DEBRIEF – MEETING NOTES

Stakeholder Round Table: Helping Businesses Save Water

Date: 24 March 2022 l Time: 9am – 10.30am l Zoom Meeting

Purpose:

This paper summarises the key learning points and feedback from the roundtable discussion held with businesses in the Cambridge area around what we can do, with retailers to further support, promote and implement water efficiency in Non-Households (NHH) in the next 5 years and beyond.

Agenda:

9.00 - 9.10	Welcome and Introductions
9.10 - 9.15	Water Resources Planning and role of demand management
9.15 - 9.25	Blue Marble Project: NHH demand research – MOSL segmentation
9.25 - 10.25	Key discussion topics into demand management opportunities
10.25 - 10.30	Next steps

Attendees:	University of Cambridge Anglian Rusk University (ARU) TTP plc Turners (Soham) Ltd Transport company Marshall of Cambridge Water Data insights company
Apologies:	Arm Gog Magog Golf Club

Meeting Notes:

Key points from discussion topics:

1. <u>Challenges</u>: **What are the challenges with utilities in your business and scale of activity vs investment in water efficiency?**

- **Provision of usage data** – a common feedback point was that usage data and understanding of where water is being used was critical to enable implementation of water efficiency interventions and help identify and fix leaks. There was strong and consistent support shown for smart water meters and more frequent data.

- **Engagement and transparency of information** – there was demand for more information, making data more transparent across utilities. Links between energy and water use is currently not clear and so more collaboration between companies and utilities is needed to build a better value proposition. It was also encouraged that more should be done to share industry learning (what's actually worked) and more guidance to help with specific water use needs e.g. for one NHH most of their water use was in one are of their building and less so in other areas so specific guidance would be beneficial. Plus, benchmarking numbers would be helpful to determine how well they are performing on a per/head, sqm basis.

- **Lack of understanding of benefits vs costs** – there was a need to provide more support on the cost benefit analysis of water reuse interventions and wider non-monetary benefits to help businesses make informed decisions. New builds were also a key area flagged a few times as an

opportunity to area to explore options for water re-use/harvesting if right support/expertise was provided.

- **Investment in water efficiency** – Water management conversations were happening more in new sites and a shared view was it was easier to do than retrofitting existing sites. Some NHHs were investing in interventions such as, waterless urinals, rainwater harvesting and acquiring their own AMR meter readers (as data was critical to measure water savings). The general support from Retailers/Wholesalers appeared to be minimal and not very innovative in terms of recommendations. Businesses said to have invested more on energy smart meters and expressed there was a need to do more for water. It was noted businesses tend to see larger financial savings on the energy side and clearer links to carbon savings.

2. **<u>Vision</u>: What is your vision for your business in the next 5 years (and by 2040) in terms of sustainability?**

- **Include water into Net Zero strategy** – There was a recognition the corporate strategy for zero carbon targets needs to better tie in water and embed sustainability decision making into the organisation, such as internal carbon pricing to drive investment decision making – costs and managing risks. There was also a suggestion to align new strategies to UN sustainability goals and have carbon ambition targets, as well as biodiversity actions plans in place with direct links to water quality and consumption.
- **Collaboration and partnership** – the importance of working together was emphasised and one NHH quoted 'sustainability is a puzzle' and that it relies on a range of partnerships to really achieve Net Zero, so reliant on suppliers and the value chain to deliver true Net Zero will be required.
- **Innovation in agricultural sector to reduce water dependence** – discussed opportunities in the agricultural sector to reduce water usage and power generation with the use of AI in terms of energy management (targets, benchmarks) and could explore how machine learning can help identify patterns in use and recommend solutions. A holistic view is important but need more systems thinking about how water is managed to understand where water is coming from and how it is being used.
- **Regulation** – discussed that we might see more regulation around water usage to change the way water is valued to incentivise change in behaviour usage. Also increasing energy/fuel costs may push distribution model to be more regionalised around storage and transportation.

3. **<u>Opportunities</u>: What opportunities are there for businesses to be more sustainable and water efficient? And how can Cambridge Water best help businesses unlock these opportunities?**

- **Smart metering, Technology, Data insight –** smart metering roll out was deemed to be a key enabler so all working with the same data. There was a need for more support and advice on business cases in how to make best use of resources.
- **Leakage, Wastage (internal leaks e.g., loos, urinals) and Retrofits** – this is already being considered for new sites but there needs to be more i.e. what's the next generation of solutions from the water sector and business case studies to support.
- **Water Recycling (grey water, rainwater, irrigation)** – a discussion around what is the best route for water recycling on large developments. The ROI on the investment would be key to understand for the Business case to stand. In energy business cases are not looking much healthier – balance saving water vs risks around water supply – this could be a justification for

investment. There was mention of some negative case studies of water recycling not working, so we need to share more success stories in what has worked to help shift perceptions.

- **Energy and Water, Incentives and Rebates, tariffs** – there seems to be opportunities to link water and energy savings. Multi-utility link up could work but depends on the building usage and how much water is used (link to occupancy) and potentially new build incentives to harvest water. If there was a price rise in the cost of water, then more effort is put in place to reduce usage.
- **Support/guidance** – Best practice sessions to share case studies of success stories would be helpful. It was viewed water as a key part of the conversation around strategic planning – quality of life and attracting business investment in Cambridge.

Conclusion – Key learnings

Key area of focus for large NHH users

- Accurate and timely data is the key driver for large businesses to enable them to better manage water uses
- Targeted support for preparing business cases around water harvesting – split between retrofit and new build support.
- More partnership working between energy and water around data and developing solutions to help the NHH customer meet sustainability targets is key.

Regular engagement is key

- Regular sessions to share best practice case studies would provide added value.
- Need to reflect for strategic plans "how does a water company become part of the value chain to enable companies to achieve sustainability targets"?
- Review opportunities to partner with a NHH business with large estate footprint who is cutting edge in terms of sustainability agenda to help develop – is this already happening through SPRING/Ofwat innovation funding or is there a gap SSC could support.
- Wider point around updates on the regional/Cambridge Water on water resource position to help large businesses with strategic planning and investment cases for water efficiency/recycling schemes.