

# State of the market 2018-19 case study

## Large multi-site company

One large company with operations and multiple sites in the UK outlined its experiences – both positive and negative – in switching water services retailer. This company's business areas require careful management of utilities and utility services, including water and waste water services.

After monitoring the business retail market for 6 months following its opening, this company decided to conduct a tender to consolidate its water supplies to a single retailer – with a view to reaping the benefits of having just one monthly bill. Following assessment of tenders received, the company switched to their preferred retailer

The company noted however that they experienced numerous issues with this retailer, in particular concerning:

- meter reads - an issue with one of the company's sites resulted in an incorrect value for all sites across the whole invoice; and
- the retailer's inability to provide and support the relevant permissions and legislative permits concerning water supply and trade effluent services that the company required for its business.

The company subsequently re-tendered and switched supplier. Their new retailer is now providing accurate billing - and where the company experienced a meter read issue, the retailer has issued a modified invoice, allowing the company to pay while the issue is resolved.

As a result, the company reports that it is now benefitting from the following:

- timely processing of change of tenancy and disconnection requests (this is important given they have high rates of change due to the nature of their business activities);
- support for the provision of trade effluent services for its sites; and
- support from the retailer regarding meter reads and locations.

The company nevertheless highlights that one issue remains that is specific to their business. It can take up to 3-4 months, or even longer, for a disconnection or change of tenancy to be processed within the market operator's central database. In such cases, even where the company have agreed a disconnection date with its retailer and the relevant wholesaler has carried out the relevant works, risks remain that they continue to incur charges. During this time, consolidated bills continue to be issued and disputed debt accrues on the consolidated account.