Fit for the Future – Attachment B
Community Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Strathfield Council has extensively consulted with its local community since the commencement of the Local Government Reform process to ensure that Council was guided by the views of its community in responding to these processes.

In each engagement with the local community, the community has indicated overwhelmingly that they support Strathfield Council to stand alone and are opposed to Council amalgamation.

The most recent engagement was a community survey conducted by independent research company IRIS, which indicated that 81.4% of the Strathfield community supported a stand-alone Strathfield Council with working with other councils on regional issues as opposed to the merger of the six Inner West Councils. This result was similar to the online survey conducted by Council using similar questions.

Community consultations

The following direct consultations have been undertaken:

Community views on 'Fit for the Future' (May-June 2015)

12 page 'Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack' issued to all households in Strathfield with copies available at Strathfield's libraries and customer service centres	Community Information
Independent Telephone Community Survey – Fit for the Future Options	Survey/Interviews
Online Community Survey -– Fit for the Future Options (1-28 June 2015)	Survey/Interviews
Information Sessions at Strathfield Library – 6 June 2015	Information sessions
Information Sessions at Strathfield Library – 13 June 2015	Information sessions

Community views on amalgamations (March-April 2015)

Community information issued to all households on the 'Fit for the Future' program containing financial information provided by Morrison Low.	Community Information
Community petition and online survey	Surveys

Amalgamation awareness (February 2013)

Council commissioned independent polling company I-view to ascertain community views on amalgamation	Community Survey

Community Consultation on 'Fit for the Future' Options

In May 2015, information outlining Council's options, consistent with the Independent Local Government Panel recommendations on Strathfield Council was issued to each household in Strathfield Local Government Area.

The information titled 'Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack' provided balanced information on Council's options and information relevant to each option.

The community were invited to participate by:

- Phone survey - Random sample community survey conducted by independent research consultant
- Online survey - Complete the survey online via www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au
- Displays - Drop in to our display of information at Council's customer service centre and libraries, view the information and complete the community survey.
- Information Sessions - Meet with Council representatives to discuss the proposals on Saturday 6 June, 10am – 12 noon or Saturday 13 June, 10am – 12 noon at Strathfield Library.
- Website - View up to date information on Council's website - www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Phone Survey

To ensure that this process was supported by independent analysis, Council commissioned IRIS Research to conduct an independent community phone survey on Fit for the Future program. Over 805 interviews were conducted. The 'Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack' was issued in early June and a copy of the survey questions was issued with Strathfield Scene in early June 2015, so that participants would have knowledge of the issue prior to the interview.

The survey has overwhelmingly confirmed that the Strathfield community support Strathfield as a stand alone council working with other councils and rejected the option of Inner West council amalgamation.

81.4% supported Strathfield as a stand alone Council. The suburbs of highest support were Homebush West (85%), Strathfield (82.8%), Greenacre (81.5%) and Homebush (80%).

All age groups were recorded over 70% in support. The two highest groups were aged 65+ (91.5%) and 18-29 years (85.9%).

75.6% considered the local identity of Strathfield to be 'important' or 'very important' to them. The highest areas of response were Homebush West, Strathfield, Chullora and Strathfield

South (note that both Greenacre and Chullora reported 100% agreement to the question of importance of local Strathfield identity).

The majority of people agreed that a large council would be less responsive, rates would increase and that representation in a larger council would reduce. The majority did not support the proposition that a large council is more cost effective and delivers better services for residents.

Online Survey

Council conducted online survey hosted via the Council website www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au using Survey Monkey software. The survey was open from 1 June 2015 to 28 June 2015. This survey asked similar questions to the telephone survey but gave residents and ratepayers the opportunity to directly comment on the Options presented in the Fit for the Future flyer.

A full copy of the survey results is attached including individual comments from survey respondents.

Total survey responses – 202

Preferred options for Strathfield Council

1. 85.15% supported stand-alone Strathfield Council but working in collaboration with other councils on regional issues
2. 14.85% support merger of the six Inner West Councils

Reasons for support for preferred options

- Refer to full survey results~~ – too numerous to list~~.

Agreement statements

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Can't say
Representation for local residents in an amalgamated council will be reduced	**72.96%**	12.58%	5.66	3.77%	3.77%	1.26%
Larger local councils would deliver more effective and better services for residents and communities	6.96%	10.13%	6.33%	24.68%	**45.57%**	6.33%
A larger local council would be less responsive to local communities and	**67.50%**	15.63%	5.63%	3.75%	5.00%	2.50%

rates would increase						

Importance of Strathfield's local identity

Very important	**77.50%**
Important	10.63%
Somewhat important	7.63%
Not very important	2.50%
Not at all important	3.75%

Personal data:

- 91.77% of respondents were home owners.
- 65.82% had lived in Strathfield more than 10 years, the next highest was 15.82% of persons living in Strathfield 1-5 years.
- 64.10% lived in Strathfield, the next highest were Strathfield South (12.82%) and Homebush (12.82%)
- 39.10% of respondents were aged 30-49 years, 28.21% were 50-64 years, 25% were 65 and over.

Community Views on Amalgamation of Strathfield Council

In March 2015, Council issued a flyer to residents regarding the outcomes of the report from Morrison Low on financial modelling of the Inner West Council proposal. Council requested responses from the community regarding the proposal to amalgamate Council with other Inner West councils.

- A total of 395 responses were received to the online petition. The results were 383 against amalgamation representing 96.96% of responses received.
- A total of 306 responses were received in the mail using the tear off sheets. The results were 306 against amalgamation representing 97.06% of responses received.

A copy of the comments made by the community is attached.

General Community views on Amalgamation

Strathfield Council commissioned polling company I-view to undertake a phone poll of the Strathfield community regarding their views on amalgamation. The poll was conducted between 20 May 2013 and 24 May 2015. I-view is a leading market and social research data collection agency with over 30 years' experience.

I-view phone polled a group of 800 residents from the Strathfield Local Government Area. The margin of error for a sample size of 800 is approximately 3.5%..

87% of respondents were aware of the amalgamation debate. 84% believed that no decision should be made to amalgamate Strathfield Council without it first being put to a referendum or Strathfield residents.

Respondents were asked about the NSW Government plan to amalgamate Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay (with possibility of Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils), 70% indicated their opposition to this proposal. ~~specifically to Strathfield being amalgamated.~~

Reasons for opposing amalgamation included:

- Strathfield should stay Strathfield. I don't want it to merge its identity with neighbouring councils (37%)
- Strathfield is well managed. Merging with neighbouring council areas would drag Strathfield down (33%)
- Concern that council rates would increase and would not stay in Strathfield (18%)
- Concern about impact on property values (10%)

Fit for the Future – Attachment B
Community Engagement

Inventory of consultations, meetings and engagements on local government reform process including Fit for the Future

Dates	Action	Type
28 June 2015	Online Community Survey closes -– Fit for the Future Options (1-28 June 2015)	Survey
18 June 2015	Council considers and endorses the report on Council's Fit for the Future submission	Council meeting
16 June 2015	Council Column in Inner West Courier – 'Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack' has issued reminding residents and businesses to have their say	Newspaper
13 June 2015	Information Sessions at Strathfield Library – 13 June 2015	Information sessions
6 June 2015	Information Sessions at Strathfield Library – 6 June 2015	Information sessions
June 2015	Independent Telephone Community Survey – Fit for the Future Options – conducted by IRIS research	Survey/Interviews
June 2015	Copy of the phone survey questions distributed with June 2015 edition to Strathfield Scene to each household	Community Information
June 2015	Strathfield Scene – 'We will lose our voice: the next generation of voters speaks out about Council mergers', '130 years of proud local government', 'The Fight continues', 'Rival Councils told "Hands off Strathfield", 'Property could fall', 'Council to lobby Governor', 'Council spells out the Facts and Urges Residents "Give your own views on Mergers".	Newspaper
2 June 2015	Council Column in Inner West Courier – advises community of the Fit for the Future phone surveys and issue of the information packs	Newspaper
2 June 2015	Council resolution – Sydney Metropolitan Mayors – Fit for the Future Resolutions	Council meeting
2 June 2015	Council resolution – write to the NSW Governor opposing forced amalgamation.	Council meeting
2 June 2015	Council resolution – provide funds to community based groups in the fight against amalgamations	Council meeting
2 June 2015	Council resolution – recommit to anti-amalgamation fund and a workshop to be held.	Council meeting

