

25 March 2010

Kapiti Coast District Council
Private Bag 60601
PARAPARAUMU 5254

WATER METERS

Dear Kapiti Coast District Council,

The purpose of this letter is to express support for the Council's recent decision to look at water meters as a part of the water project.

The underlying concern expressed in our letters dated 17 December 2009 and 4 February 2010 (copies attached) was that the non-consideration of water meters could directly lead to higher costs than necessary. There are two sides to the equation – supply and demand. If demand is not kept within limits then the risk is that the supply solution will become more costly than it needs to be, or be built and then be found to be insufficient.

At this stage of its development as a community, the Kapiti Coast does not have any spare money to spend on things which can be avoided and accordingly if water meters are able to help control demand and therefore drive down both the cost of the supply solution and also ongoing operating costs, then this option should be examined and water meters used if they are a suitable solution.

We also submit that the evaluation of whether to use water meters should include a published estimate of costs and benefits – this sort of analysis is prudent with these types of decisions and assuming that the use of meters is proven to be a good idea financially, it will go some way to informing the public on the reasons for their use.

We are aware of other issues around water meters, particularly public perceptions of fairness in water usage (“why should we pay more because someone else uses lots of water?”), concerns over cost (the main point is not about generating additional revenue, it is about reducing water usage especially by high users) and concerns over possible future privatisation (which of course can be answered by suitable orders), however our primary concern is simply to ensure that scarce capital is spent well.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Ternent, MNZM
Chairman
Kapiti Coast Chamber of Commerce

Encl.