

Enquiries received 5 Jan

Item 1.

Commentary: Upper Hutt's Gibbon St water pipes were deemed to be able to handle Brewtown when it was constructed. Since then many areas which require that infrastructure on top of those using Gibbon St already and many like Gibbons St have now been zoned High Density Residential. We believe the additional volume will put extra pressure on already pressured infrastructure.

Questions: Has this extra pressure of High Density Residential Zoning been taken into account when designating this zoning?

Where are the results of this assessment is it has been done?

RESPONSE:

The current Gibbons Street pipes have previously serviced a high level of industrial activity in the industrial area that now includes Brewtown. Future asset renewals are planned, which will take into account further growth and/or capacity aspects (renewals project do as a matter of business-as-usual practice).

The High Density Residential zoning plan change considered infrastructure constraints and the need for some infrastructure upgrades to occur. Future upgrade works that are required to provide for growth are considered as part of the Council's Infrastructure Strategy, a mandatory part of the Long Term Plan (LTP). Growth-specific infrastructure upgrades can be funded through Development Contributions (in line with Council's policy for this).

Item 2.

Commentary: We feel that the information in the public realm regarding private vs public leaks is not consistent and this concerns us. It makes us concerned that other information is also inconsistent. Information from the Wellington Water meeting on the 13th of Dec vs RNZ article with respect to the private leaks do not seem to line up. The stats that we have found indicate there is a back and forth between public and private leaks and how many are in the backlog but nothing on severity of leaks, just the numbers.

Question: How can the public have confidence that the information which is being provided to the public on Local Water Done Well and current water delivery is correct and true? Especially when there is conflicting information from media, current water suppliers and the information what is available for Local Water Done Well?

RESPONSE:

Council and our service provider Wellington Water provide and use consistent reporting on water activities and network performance. We cannot vouch for or comment on other data used or commentary made by other parties including the media.

For the Local Water Done Well planning, Council is working collectively with the other metro councils, using specialist resources and advice where required, and following the prescribed legislation and Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) guidance for preparation of a new water services delivery plan (WSDP).

There is a notable quality assurance step built into this prescribed process in that the draft WSDP (like those of all other councils) will be submitted to DIA for review and approval by 3 September 2025.

Item 3:

Commentary: From accounts at Upper Hutt council meetings the Local Water Done Well Consultation with the communities in 2025 will include 2 viable options consulted on. From the 3 options initially tabled, which 2 of had been dismissed by council, to now 2 options which are effectively the same.

We have had one councillor state that “going it alone is not an option” and “The options we will present is either the status quo (Wellington Water) and a joint venture (CCO) which is being investigated now”. Then at the 11th Dec UHCC meeting Cr Carson highlighted the fact that from all accounts the 2 options which were to be put to the public for consultation we, in effect, “the same”.

The public should be seeing all options with justification’s for the viability of the option or not. This would be true consultation and provide a democratic approach to the city selecting a viable and community backed option.

People from the community were advised on the 21st October Community Hui at Orongomai Marae.

“You can send letters to the ministers to voice that communities don’t have a voice within the Local Water Done Well process and what you would like to see happen. Upper Hutt Council pushed that local representation should be on the board but it’s unknown if that will be a council officer, community person or councillor. “

Questions: Why does it seem that Upper Hutt Council will be putting 2, effectively the same, viable options to the public for consultation in Upper Hutt?

How does the Upper Hutt Council deem the term consultation when offering 2 similar/identical options?

Why does it seem that there will be no inclusion of any of the communities ideas or solutions to assist with water delivery within Upper Hutt and maybe in other regions?

RESPONSE:

The Water Service Delivery Plan (WSDP) and delivery model options being developed are required to meet the [legislative requirements for a water services delivery plan \(link\)](#) and Council is following the guidance provided by the Department of Internal Affairs on this.

As such, it is not, or does not have, an open starting point for a range of ideas from the community.

The Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024 specifies the delivery model options councils have to develop to consult on with their community.

Following the required consultation on the proposed delivery model, all councils are required to submit their Water Service Delivery Plan (WSDP) to DIA by 3 September 2025 for review and approval.

As part of both the joint (five council) planning process and internal considerations, Council has considered the available range of delivery model options and during this narrowed the options for consultation down to what is considered workable to meet the legislative requirements and Government expectations. This process and the rationale have been reported publicly through Council meetings.

This consultation is occurring under specific the provisions of the alternative, simplified arrangements of the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024.

In general, during standard consultation processes submitters have the opportunity to provide options and suggestions for Council consideration.

Item 4:

Commentary: The implementation of water meters seems to be a requirement for the new entity which is likely to be put in place to manage Water Delivery in the Wellington Region. It seems that councils are putting into their long-term plans to either investigate or install water meters. E.g. \$500k put in the budget for Upper Hutt Council to investigate water meters and an estimate of \$35m or more to install these meters. Wellington Water stated at the 13th Dec meeting that even if it was to install 1 water meter every 4 minutes it would take the next 6 years to have them all installed.

If the \$35m+ from Upper Hutt was invested into renewals of pipes and the water entity continued fixing leaks, surely the only requirement for water meters would be to charge dwellings for water. According to water statistics. Private residential water usage is not far off the world wide average once water loss from leaks are taken into account. So, in Upper Hutt, from the information provided this does not seem like it would be a great revenue gatherer or deterrent for over use of water.

Question: What is the benefit of water meters for our water supply, if water meters are to be installed at this early stage, over using funds to continue fixing and replacing our infrastructure?

If there is a tangible benefit, who will fund the installation and management of water meters, councils/ratepayers or new water entity?

RESPONSE:

The use of universal water metering is a demand management tool, and one of a suite used collectively to understand and manage water networks and water loss. It is not used in isolation as an 'either or' method instead of network leak repairs or replacement of assets when required.

In Council's LTP 2024-34 funding has been included for a business case investigating the use of residential water meters. This work is currently underway to help inform future consideration of and decision-making on this water demand management measure.

Depending on the timing of any decision to proceed with installation of universal water metering for Upper Hutt, the water service provider (i.e Council or another water entity) responsible for implementation thereof would be required to fund the work.

Item 5:

Commentary: When checking into how businesses in Upper Hutt pay for water we found it is paid through water metered usage and via their rates.

Questions: What do businesses in Upper Hutt pay for their metered water?

How is this structured?

RESPONSE:

20% of the revenue required to provide the general water supply is raised by way of a user charge, based on the quantity of water used, as calculated by water meters installed on the properties concerned and authorised by Council's [Water Supply Bylaw \(link\)](#), and specified in the [Schedule of Fees and Charges \(Link\)](#) (reference: Long Term Plan 2024-2034 p.292)

There are approximately 700 properties in Upper Hutt currently on a metered supply.

Item 6:

Commentary: The Upper Hutt Council does not have a publicly available glossary of terms and definitions. This is a point of contention when the public is attempting to understand terms that council uses and in what context they are being used. UHCC CEO Geoff Swainson has assured us that this would be looked into.

Questions: When will this Glossary of Terms and Definitions be made available and what will the process be around keeping it up to date?

RESPONSE:

Since previously responding to you via email on this, I have discussed and considered options further.

Establishing a 'live', standalone, all-encompassing master glossary is simply not workable due to the vast amount, range and dynamic nature of language and terminology used in relation to Council activities and services.

Where possible and appropriate we intend to include better summaries and explanations of commonly used terms in specific reports and related documents.

With acronyms we will continue to follow the convention of using the full description with the acronym in brackets at first reference in a report or document.