Dates	Action	Type
2 June 2015	Council resolution – that results from the Anti-Amalgamation petition be accepted.	Council meeting
2 June 2015	Council resolution – Strathfield Council writes to 5 Inner West Councils plus Auburn and Bankstown Councils to state that Strathfield Council can stand alone, will not agree to any boundary adjustments and Council will be making a stand alone submission.	Council meeting
May 2015	Information displays on Fit for the Future at Strathfield Council's Customer Service Centre and Libraries. Information also published on information screens at Homebush Library and Strathfield Customer Service Centre	Information Displays
May 2015	Council website at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au updated with information on the Fit for the Future Options information and how community can participate in providing comments and feedback	Community Information
May 2015	12 page The 'Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack' issued to all households in Strathfield with copies available at Strathfield's libraries and customer service centres	Community Information
26 May 2015	Council resolution – note that the other five Inner West Councils are not supporting the Panel recommendations, that any council including an amalgamation proposal with Strathfield Council will not be agreed to.	Council meeting
19 May 2015	Council column – Inner West Courier – Mayor's Message that Council will be making a submission to IPART on the basis that Council will stand alone.	Newspaper
5 May 2015	Council resolution – resolved to write to Premier regarding appointment of IPART as expert advisory panel and concerns with consultancy appointments, assessment criteria, deadlines for review of methodology and to write to NSW Councils, Sydney Metropolitan Mayors and LGNSW advising of Council resolution.	Council meeting
5 May 2015	Council resolution – that results from the Anti-Amalgamation petition be accepted.	Council meeting
9 April 2015	Council resolution – that Council write to local MPs, Premier, Minster for Local Government and Members of the Legislative Assembly and Council regarding	Council meeting

Dates	Action	Type
	council position on amalgamation.	
16 March 2015	Flyer issued to all households in Strathfield Council area on 'Fit for the Future' program with tear-off reply or access to an online survey via Council website.	Community Information/Survey
3 March 2015	Council resolution – that results from the Anti-Amalgamation campaign be accepted.	Council meeting
2 March 2015	Amalgamation flyer issued to all households in Strathfield Council area with tear-off reply or access to an online survey via Council website.	Community Information/Survey
March 2015	Strathfield Scene – 'What Council mergers will mean for the Oasis of the West' and 'Council mergers how you'll suffer'	Newspaper
24 February 2015	Council resolution – that results from the Anti-Amalgamation petition be accepted.	Council meeting
10 February 2015	Council Column – Inner West Courier – petition open for residents to have their say on proposed Inner West merger.	Newspaper
3 February 2015	Council resolution - acceptance of Council report on Anti-Amalgamation campaign, approval for display of banner on Council offices, approval of expenditure.	Council meeting
February 2015	Strathfield Scene – 'Residents to be slugged $320 in rates increases under merged Councils, Strathfield warns'	Newspaper
January 2015	Anti-Amalgamation banners erected on Council buildings and key locations	Banners
26 January 2015	Flyer on likely impacts of amalgamation based on financially modeling from Morrison Low issued to all households in Strathfield.	Community Information
27 January 2015	Council column in Inner West Courier - Mayors Message – Comments on NSW Government's recommendation to merge Strathfield Council with five other Inner West Councils	Newspaper
23 December 2014	Council resolution – acceptance of Council report on the Anti-Amalgamation campaign and expenditure.	Council meeting
2 December 2014	Council resolution – Reaffirm commitment to anti-amalgamation fund and a councillor workshop be called to review work to date	Council meeting

Dates	Action	Type
December 2014/January 2015	Strathfield Scene articles 'Don't fall into council merger trap' warns Cr Datta.	Newspaper
4 November 2014	Council resolution – that Anti-Amalgamation Reform Taskforce conduct a workshop to discuss working with other Inner West Councils to fight amalgamation. A resolution on Amalgamation regarding Fit for the Future program.	Council meeting
October 2014	Morrison Low engaged to provide financial modeling and analysis in regard to Fit for the Future	Financial modeling
7 October 2014	Council resolution – allocated funds to a fighting fund about forced amalgamations and councillor workshop be held.	Council meeting
October 2014	Strathfield Scene – '$100,000 fund to save our council', 'Questions the Premier wouldn't answer'	Newspaper
23 September 2014	Council column in Inner West Courier - Mayors Message – Comments on NSW Government's incentives for amalgamating councils	Newspaper
10 September 2014	Media Release – Drop plans to blackmail and bribe Strathfield into selling out residents	Media Release
2 September 2014	Council resolution – write to Minister Toole regarding statements recommending Strathfield Council merger with other inner west councils, that a report be prepared to issue to community and commence program of community engagement.	Council meeting
September 2014	Strathfield Scene – 'Arrogant' state out to amalgamate	Newspapers
9 January 2014	Media Release – Strathfield Council rejects report's merger recommendations	Media Release
3 December 2013	Council resolution – commends comments by Premier Barry O'Farrell on amalgamation and panel reports	Council meeting
4 June 2013	Council resolution – to make joint submission to Panel with Ashfield, Burwood and Canada Bay Council, provide information to community on Panel and encourage resident participation at community meetings	Council meeting
4 June 2013	Council resolution – acceptance of poll of Strathfield community regarding amalgamation	Council meeting
May 2013	Strathfield Scene – articles 'Memo to State: $292M in	Newspaper

Dates	Action	Type
	Assets + 9M in Bills = Sustainability', 'Mergers will mean rate rises: Mayor' and 'Why Mega Councils Just Don't Work'	articles
May 2013	Research company I-view commissioned to conduct community survey on views on amalgamation and proposal for amalgamation of Strathfield with other Inner West Councils. Polling conducted in May 2013.	Community Survey
March 2013	Strathfield Scene – articles 'We don't want Amalgamation – SOS Plans People's Survey' and 'Mega Council Fears' by Cr Raj Datta	Newspaper articles
February 2013	Strathfield Scene – articles include 'Merger Battle Begins', '$50,000 to fight amalgamation', 'A people's campaign – Save our Strathfield (SOS), 'Why Amalgamation doesn't work'	Newspaper articles
11 February 2013	Media Release – Fighting to save Strathfield from amalgamation is the only responsible course	Media Release
6 February 2013	Media Release – Mayor of Strathfield moves to resist State Government's amalgamation push	Media Release

Enclosures

IRIS Research Ltd, Strathfield Council 'Fit for the Future' Community Engagement Survey, June 2015

Strathfield Council Community Survey June 2015 – results

Strathfield Council Community Feedback April 2015 - results

Insight for
Business & Government

Strathfield Council 'Fit for the Future' Community Engagement Survey

Prepared for

Prepared by
IRIS Research Ltd

June 2015

IRIS Research ABN 16 002 278 793
Level 1, IC Central, Innovation Campus, Squires Way, Fairy Meadow
Postal address: Northfields Ave, Wollongong NSW 2522. Telephone: (02) 4285 4446 Fax: (02) 4285 4448
Net: http://www.iris.org.au Email: research@iris.org.au

Table of contents

Executive summary

This report presents the results of Strathfield City Council's 'Fit for the Future' Survey, 2015. IRIS Research was commissioned by Strathfield Council to conduct research amongst the area's residents in relation to the NSW Government's 'Fit for the Future' reform program. The survey sought to attain the preferences of residents and businesses towards 2 'Fit for the Future' options, that ranged from Strathfield Council remaining as it is, to merging with other Councils.

