

## Southland District Council Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016

For the newly elected Councillors I am Ruth Shaw, representing Fiordland Sewerage Options. Together with Alistair Paton-McDonald our Chairman, I look forward to meeting you on a more personal basis on Friday when you are visiting Te Anau/ Manapouri area.

### **Some basic facts:** very briefly

1. 98% of ratepayers in Manapouri and a high percentage in Te Anau are against the Kepler proposal.
2. The Manapouri CDA, the Te Anau Community Board and the Council elected Governance Group do not support the Kepler proposal.
3. On the 20 November 2014 CEO Steve Ruru stated in the *Advocate* “*Ideally we wouldn’t be building a 19km pipeline to dispose of this water, but options of land-based disposal are limited.*” However we have identified other options.
4. On the 10 April 2015 the Southland Times ran an article headed “*Mayor ‘excited’ by sewage site option.*”
5. On the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 we published details of an alternative scheme in response to public outcry clearly stating that they did not want the Kepler scheme to go ahead.
6. 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015 Peer Reviewers PDP outlaid the results of their multi criteria Analysis. Out of 15 options the Kepler proposal came in as nearly the worst option.
7. Rapid infiltration adjacent to the Upukerora River was evaluated as the worst option. This was based on the assumption that the wastewater would backflow into the River. Due to lack of progress by Council to research this option Fiordland Sewerage Options went ahead and dug 9 test holes on the site and results have proven that backflow does not occur.
8. PDP scored the Kepler low for the following reasons:
  - Potential odour upsets with biofilters and sprinklers
  - SDI more efficient user of water and nutrient
  - SDI has greater acceptance
  - Kepler has potential for flooding (see attached photo of discharge site).
  - Kepler will affect air quality – odour and spraydrift.
  - Lack of support from communities
9. 20 Sept 2016: Outcome of conference held in Christchurch, agenda was to compare environmental effects and costs of centre pivot irrigation CPI, and sub surface drip irrigation, SDI. Very briefly the outcome was “*that both irrigation CPI and SDI could work but that the cost was the primary issue to be resolved.*”
10. 7<sup>th</sup> October reconvened mediation. Failed to reach an agreement.

### **Comments on a few of the statements made in today's agenda:**

Time frame can be reduced if membrane option considered.

Relative costs of Capex and Opex is significant with potential alternatives having many savings.

Report from Wastewater Governance Group was very clear in their statement regarding the economic viability of the cut and carry operation at the Kepler to off set costs. Cost recovery will be low.

Council needs to take a competitive stand to achieve contestable pricing for alternatives.

Our wastewater experts are not working in conjunction with the Council's experts regarding SDI at Kepler. Confirmed 15 Nov with Ecogent.

Operation costs of SDI and/or Rapid Infiltration is very low.

We have discussed alternatives with land owners and neighbours and response has been positive.

We have given our word that if the Council applies for a resource consent for an alternative we will fully support them in any way possible.

If the Council seriously looks at installing a membrane and discharges onto either Slee or Smith we believe this could be achieved within the timeframe of December 2020. This will avoid the need to apply for a Resource Consent to continue discharge to the Upukerora River. Your Mayor favours the Smith block.

Sale of the Kepler block will bring in over 4 million. Money spent so far should not be looked at as a negative but as an investment to ensure the best technology is used for the treatment and disposal of our sewerage.

SDI is a proven method of disposal. Councilor Kremer has visited SDI sites up North which are close to urban areas, accepted by residents and approved by local iwi. He was greatly impressed after speaking with the plant operators.

SDI ticks all the boxes, environmental, social, cultural and financial.

### **Comparisons Kepler to Kaipara project:**

- History of incompatibility between ratepayers and SDC during process
- Lack of consultation leading up to resource consent application.
- Ratepayers to pay if scheme fails. We are not adequately informed re the actual costs.
- Over riding of community views

- Patchwork solutions as problems arise
- 'Pedestrian crawl' regarding progress
- Did not know the overall costs until project was completed and signed off.
- 23 million first quoted then blowout to 82 million. Kaipara scheme.
- Kaipara 2 million a year to maintain due to land not being suitable, rainfall and weather effects on discharge, constant testing.
- Commissioner's were told that to operate the Kepler scheme "*it will not be for the faint hearted.*"
- Restrictive markets for baleage sales due to wastewater contamination.
- Lack of ability to take all factors into consideration.
- Councils went ahead and bought land without community consultation.
- Projected expenditure must include GST and servicing of loans.
- Impossible to meet all resource conditions as set out in consent.

**Conclusion:**

Fiordland Sewerage Options are willing to reach an agreement with Council if we have in writing that a full, on site investigation, will be carried out at one of the alternative sites. We will ask our members if we can consider withdrawing from the court process if we receive a letter outlining the Council's intentions to fully investigate an alternative which incorporates newer technology.

RUTH SHAW

On behalf of Fiordland Sewerage Options.