

Press Release

18 December 2012

Council to pursue Local Bill

Kaipara District Council will seek a parliamentary solution to resolving historical rating errors.

At today's Council meeting Commissioners resolved to pursue a Local Bill.

Kaipara District Council made a series of procedural or technical errors when setting rates between 2006 and 2012. The services the rates paid for were still supplied. The rating revenue involved adds up to more than \$17 million.

While a Local Bill would validate all the other incorrect historic rates by fixing largely technical deficiencies, the Bill would include specific actions to address issues around the Mangawhai targeted rate.

A Local Bill would not hinder possible legal action by the Council over matters around the extension of the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Scheme. At Council's request, the Auditor-General's office is investigating the Scheme with a report due out next year. Commissioners have already said they will consider the report with urgency and have not discounted legal action against those involved.

Commissioners discussed other options to address historical rates irregularities. However, they favoured the Local Bill option because it would highlight past mistakes and open past decisions up to full public scrutiny.

Should a Bill proceed to Select Committee stage, Commissioners hoped public hearings would be held in Kaipara District.

Ends

For further information contact: Barbara Ware on 09 439 3123. For further information, please also refer to the news release dated 11 December 2012 "*Commissioners may seek parliamentary solution to rates*".

How does a Local Bill work?

- The Council prepares the Bill;
- The Council advertises its intention to promote the Bill and makes it available for public inspection in its district;
- After introduction, normal Parliamentary process applies. This means the Bill will be referred to a Select Committee for consideration and public submissions heard on the Bill;
- Separate time is set aside in the Parliamentary timetable for local Bills - from introduction it would normally take six to eight months for a local Bill to be passed.