To attain the views of those that make up Strathfield Local Government Area, a comprehensive telephone-based poll among the area's residents was used.

A random sample of households was selected by IRIS Research for the telephone based survey with 805 residents participating.

The main findings of the survey were:

Most preferred option

Results showed that over four fifths of all residents surveyed (81.4%) indicated their most preferred option was for Strathfield Council to remain by itself but work in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues. This was significantly the most preferred option.

The second most preferred option for residents was for Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhart and Marrickville Councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council.

Agreement Statements

Strathfield residents were asked to rate their level of agreement toward three statements concerning being part of a larger Council area. Of the three statements put to residents, 2 attained mean agreement scores in the upper limit of the 'Medium' range (see page 6 for range). Residents showed most agreement with the statement 'A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase' with 68.0% of the residents surveyed providing a 'high' agreement score.

The lowest agreement came for the statement 'Larger local Councils would deliver more cost efficient and better services for residents and communities', with 28.7% of residents providing a 'high' agreement score and 44.9% providing a 'Low' agreement score.

Introduction

1.1 Background

IRIS Research was commissioned by Strathfield Council to conduct research amongst the area's residents in relation to the NSW Government's 'Fit for the Future' reform program. The survey sought to attain the preferences of residents towards two 'Fit for the Future' options, that ranged from Strathfield Council remaining as it is, to merging with other Councils.

To attain the views of those that makeup Strathfield Local Government Area, a comprehensive telephone-based poll among the area's residents was used.

1.2 Study Objectives

The objective of the poll was to:

- Identify the preferred 'Fit for the Future' option amongst Strathfield Local Government Area residents.

1.3 Survey Response

The table below shows the compliance rate achieved for the entire sample. The compliance rate is the number of completed interviews to the total number of calls made (including refusals). A compliance rate of 64% is considered a good result for a community survey.

Table 1.1 Survey compliance rate

Response sequence	Outcome
Interviews	805
Refusals	592
Compliance rate	**74%**

1.4 Survey Accuracy

When analysing results for the entire sample, the maximum error rate will be about ±3.5% at the 95% confidence level, assuming a proportional response of 50%. Put another way, we can be confident that if the survey were to be repeated there would be a 95% chance that the new result would lie within ±3.5% of the result achieved in this survey.

1.5 Mean Scores

Given that IRIS undertakes many residents' surveys such as this; we are able to benchmark mean scores. As such, mean importance and satisfaction scores can be further classified as being a low, medium or high score based on this experience. Table 1.3.1 highlights the mean classifications.

Table 1.3.2: Classification of mean scores

Mean importance scores	
0 – 2.99	Low
3.00 – 3.99	Medium
4.00 – 5.00	High

Mean satisfaction scores	
0 – 2.99	Low
3.00 – 3.74	Medium
3.75 – 5.00	High

Survey Results

2 Resident Telephone Survey

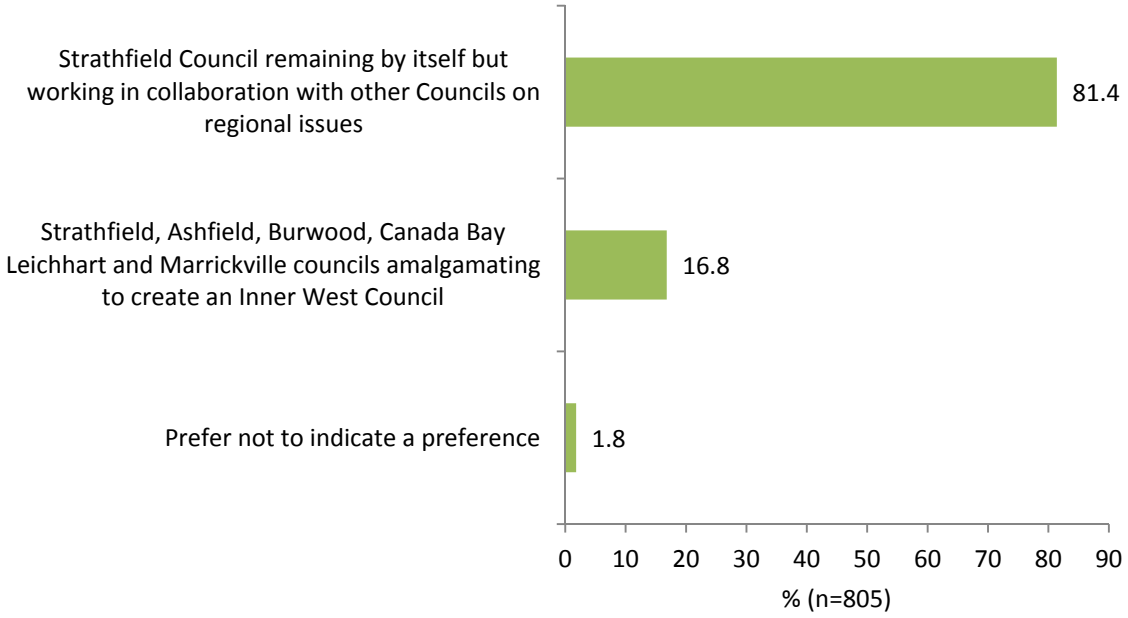
The NSW State Government released its 'Fit for the Future' program, which requires most NSW Council's to consider amalgamation options with neighbouring councils. This section looks at the views held by Strathfield Council residents as measured by IRIS' telephone survey.

2.1 Preferences of options

Section 2.1 of this report highlights the options that resident's preferred in regards to amalgamation with neighbouring Councils.

Question: Which is your preferred option?

Graph 2.1: Preferred option for 'Fit for the Future' program



Key Results:

- Over four fifths of all residents surveyed (81.4%) indicated their most preferred option was for Strathfield Council to remain by itself but work in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues.
- The second most preferred option for residents was for Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhart and Marrickville Councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council.

Results for these two preferred options were then analysed by suburb.

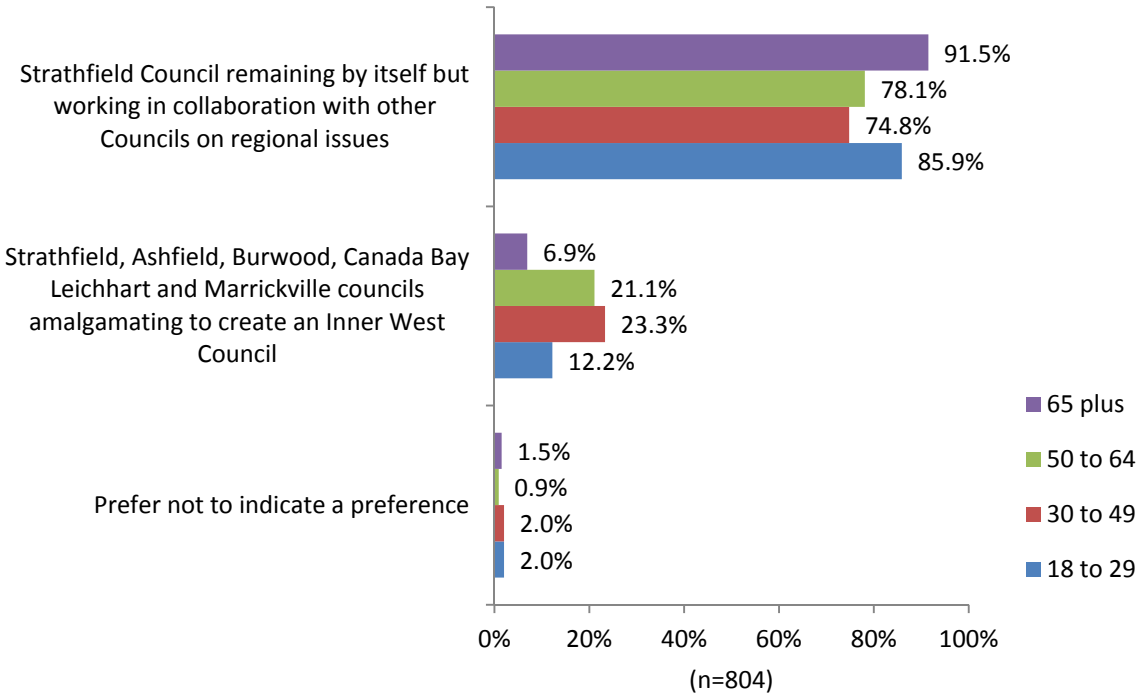
Table 2.1: Preferred option for 'Fit for the Future' program by suburb

