

Clogher Group Water Scheme, comments on

## **Domestic Tariff Design Principles and Proposals**

### **Irish Water submission to the CER**

I am a member of Clogher Group Water Scheme, Westport, Co. Mayo. I note in the executive summary the statement “**There are currently no domestic water or wastewater charges in place,**”. This is a myth, Mayo County Council have been charging our scheme on a metered basis for water supply, with an annual allowance per household, for years. They supply other houses in the area free of charge. They took over a group water scheme in Kiltimagh back in the early nineties and have never charged for water consumption there. Despite numerous requests, they have made no allowance or (minimal at best) for leakages in our scheme. The design and implementation of this scheme was approved by Mayo County Council back in the seventies, they approved laying the pipes without any sand. Consequently, after 40 years, the main pipes continuously develop major leaks due to vibration on stones and we are full time trying to find and fix them. This is unpaid work. Most of the leaks are on the bottom of the pipes, making them very difficult to find.

I suggest that Irish Water should be obliged to take over group schemes immediately and that the members be charged on an estimated basis until Irish Water install meters. It is unjustifiable to charge group schemes for leaks when schemes which have been taken over will not be charged. I’m a pensioner, not a lawyer, but is there a comparator precedent here somewhere?

I also suggest that arrears, which made the Council’s finances look good on paper be written off immediately. In our case, we have credited Mayo County Council in excess of €110,000 since 2009, we have around 115 members, so that works out at over €200 per house per year. We also have had a social role in subsidising those who can’t pay, but get no allowance for that either. I have no doubt that other schemes, who supplied their own schemes because of the failure of local authorities to do so are also in the same predicament and should get immediate takeover and a clean start as well.

The idea that group schemes are somehow “outside the fold” is absolutely unacceptable in the current environment /climate

Michael G Lavelle

Member, Clogher Group Water Scheme. , 16 May 2014. 14.05 pm.

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