



Selwyn considers options for Local Water Done Well

The Selwyn District Council is exploring options for the next stage of the government's local water reforms, including the possibility of establishing a Selwyn Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) for delivering water services.

Following the direction of the Minister for Local Government, Simeon Brown, around the next stages of Local Water Done Well, the Council has been exploring options, including collaborating with other councils, setting up its own CCO, retaining the existing system, or contracting water services to another entity, to meet the minister's goals of financial sustainability and regional collaboration.

The new Local Water Done Well legislation aims to address decades of underfunding of infrastructure around the country and gives councils until September next year to submit their own Water Services Delivery Plans.

Mayor Sam Broughton says that Selwyn has invested heavily in water in the past decade, and new growth has created one of the country's most up-to-date and reliable water systems while maintaining some of the lowest water charges.

“But we need a future-proof solution to deal with the rising costs of maintaining those first-class water services, as well as responding to this new legislation and the needs of the South Island,” he says.

“Canterbury, the West Coast, Southland and Otago councils were invited to work together to understand the broadest range of outcomes. Some councils have decided not to collaborate, which limits viable options; however, we have continued an alliance with five like-minded councils to understand how a model together compares to working individually. We want to identify the best options to deliver great water services and keep costs affordable for communities,” says Broughton.

The Council will consider the initial assessment and indicate a preferred option at its 23 October meeting. The options will be worked out in more detail and taken to the community for consideration.

“Public ownership of our water and wastewater infrastructure is central to this major decision for our district, and we need to make sure it's done in collaboration with our communities,” Mayor Broughton says.

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