	Strathfield (n=471)	Strathfield South (n=116)	Homebush (n=120)	Homebush West (n=60)	Greenacre (n=27)	Chullora (n=10)
Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues	82.8%	77.6%	80.0%	85.0%	81.5%	60.0%
Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay Leichhart and Marrickville councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council	14.4%	22.4%	20.0%	13.3%	18.5%	40.0%
Prefer not to indicate a preference	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Key Results:

- The vast majority of residents from each of the six suburbs preferred the option of 'Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues'.
- A slightly higher proportion of residents from Chullora (40.0%) and Strathfield South (22.4%) preferred the option of 'Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay Leichhart and Marrickville councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council' in comparison to other suburbs.

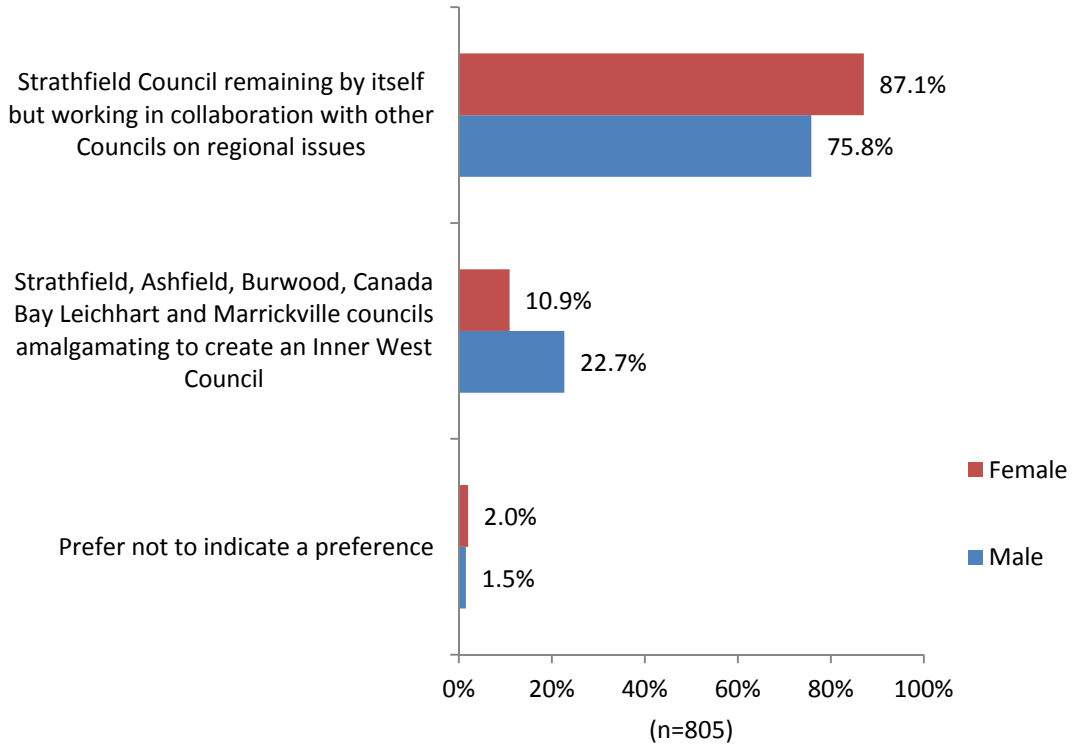
Graph 2.2: Preferred option for 'Fit for the Future' program by age



Key Results:

- Results show a significantly higher proportion of residents aged 65+ prefer the option of Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues compared to those aged 30-64.
- Residents aged 30-49 were significantly more likely to prefer the option of the amalgamation of Councils compared to those aged 18-29 and 65+.

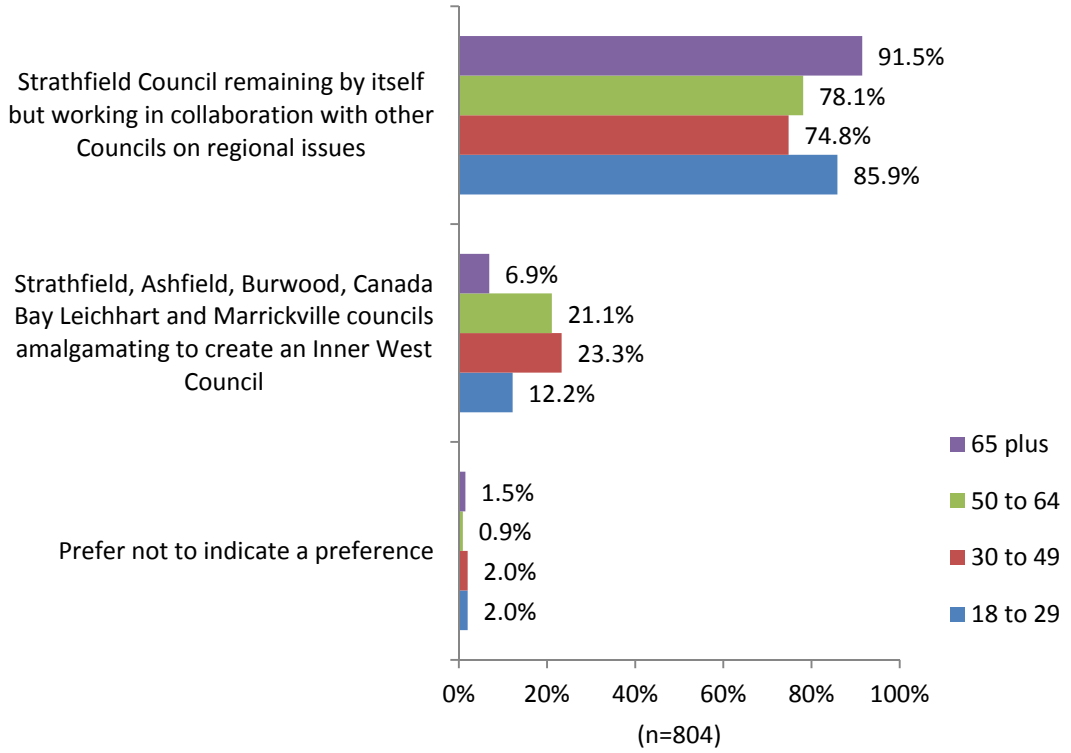
Table 2.2: Preferred option for 'Fit for the Future' program by sex



Key Results:

- Results show a significantly higher proportion of females preferred the option of 'Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other Councils' on regional issues than males.
- On the other hand a significantly higher proportion of males preferred the option of the amalgamation of Councils compared to females.

Graph 2.3: Preferred option for 'Fit for the Future' program by time lived in the area



Key Results:

- Results show that residents who have lived in the area for less than one year were significantly more likely to prefer the option of Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other Councils, compared to those who have lived in the area for longer than one year.

3.0 Reasons for Choice

Residents that opted for Strathfield Council to amalgamate with other Councils to create an Inner West Council were asked why they chose that option and why they didn't choose for Strathfield Council to remain by itself.

