ongoing support from Ofwat.

Anglian Water provided an update on the delivery of major infrastructure projects, including the Grafham pipeline transfer and the Fens reservoir. They noted that for the Fens reservoir, the second public consultation is currently ongoing. They also noted that conversations with Ofwat are ongoing to ensure they have adequate funding in place for the programme.

4. Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service update

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP) provided an overview of recent and upcoming planning decisions and provided a summary of key sites in their current and emerging local plan that are relevant to the work of the WSG.

Action

- Future agenda item to discuss recent planning decisions.
- Future agenda item to invite Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital representatives to WSG.

5. Long-term measures deep-dive

MHCLG provided an overview of work to date on long-term options to address water scarcity in Cambridge. Key questions were posed to the WSG to inform the approach to progressing this work.

Action

- Formation of long-term measures subgroup that proposes an approach to take long-term work forward, and feeds back to WSG.

6. Any Other Business

The chair noted that the next meeting of the WSG is due to take place on 3rd October, 14:00 to 16:00.