

To the Manager.

Sir i attended your public meeting at Horsham at the Mercurio Motel and you recomended that we could write submissions concerning the water budget.

i would like to express my opinion that all your service fees far out-weigh any water use by any local rural country home owners and are far too high in the context that rain falls out of the sky and yet country people pensioners included are getting slugged by your very high Water service fee,s .

This is going to discourage many people in small rural towns from having a garden and beautifying the local towns Most country towns up here in the wimmera are now population wise are made up of pensioners or retired people who were never in the age of Superannuation systems when they were in the Work force, so their only income is the Govt Old Age Pension and with all the added charges on your Water services it is certainly becoming most difficult for many people up here to pay these rising Water accounts.

As we suspect in this area we could be entering another Drought period up in the Wimmera where water could be rationed once again, and yet your charges are going to far exceed any water usage when water restrictions occur.

Your meeting in Horsham recently was our only way of showing dissatisfaction at your predictions of higher Water service costs , as we have no other recourse with your department.

i also dont think that your department showed or printed enough information to the Rate payers of Rural victoria your intentions of Price rises. puting a notice in the paper is not good enough people should be notified by mail to their houses as they are paying clients of the GMW water up here .

A 12% rise in your costs is far too much and in my opinion your Administration costs for GWM water are far over the top and probably the Salaries paid to those at the top dont balance at all in relation to the price of services and the actual water which as said before simply falls out of the sky.

Sir Country towns are Dying now young people are not staying and Farm Owners are getting fewer every month as Farms are sold to overseas Buyers who will only grow for their own countrys oversea,s with no benefit what so ever to Australia at all.

I am trying to point out that the people left up here to live cannot afford to move and yet are being slugged by GMW Waters exhorbitant service rates in which the Administrations takes a hefty lump of it to pay the Faceless men we never see who over see the Price rises that should never be.

This Wimmera Area will become a Dust bowl nothing so certain if your price rises are allowed to go ahead many of us still do and prefer to use our rain water tanks to secure our domestic needs in the kitchen, so our Bills are just made of service charges to pay for and administration that have become a Bureaucracy unto their own in which the Rate payers of country Shires have little or nothing to do with and only see fleeting glimpses of Managers and administrators in newspapers now and again.

These faceless people make up the prices and charges for the lowest paid of society up country who own very simple housing and try to have a garden that produces vegetables etc and yet your service charges will in fact make that small pleasurable effort impossible by your Service charges that in the event of another drought will be totally impossible to grow anything or have a presentable garden or tree,s.

Frankly you need to meet with local councils and have localised meetings because this is not the way to go with Country people at this moment in time.

Yours Glenn Baker.