Table 3.1: why you chose amalgamation? (n=112)

Why you chose amalgamation	%
Costs will be lower / more funding	28.4
More efficient	17.9
Do a better job / stronger	13.3
Improve services / facilities	12.5
Current Council doesn't do a good job	5.4
Over governed at the moment	4.9
Better for local residents / area	4.7
More power	3
Only one Council to deal with	2.6
Too small as is	1.6
More ideas	1.3
I like other suburbs	0.9
Current Council should help others	0.5
Rates will be lower	0.5
Other	1.2

Key Results:

- The top three answers as to why residents chose amalgamation were 'costs will be lower / more funding', 'more efficient' and that Council will do a better job and be stronger.

Table 3.2: why you didn't choose for Strathfield to remain by itself? (n=74)

Why you didn't choose for Strathfield Council to remain by itself	%
Will do a better job / stronger	31.5
Current Council doesn't do a good job	18.2
Too small as is	14.4
Costs will be lower / more funding	12.4
More efficient	6.7
Inevitable amalgamation	4.5
Over governed at the moment	4.1
Rates will be lower	2.1
More ideas	1.8
Current Council should help others	1.2
Only one Council to deal with	1.2
More power	0.9
Corruption	0.9

Key Results:

- The most popular response as to why residents didn't opt for Strathfield Council to remain by itself was that it 'will do a better job and will be stronger'.

Residents that chose for Strathfield Council to remain by itself were asked why they chose that option and what their main reasons were for not choosing amalgamation.

Table 3.4: why you chose for Strathfield Council to remain alone? (n=638)

Why you chose for Strathfield Council to remain alone	%
Happy with current Council	24.2
Money will go to other Councils	12.9
Single / smaller area can be better taken care of	8.5
Don't see benefits of amalgamation	5.8
Too big / won't function well	5.8
Works fine as it is	4.6
Better for local issues	4.1
Increased rates	4.0
Other Councils not similar	3.5
Inherit other Councils problems	3.1
Bigger Council is less efficient	2.9
Like to maintain tradition / identity	2.9
Better services	2.7
Financially stable in own right	2.4
Strathfield is better than other areas / don't like other Councils	2.3
Focus on Strathfield	2.0
Won't have a voice in bigger Councils	1.7
Enough problems already	1.4
Council is independent	0.9
Local Councillors should stay local	0.6
Bigger Council won't deliver services	0.5
Amalgamation is costly	0.4
Can make decisions quickly	0.3
Jobs will be lost	0.3
Looked after better by local Council	0.3
Fear of change / unknown	0.2
Property value is higher than other areas	0.2
Can see where money is going	0.1
Bigger Council will have too many Councillors	0.1
Other	1.3

Key Results:

- Results show that the most popular reasons residents had for choosing to remain alone included being happy with the current Council, being afraid too much money will go to other Councils and that a single / smaller area can be better taken care of.

Table 3.5: why you didn't choose amalgamation? (n=545)

Why you didn't choose amalgamation	%
Too big / won't function well	33.5
Don't see benefits of amalgamation	12.3
Money will go to other Councils	9.4
Increased rates	8.0
Happy with current Council	7.4
Won't have a voice in bigger Councils	5.4
Strathfield is better than other areas / don't like other Councils	2.8
Other Councils not similar	2.4
Better for local issues	2.3
Like to maintain tradition / identity	2.1
Better services	1.9
Single / smaller area can be better taken care of	1.7
Amalgamation is costly	1.6
Inherit other Councils problems	1.5
Fear of change / unknown	1.1
Bigger Council is less efficient	0.9
Focus on Strathfield	0.8
Enough problems already	0.7
Can make decisions quickly	0.5
Council is independent	0.4
Property value is higher than other areas	0.4
Other	3.0

Key Results:

- Over a third of residents (33.5%) mentioned that the main reasons they didn't choose for Strathfield Council to amalgamate were that it was 'too big and wont function well', 'that they can't see the benefits of amalgamation' and that they are afraid money will go to other Councils.

4.0 Agreement statements

Strathfield residents were asked to rate their level of agreement towards 3 statements concerning being part of a larger Council area. The results are shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Agreement statements

n=805	Agreement rating				
	N/R	Low (1-2)	Medium (3)	High (4-5)	Mean score (out of 5)
A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase	2.7	14	15.2	68.0	3.94
Representation for local residents in an amalgamated Council will be reduced	5.1	15.6	15	64.3	3.85
Larger local Councils would deliver more cost efficient and better services for residents and communities	2.8	44.9	23.6	28.7	2.70

Key Results:

- Of the three statements put to residents, two attained mean agreement scores in the upper limit of the 'Medium' range. Residents showed most agreement with the statement 'A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase' with 68.0% of the residents surveyed providing a 'high' agreement score.
- The lowest agreement came for the statement 'Larger local Councils would deliver more cost efficient and better services for residents and communities', with 28.7% of residents providing a 'high' agreement score and 44.9% providing a 'Low' agreement score.

Table 4.2: Agreement statements by suburb

		Representation for local residents in an amalgamated Council will be reduced					
		Strathfield	Strathfield South	Homebush	Homebush West	Greenacre	Chullora
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	13.2%	22.2%	16.5%	14.8%	21.4%	27.3%
	Medium (3)	13.0%	22.2%	10.7%	23.0%	10.7%	45.5%
	High (4-5)	69.2%	52.2%	66.1%	52.5%	64.3%	18.2%
	(Can't Say)	4.7%	3.4%	6.6%	9.8%	3.6%	9.1%
	Mean score	3.96	3.53	3.93	3.69	3.75	2.89

Key Results:

- The suburb with the highest level of agreement for this statement was Strathfield (3.96). This was followed by Homebush (3.93) and Greenacre (3.75).

Table 4.3: Agreement statements by gender

		Representation for local residents in an amalgamated Council will be reduced	
		Male	Female
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	15.2%	15.8%
	Medium (3)	18.7%	11.4%
	High (4-5)	62.4%	66.1%
	(Can't Say)	3.7%	6.7%
	Mean Score	3.80	3.90

Key Results:

- Results show that females (3.90) were more likely to agree with this statement than males (3.80).

Table 4.5: Agreement statements by suburb

		Larger local Councils would deliver more cost efficient and better services for residents and communities					
		Strathfield	Strathfield South	Homebush	Homebush West	Greenacre	Chullora
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	47.1%	46.2%	40.8%	43.3%	19.2%	55.5%
	Medium (3)	26.0%	15.4%	26.7%	25.0%	0.0%	22.2%
	High (4-5)	23.9%	37.6%	29.2%	28.4%	80.8%	11.1%
	(Can't Say)	3.2%	0.9%	3.3%	3.3%	0.0%	11.1%
	Mean Score	2.59	2.75	2.80	2.81	3.87	2.27

Key Results:

- The suburb with the highest level of agreement with this statement in terms of the mean score were Greenacre (3.87). The suburb of Chullora (2.27) displayed the lowest level of agreement with this statement.

Table 4.6: Agreement statements by gender

		Larger local Councils would deliver more cost efficient and better services for residents and communities	
		Male	Female
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	41.4%	48.5%
	Medium (3)	24.6%	22.5%
	High (4-5)	31.8%	25.5%
	(Can't Say)	2.2%	3.5%
	Mean Score	2.85	2.56

Key Results:

- Results show that males (2.85) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement compared to females (2.56).

