

NOTICE OF MOTION**GREEN GROUP****METERING WATER SUPPLY IN FLATS**

“This Council notes:

Basing charges for domestic water on the readings of a water meter is likely to result in a decrease in water bills, in some cases this has been reported to be as much as 60% a year.

Further, by creating a financial incentive to reduce water consumption, the installation of a water meter usually results in a marked reduction in annual household water consumption.

But Southern Water – the principal supplier of water to households in the city – has been either unable or unwilling to install individual water meters in a large number of flats owned by this council.

This means tenants and leaseholders living in council-owned blocks are likely to be paying more, on average, for their water, than those living in private houses – and have no direct incentive to try to reduce their water consumption.

Recent projections of the city and region's climate predicted a large reduction in rainfall in coming decades – whilst the city's population is set to increase: this is almost certain to increase pressure on supply, pushing up costs and requiring ongoing reduction in consumption to avoid interruptions in supply.

This Council resolves:

1. To support the principle that charges for water should be made more fair: that the charging structure should be based on three key principles:
 - (a) bills should reflect the amount of water actually used,
 - (b) Southern Water should reward households for taking steps to reduce their water consumption, and
 - (c) Southern Water should ensure that water is available for all, all the time, and that no-one chooses to use less water than they need for their health or welfare in order to reduce bills.
2. To recognise and welcome the work already being done on this issue by tenants and staff working in the housing directorate, as well as the city's High Rise Action Group and members of the Older Person's Council and the Sheltered Housing Action Group.

3. Support the principle that all properties should have individual water meters, where this is technically possible, at no cost to the tenant or leaseholder – and that where this is not possible fairer charges for water should be applied.
4. To support the principle that calculating water charges on the basis of the number of bedrooms in a residence rather than occupancy constitutes discrimination against single people as a class and an unfair pricing policy.
5. To request the Acting Chief Executive to write to Southern Water (sending a copy to industry regulator Ofwat), urging the firm to rethink its policy on charging for water at unmetered properties, specifically that information is sought about the number of people living in a particular property and adjustments made to ensure water bills are cut for single and two-person dwellings, and that no charges for surface drainage are made to those living in properties with 'soakaways'
6. To request the Acting Chief Executive write to the city's MPs with a copy of this Notice of Motion, urging them to support the principle of fairer charges for water."

Proposed by: Cllr Ben Duncan

Seconded by: Cllr Jason Kitcat