

# **WESTMEATH COUNTY COUCIL**

## **GROUP WATER SCHEMES EXPLANATORY MEMO**

A **Group Water Supply Scheme** involves the piping of water from a single source by two or more householders to their homes, farms and other premises and may offer many advantages and economies.

This note has been prepared as a guide to such people coming together to provide themselves with satisfactory piped water supply where no such supply exists – or for the necessary improvement of their existing individual or group supply (or number of individual supplies) if seriously deficient.

Group Water Schemes may be undertaken **subject to the approval of the County Council:**

- (1) in areas which can be served by extension of existing Council or Group Scheme watermain, or
- (2) where the area cannot reasonably be served by extension of existing Council/Group Scheme watermain, a suitable alternative source of water to supply the Group can be obtained.

**Grants of up to 85% of the total cost of the scheme, to a maximum of €6,475 per habitable house may be allocated. *There is no grant available towards cost of agricultural or commercial connections.***

(100% grants may be allocated towards the cost of essential disinfection and filtration equipment on existing privately sources group water schemes subject to certain criteria).

In order to qualify for a domestic grant, each member of the Group must, on completion of the scheme, have at least a water supply from the Group Scheme to the curtilage of their habitable house.

***Where a proposed Group Water Supply Scheme, to be supplied from a public watermain, has the potential to serve areas beyond that served by that particular Group Scheme – and thus ultimately contribute to the overall public watermain network – the scheme must be designed so as to be capable of being integrated with the public scheme and planned or possible future schemes in due course.*** If this results in extra costs, e.g. larger or higher specification pipes, fittings, etc., and results in making the scheme financially unviable, the Scheme may qualify for additional funding over and above the normal grants detailed above. This additional funding is sometimes described as an “upsizing contribution”.

The balance of the cost of a Group Water Scheme nett of grants (including upsizing contribution referred to above, if applicable) must be met by the participants in the Group Scheme by way of financial contribution from each.

If you and your neighbours are interested in forming a Group Water Scheme, the best approach is for all proposed members of the Group to call a meeting and there to select a committee comprising three to six people and headed by an energetic Group Secretary who will conduct all necessary business within the Group and with the County Council and others.

The aim of the Group should be to ensure, if possible, that all the householders, landholders, etc. in the area to be served by the Scheme join the Scheme. In this way, the unit cost of the Scheme and thus the amount of each individual contribution will be kept to a minimum. The larger the number of participants involved, consistent with the amount of water available at source, the more economical should be the scheme.

The Group Secretary should write initially to the Liaison Officer, Water Services Section, Westmeath County Council, County Buildings, Mullingar, giving notice of the intention to form a Group Water Scheme and indicating, if possible, the proposed source of the water for the scheme i.e. public watermain, existing group watermain, existing or new well, etc. **A completed Form GW1 (see attached) listing all the proposed members of the Group should be submitted with this letter, together with a map showing the line of the proposed group scheme. *The Form GW1 should list the proposed members starting at one end of the proposed scheme and working through to the other to facilitate the Council in the necessary validation of number of habitable houses.***

The Council will examine the proposal, consulting and meeting with the Group Secretary and members of the Group as necessary. When this examination has been completed, the Council will write to the Group Secretary indicating if the scheme appears technically and financially feasible and advising how to proceed.

**Water Services Section**