Table 2.7: Agreement statements by suburb

		A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase					
		Strathfield	Strathfield South	Homebush	Homebush West	Greenacre	Chullora
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	12.1%	15.3%	18.3%	10.0%	35.7%	0.0%
	Medium (3)	14.4%	20.5%	12.5%	1.7%	35.7%	55.6%
	High (4-5)	70.5%	63.3%	64.1%	88.3%	28.6%	44.4%
	(Can't Say)	3.0%	0.9%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean Score	4.05	3.77	3.87	4.13	3.05	3.36

Key Results:

- The three suburbs with the highest level of agreement with this statement in terms of the mean score were Homebush West (4.13), Strathfield (4.05) and Homebush (3.87).
- Residents from Greenacre (3.05) and Chullora (3.36) were least likely to agree with this statement.

Table 4.8: Agreement statements by gender

		A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase	
		Male	Female
Agreement rating	Low (1-2)	13.7%	14.4%
	Medium (3)	18.9%	11.7%
	High (4-5)	65.4%	70.4%
	(Can't Say)	2.0%	3.5%
	Mean Score	3.86	4.03

Key Results:

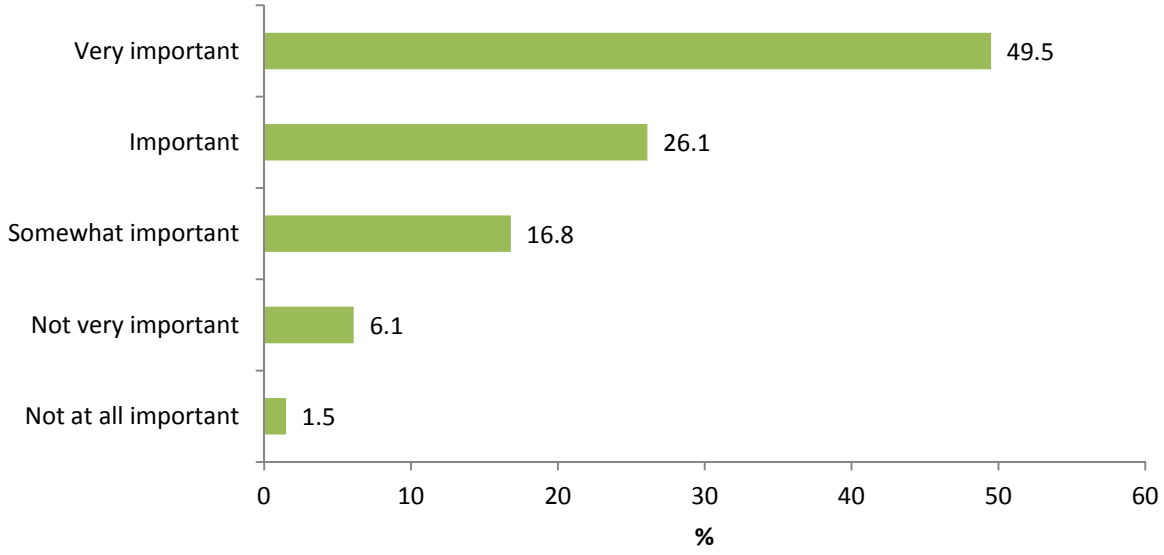
- Results show that females (4.03) were more likely to agree with this statement compared to males (3.86).

5.0 Local identity

Section 5.0 of this report highlights how important the local identity of Strathfield is to residents.

Question: How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you?

Graph 5.1: Importance of local identity



Key Results:

- Three quarters of residents surveyed (75.6%) considered the local identity of Strathfield to be either 'important' or 'very important' to them.

Table 5.1: Importance of local identity by gender

		How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you?	
		Male	Female
Answer	Not at all important	2.2%	0.5%
	Not very important	9.5%	2.7%
	Somewhat important	18.0%	15.9%
	Important	24.4%	27.8%
	Very important	45.9%	53.1%

Key Results:

- According to the results, there was a higher percentage of females (80.9%) than males (70.3%) that said the local identity of Strathfield was either 'important' or 'very important' to them.

Table 5.2: Importance of local identity by suburb

		How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you?					
		Suburb					
		Strathfield	Strathfield South	Homebush	Homebush West	Greenacre	Chullora
Answer	Not at all important	1.1%	0.0%	4.2%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Not very important	6.6%	7.8%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat important	13.6%	15.5%	21.7%	18.3%	51.9%	22.2%
	Important	29.1%	20.7%	23.3%	25.0%	11.1%	33.3%
	Very important	49.7%	56.0%	44.2%	55.0%	37.0%	44.4%

Key Results:

- The four suburbs with the highest number of residents giving either an 'important' or 'very important' rating to this question were; Homebush West, Strathfield, Chullora and Strathfield West.

Table 5.3: Importance of local identity by time lived in the area

		How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you?			
		How long you have lived in the Council area			
		Less than a year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years
Answer	Not at all important	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	1.4%
	Not very important	0.0%	0.0%	13.1%	4.5%
	Somewhat important	66.7%	18.8%	10.4%	18.4%
	Important	33.3%	25.0%	24.6%	26.8%
	Very important	0.0%	56.2%	50.3%	48.8%

Key Results:

- Residents that have lived in the Council area for less than a year were least likely to consider local identity as either 'important' or 'very important'.

IRIS Research Limited ABN 16 002 278 793
Level 1, iC Central, Squires Way, Fairy Meadow
Postal address: Northfields Ave, Wollongong NSW 2522
Telephone: (02) 4285 4446 Fax: (02) 4285 4448 International: 61 2 4285 4446
Net: http://www.iris.org.au Email: research@iris.org.au

Disclaimer

16 June 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Celebrating 130 Years

Council News

The Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack

The NSW State Government has released its 'Fit for the Future' program which requires most NSW councils to consider amalgamation options with neighbouring councils.
All residences and businesses within the Strathfield local government area will have recieved an information pack which outlines options for Strathfield Council's future. Council encourages all residents to consider the information and have their say by completing the survey at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au by June 20.

Red Shield Appeal

Council would like to thank everyone who came along to the Red Shield Appeal BBQ at Strathfield Town Centre recently. The BBQ raised $3,245 for this important cause. The doorknock appeal on May 31 raised a total of 15,983.40, which is a testament to the generosity of the people of Strathfield.

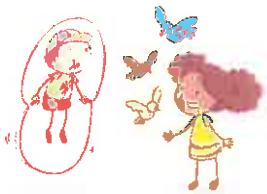
Memory and Ageing Presentation

Strathfield Council is running a free Memory & Ageing seminar for residents who would like more information about normal ageing and memory loss. The presentation addresses the myths surrounding dementia and provides strategies to help your memory.

Date: June 22, 11:15am
Location: Strathfield Community Centre

School Holiday Program

Registrations are now open for the June School Holiday Program. The program runs from June 29 to July 10, and is open to children between the ages of 5 and 12 who live or attend school in the Strathfield area.For more information or to register, visit www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au



Asset Management Review

Strathfield Council is responsible for managing and maintaining community assets like regional and local roads, foothpaths, kerbs and guttering, parks and community buildings such as libraries. In managing our assets Council aims to find an optimal balance between the condition that we maintain our assets and the cost to ratepayers.

Council would like resident's views on the level at which our community assets are maintained. Residents are encouraged to consider the information at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au/home/council/asset-management-review and take the online survey.

The Cooks River Fun Run takes place this Sunday – Register online now

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Strathfield Council's annual fitness event, the Cooks River Fun Run, will return for its sixth year this Sunday 21 June

The event includes a 5km and 10km race starting at Freshwater Park and following the Bay to Bay Cycleway. The certified course offers runners a chance to get a qualifying time for the big events coming up on the running calendar, including the City2Surf and the Sydney Running Festival.

Council is pleased to be supporting Bowel Cancer Australia as the official charity partner for the third year in a row. June is Bowel Cancer Awareness month, which aims to educate the community about identifying risk factors and prevention to save lives. Each entry to the Cooks River Fun Run includes a $5 donation to Bowel Cancer Australia.

