

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

AGENDA ITEM No. 10

To: Education Resources Sub-Committee	Subject: WATER MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2005/2006
From: Director of Education	
Date: August 2005	
Ref: MM/IS/PH	

Summary

This report recommends a water management policy for the education service and 2005/06 priorities based on it.

Recommendations

The education resources sub-committee is recommended : -

- i to note the action taken to promote the more efficient use of water in educational establishments.
- ii to approve the water management priorities recommended for 2005/06.
- iii to request the submission of a progress report at the end of year 2005/06.



Members wishing further information about the paper should contact:

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Water Management Priorities for 2005/06

Report by the director of education

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting in September 2003 the education committee expressed concern about the level of water charges and requested that the issue be given urgent attention. This report details the expenditure on water charges, including the substantial increases in recent years and describes the action taken to promote a more efficient use of water and more effective management in the water budget.

2. Water charges

- 2.1 The water supply and waste water charges to educational establishments over recent years are shown below in table 1. The increases have been substantial and it is essential that all possible action is taken to ensure payments are minimised.

Table 1

Year	Charges
2000-1	£552,306
2001-2	£700,544
2002-3	£1,178,598
2003-4	£1,793,899
2004-5	£1,414,099

3. Policy and priorities

- 3.1 The general water management policy is to promote the more efficient use of water in all establishments. The aims are to reduce water consumption and expenditure.

- 3.2 The action taken to date is detailed below.

- 1 installation of efficient meters in all establishments

Until recently water charges were based on estimates because meters either had not been installed or were inaccessible. In addition the meter was too large in some instances and this generated higher standing charges. In partnership with Scottish Water the department has initiated a meter installation and rightsizing project. As a result estimated charges have been replaced by charges based on usage. Substantial refunds backdated to 2002 have been negotiated.

- 2 establishing a benchmark for water usage at all premises

In line with best practice water costs have been recorded and analysed to determine establishments with above average usage. These will be targeted for water reduction measures.

3 challenging the charges levied by Scottish Water

The department has initiated regular meetings with Scottish Water to discuss various billing issues and charging anomalies, and to negotiate leakage rebates where applicable. Schools are also encouraged to check actual readings and compare these with accounts from Scottish Water to ensure accurate billing takes place.

4 matching budgets to usage

For the establishments that are unmetered, water charges are based on rateable value which leads to higher charges, these budgets are allocated by the finance department. The metered water budgets are historic and have remained static for some time. Refunds received as part of the rightsizing programme have been used to offset the overspend in metered charges in the last financial year.

4. 2005/06 Priorities

4.1 The priorities in 2005/06 are to build on the action areas described in section 3.2 with the continuing aim of reducing consumption and expenditure. The specific targets are outlined below.

1 target 1 : to complete the installation of water meters at all establishments and to ensure usage is monitored on a regular basis.

- Unmetered establishments

Premises without water meters pay a higher combined water charge based on rateable value. The installation of meters at these schools is a priority. Each installation is anticipated to have a payback period of less than one year.

- Leak detection

A condition survey of the water systems in secondary schools is proposed. Each report will provide plans of the local systems and detail faults, leaks and bursts. This report will form the basis for a repair programme and is anticipated to substantially reduce water meter charges. Community Services will encourage janitors to take regular water meter readings. However, in some instances there are manual handling problems because of difficult locations and covers too heavy to lift.

- 2 target 2 : to benchmark all establishments on the basis of usage/cost per pupil

Scottish Water is to make historical and current water billing information available to the education department. Water use will be benchmarked and the information used to target resources on the most inefficient premises.

- 3 target 3 : to install water management controls in all establishments

It is proposed to initiate a programme of water management controls. These will include:

- sensor controls on urinal cisterns
- spray and/or percussion taps in toilet areas
- waterless urinals

5. Recommendations

The education resources sub-committee is recommended : -

- i to note the action taken to promote the more efficient use of water in educational establishments.
- ii to approve the water management priorities recommended for 2005/06.
- iii to request the submission of a progress report at the end of year 2005/06.