

Water Scarcity Group

Tuesday 9 June, 14:30–16:05

1. Chair's introduction

The Chair welcomed members and outlined the agenda for the meeting.

2. Wastewater update

Anglian Water provided an update on progress to resolve immediate wastewater constraints and plan for long-term growth. They are working closely with the Environment Agency to agree an approach that supports growth and the environment.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning is progressing a statement of common ground to support the emerging Local Plan. This will set out progress to resolve wastewater constraints and next steps via the water planning process.

Action(s):

- Anglian Water to share communications on its approach to wastewater with WSG members.
- Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to continue to provide wastewater updates via the WSG PMO process.

3. Greater Cambridge Development Corporation consultation response

MHCLG confirmed publication of the consultation response. Subject to parliamentary approval, the Development Corporation is expected to be established on 23 July. It will initially have broad delivery powers, with planning authority status expected in 2027. Early priorities are staffing, governance and processes.

Homes England will continue to work with existing bodies. Water remains a key constraint for the group to consider.

4. Great Ouse Catchment Study

Water Resources East updated the group on the Great Ouse Catchment Study, which covers major growth areas including Cambridge, Tempsford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Huntingdonshire. The study will consider water resources, water quality, biodiversity net gain and growth together. It will set a baseline, address evidence gaps and identify actions to inform regional water planning, water company plans, drainage and wastewater plans, Price Review 2029, river basin plans and the Ouse Washes strategy.

Action(s):

- WRE to keep the group updated on progress of this project.

5. Long-term optioneering

Cambridge Water set out short, medium, and long-term options under consideration to increase water supply. RAPID also outlined Defra-commissioned work to scope options outside of the Cambridge Water Resource Zone, that could support Cambridge. The Group stressed the importance of maintaining momentum on this work, including work to ensure the policy and regulatory framework supports long-term planning.

Action(s):

- Water companies and RAPID to keep members updated on progress.
- MHCLG and Defra to update WSG members on wider work to support long-term water sector planning.

6. Comms report

MHCLG updated the group members on progress to publish an update report on work to address water scarcity and wastewater in Greater Cambridge.

Action(s):

- WSG members to provide comments to MHCLG on the report to support drafting.

7. Programme Management Office (PMO) update

MHCLG updated the group on the PMO pack. Risk owners were asked to review RAG ratings. The PMO pack should be reviewed to keep slides focused and include a new Greater Cambridge Development Corporation milestones slide.

Action(s):

- WSG members to review and update their PMO slides, with particular focus on risks and milestones.
- MHCLG to amend the PMO pack to ensure it remains relevant and focused.
- MHCLG to add a slide on the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation.
- Chair to review the amended PMO pack.

8. Any other business

The next **Water Scarcity Group** meeting is scheduled for **15 July, 14:30–16:30**.