With over 400 runners already registered, the event is on target to be the biggest ever and help spread the message about the importance of healthy lifestyles. I would like everyone in the Strathfield community to think about their health and their risk factors and talk to their relatives about their medical history.

With the option of a 2km kids run and a 5km walk, the Cooks River Fun Run is an event for the whole family. I myself have entered the 5km run and encourage everyone to participate. Registrations are still open and will be taken on the morning of the race. I look forward to seeing many runners and walkers enjoying an active Sunday morning along the Cooks River.

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield

WHAT'S ON

COOKS RIVER FUN RUN

Cooks River Fun Run
Sunday 21 June, from 6.40am
Freshwater Park
Wilson Street and Alda Avenue, Strathfield
www.cooksriverfunrun.com.au

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM
Should you wish to speak with your Councillor, please contact Council on 9748 9999 by 4pm on the Friday preceding the session to make an appointment

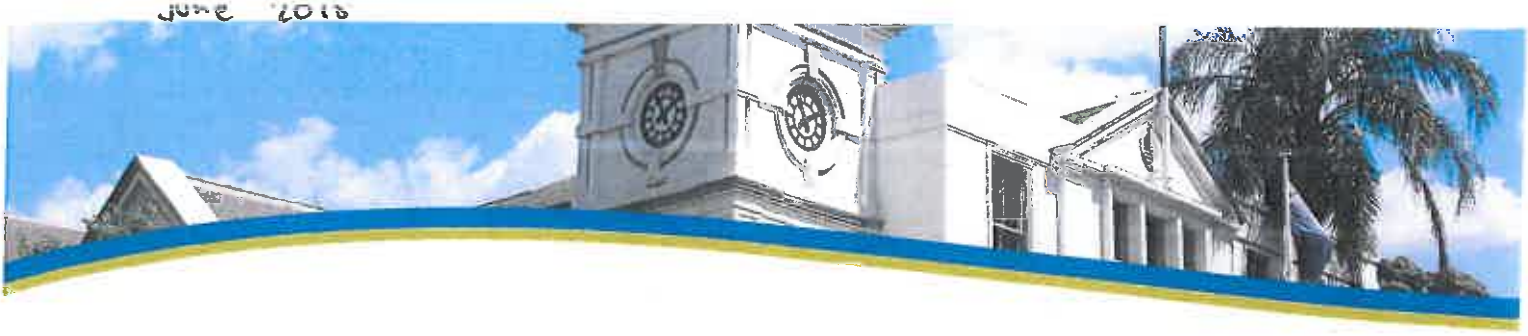
- 20 June - Council Offices: Cr Vaccari
- 27 June - Council Offices: Cr Ok

COUNCIL MEETINGS

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
- Tuesday 7 July 2015, 7pm
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

June 2015



The Future of Strathfield Council: Survey Questions

The NSW State Government has released its 'Fit for the Future' program which requires most NSW councils to consider amalgamation options with neighbouring councils. All residences within the Strathfield local government area will be receiving an information pack which outlines options for Strathfield Council's future. Council encourages all residents to consider the questions below, and have their say. You can also fill out the survey online at **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au**

1. Which is your preferred option? (Please tick)

☐ Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other councils on regional issues

☐ Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council

2. What are the main reasons you chose your most preferred option?

_____

_____

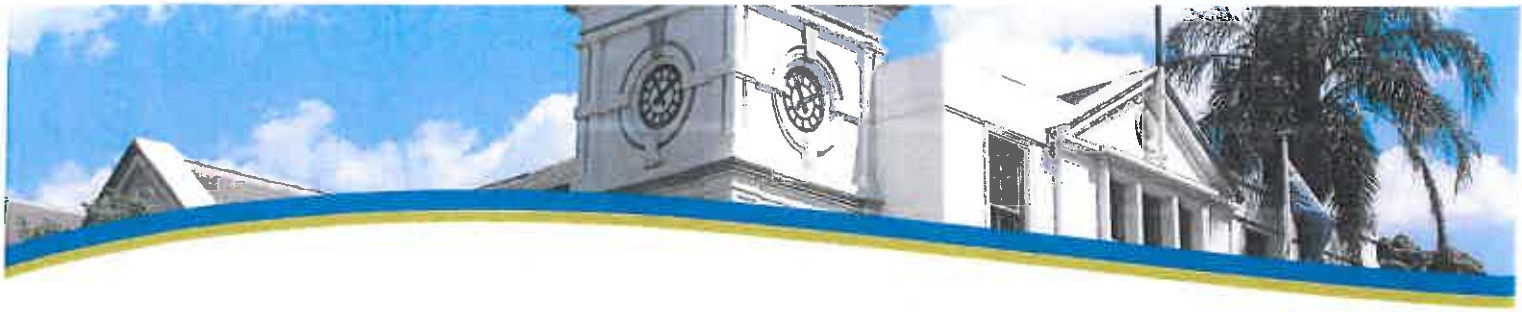
3. What are the main reasons you chose your least preferred option?

_____

_____

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements (Please tick)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Can't Say
Representation for local residents in an amalgamated council will be reduced	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Larger local councils would deliver more cost effective and better services for residents and communities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



5. **How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you? (Please tick)**

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not at all important

6. **What is your status in relation to your home? (Please tick)**

- ☐ Owner
- ☐ Rent / board

7. **How long have you lived in the Strathfield Council area? (Please tick)**

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ 1 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

8. **What is the name of the suburb where you live? (Please tick)**

- ☐ Strathfield
- ☐ Strathfield South
- ☐ Homebush
- ☐ Homebush West
- ☐ Greenacre
- ☐ Chullora

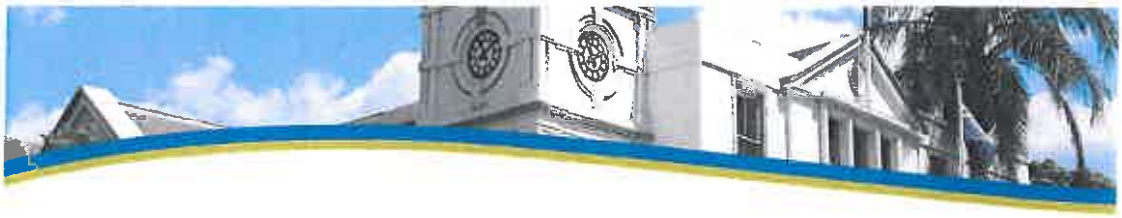
9. **Which age group do you belong to? (Please tick)**

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-29 years
- ☐ 30-49 years
- ☐ 50-65 years
- ☐ 65+ years
- ☐ Prefer not to say

10. **Which gender are you?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

May 2015



The Future of Strathfield Council: Phone survey questions

The NSW State Government has released its 'Fit for the Future' program which requires most NSW councils to consider amalgamation options with neighbouring councils. All residences within the Strathfield local government area will be receiving an information pack which outlines options for Strathfield Council's future. A phone survey will also be conducted from 1 June - 5 June. Council encourages all residents to consider the questions that will be asked below, and have their say.

1. **Which is your preferred option?**
   - Strathfield Council remaining by itself but working in collaboration with other councils on regional issues
   - Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville councils amalgamating to create an Inner West Council

2. **What are the main reasons you chose your most preferred option?**

3. **What are the main reasons you chose your least preferred option?**

4. **Before you read the information that Council sent to you, were you in favour of Strathfield Council amalgamating with surrounding council areas?**

5. **Now, to what extent do you agree with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree?**
   - Representation for local residents in an amalgamated council will be reduced
   - Larger local councils would deliver better services for residents and communities
   - A larger local council would save money

6. **How important is the local identity of Strathfield to you?**
   - Not at all important
   - Not very important
   - Somewhat important
   - Important
   - Very important
7. **What is your status in relation to your home?**
   - Owner
   - Rent / board
8. **How long have you lived in the Strathfield Council area?**
   - Less than a year
   - 1 to 5 years
   - 6 to 10 years
   - More than 10 years
9. **What is the name of the suburb where you live?**
   - Strathfield
   - Strathfield South
   - Homebush
   - Homebush West
   - Greenacre
   - Chullora
10. **Please stop me when I read out the age group you are in...**
    - Under 18
    - 18-29 years
    - 30-49 years
    - 50-65 years
    - 65+ years
11. **Which gender are you?**
    - Male
    - Female

2 June 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Council News

Strathfield Council celebrates its 130th Anniversary in June

130th Anniversary of Strathfield Council (1885 - 2015)

June 2015 marks the 130th anniversary of Strathfield Council. The name derived from house 'Strathfield' which was owned by jeweller John Hardy of city firm 'Hardy Bros Jewellers'. This firm is still in operation today.

