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NORTHERN IRELAND WATER SUCCESSFULLY TRIALS WIZE SMART METERING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF ITS SERVICE

Northern Ireland Water tried SUEZ WIZE AMI solution at Queen's University Belfast as part of its future investment, with proven results, on the technology's suitability to meet local challenges.

In 2022, Northern Ireland Water decided to conduct a trial of differing smart water metering technologies to understand their capabilities and viability, with AMI solutions WIZE, NBIOT and DIEHL's IZAR being tested. Smart metering has been highlighted as one of the transformational, future investment opportunities in their long-term vision, which looks to improve operational and capital efficiency whilst delivering enhanced service and value for customers. The programme introduces new innovative technologies, methodologies and approaches to achieve better outcomes and address root cause issues through data, evidence and analytics.

Northern Ireland Water chose SUEZ to deploy the AMI solutions at Queen's University Belfast. Seventy meters were installed across Queen's University Belfast sites along with one transmitter to understand the quality of reach. This trial has successfully shown how the WIZE solution implemented by SUEZ can handle one of the particular challenges of smart metering: ensuring signal resilience across the territory and underground with minimal infrastructure.

The gateway, hosted on the Ashby Tower, a university building and one of the taller buildings of the city, covered a range of distance of more than 4.5 miles in a built-up area and at the furthest point. While the locations of the meters have significant impact on the transmission conditions – deep boundary boxes with heavy cast iron metal lids are particularly troublesome – the trial provided a 100% connectivity rate for WIZE meters and showed there has been strong consistent signal since the commencement of the trial, in the deepest boundary box, under the heaviest lid.

With its end-to-end solution, including ON'connect™ metering, the SUEZ offer covers the complete value chain, providing network planning, hardware (endpoints and concentrators), technical assistance of local teams for installation, communication network supervision, end-user support, data processing and integration with customer billing systems. The ON'connect™ metering solution provides the necessary IT block to support and create value from the data generated by the WIZE meters. WIZE provides a low-power, long-range and bi-directional communication network that operates over a protected frequency channel for smart metering in the VHF frequency band: 169 MHz. The WIZE network communication protocol is an open protocol promoted and supervised by the WIZE Alliance and it is fully compliant with the European standard EN13757.

“NI Water is at the early stages of evaluation, but these results have clearly shown that this type of smart metering network could be viable and efficient,” commented Daniel Bermingham, Head of Metering, Billing & Collections for Northern Ireland Water.

Francesc Cabrespina, Technology & Solutions Manager, SUEZ said: “Our group has developed a strong expertise in smart meters with more than 5.6 million deployed across the world. We enable our customers our customers to provide access to water services with resilient and innovative solutions, and we are delighted with these encouraging results at Queen’s University Belfast. We look forward to working with Northern Ireland Water further.”

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About SUEZ:

Faced with growing environmental challenges, for more than 160 years, SUEZ has been acting to deliver essential services that protect and improve the quality of life. SUEZ enables its customers to provide access to water and waste services, with resilient and innovative solutions. With its 35 000 employees present in 40 countries, the Group also enables its customers to create value over the entire lifecycle of their assets and services, and to drive their ecological transition, together with their end-users. In 2021, SUEZ produced drinking water for 66 million people worldwide and sanitation services for more than 33 million people. The Group generates 3.6 TWh of energy from waste and wastewater per year and avoided the emission of 3.8 million tons of CO2. In 2021, SUEZ generated revenues of 7.5 billion euros. For more information: www.suez.com/uk

About Northern Ireland Water:

Northern Ireland Water is a Government Owned Company (GoCo), set up in April 2007 to provide the water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. The company supplies 560 million litres of clean water a day for almost 1.8 million people as well as treating 320 million litres of wastewater a day.

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