Over its 130 years, the Council of Strathfield has aimed to create and support high quality and desirable areas for people to live, work, study and visit, with good quality housing, plentiful parks and open space, well-maintained tree lined streets and community facilities.

Council gives thanks to the many men and women who have served as Mayor or as Aldermen (now Councillors), the Council staff, community volunteers, local businesses and many thousands of residents over time who have made Strathfield their home and contributed to the development of one of the best and most desirable areas of Sydney.

Happy Anniversary, Strathfield Council.

School Holiday Program

Registrations are now open for the June School Holiday Program. The program runs from June 29 to July 10, and is open to children between the ages of 5 and 12 who live or attend school in the Strathfield area. For more information or to register, visit www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Fit for the Future phone surveys

All residences within the Strathfield local government area will soon be receiving an information pack which outlines options for Strathfield Council in the face of the NSW Government's Fit for the Future program. A phone survey will also be conducted from 1 June – 5 June regarding this issue. Council encourages residents to read the brochure and have their say.

"The Naked Runners" Mossy & Robbo will MC this year's Cooks River Fun Run

Cooks River Fun Run

The 2015 Cooks River Fun Run is shaping up to be the best one yet. With some exciting new additions to the event, participants can expect a great morning on June 21.

For the first time in 2015, all finishers in all events will receive a fantastic new finishers medal. To get everyone excited on the day, the event MCs have been announced as "The Naked Runners" Mossy & Robbo. The boys will be getting into the spirit of the event and supporting Bowel Cancer Australia by donning the organisation's popular cheeky shorts. Also new this year, participants can team up with a partner and enter a 10km relay.

The event includes a 10km, 5km, 2km kids run and a 5km walk. Kids will also enjoy new games hosted by Channel 9.

The run starts at Freshwater Park, Strathfield and follows the Bay to Bay cycleway along a flat course through South Strathfield. Join us for a great, active day out. To register, visit www.cooksriverfunrun.com.au

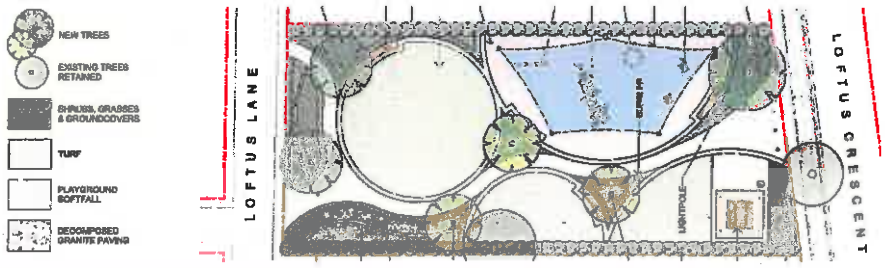
MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Homebush residents can look forward to a new park which has been approved on Loftus Crescent Work recently began on the park with the demolition of houses at 29 and 30 Loftus Crescent Upon completion of the demolition, landscaping works will be undertaken, including the laying of new turf to the entire site to ensure the space is safe and functional

Concepts for the new park have been developed and will be put forward for community consultation this month From this community feedback the concept will be finalised for Council approval, and the construction of the new park will commence shortly after.

Parks are an important part of local neighbourhoods and Council takes pride in being able to provide these facilities to the community I hope many local families will enjoy it for many years to come

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield



Concepts for the new Loftus Crescent Park have been developed and will be put forward for community consultation this month

WHAT'S ON

Author Talk – Santo Cilauro
Versace Colori,
With a Pinch of Pepper
Thursday 18 June, 6.30pm - 7.30pm
Strathfield Library
65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM

Should you wish to speak with your Councillor, please contact Council on 9748 9999 by 4pm on the Friday preceding the session to make an appointment

- 13 June - Council Offices: Cr Bott
- 20 June - Council Offices: Cr McLucas

COUNCIL MEETINGS

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

- Tuesday 2 June 2015, 7pm
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au from the Saturday prior to each meeting

PAGE 18

INNER WEST BUSINESS AWARDS
FINALISTS REVEALED

HAPPY BIRTHDAY STRATHFIELD
130 years old
PAGE 8

COOKS RIVER FUN RUN
WHY YOU SHOULD RUN NAKED
PAGE 12

FREE
Strathfield Scene
Like US ON FACEBOOK
We are five years old this month • JUNE 2015

WE WILL LOSE OUR VOICE

THE NEXT GENERATION OF VOTERS SPEAKS OUT ABOUT COUNCIL MERGERS

/ Bernadette Chua

The campaign against council mergers will reach a crescendo this month, with Strathfield leading the charge.
Councillors have approved an immediate 0,000 funding injection from the ncil's $100,000 war chest, and the idents' association Save Our Strathfield gone statewide.
This week, the voice of youth joined battle to halt mega councils and h-density development.
Their message: "Don't ignore the voice Generation Next".
Alison Chen, 16, the representative for athfield in the State's Youth Parliament ctured centre), joined two fellow PLC dents to voice their opposition outside athfield's Council Chamber.
Friends Emma Liu (left) and Rachel asel (right) are also worried about how algamation will affect young people.
There is already a lack of youth resentation at a local government level I am worried that if my area is formed a mega council, our voices will be her drowned out," said Ms Bleasel.

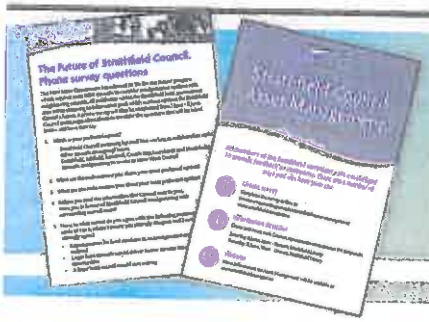
"There are positives of an amalgamated council, but from a young person's perspective, the cons outweigh the pros.
"I feel in a mega council there will be a lack of youth activities. I've read through some documents and many councils have said if they merge with other councils, it will cause an infrastructure backlog.
"This means that things like community centres and parks, which young people use a lot, may be forgotten."
Ms Chen recently started a petition around the lack of community consultation on Parramatta Road, and now, her impassioned plea to her peers is to make themselves aware of what looms ahead for young people if council mergers happen.
"I know currently in some councils there are youth steering committees which are chaired by young councillors. It means that younger people who are running for council may have less of a chance against someone who is more experienced.
"With fewer councillors, it means less representation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MORE REPORTS PAGES 6 AND 7

ARNOTT'S LAND COULD BE TAKEN BY FORCE

Arnott's Reserve, the green swathe which Council spent more than a decade wresting back from the State Government, is reportedly under threat of compulsory purchase.
The WestConnex construction company wants the land to park tunnelling machines, but has been told by Strathfield Council it is essential as a green lung in an area of housing density.
According to the Member for Strathfield, Jodi McKay, WestConnex is currently sending out compulsory purchase orders to homes and councils.
In a letter sent to Ms McKay from Roads Minister Duncan Gay, the Minister states Strathfield has been approached for "access locations to build the M4 East road tunnels, site offices and construction compounds".
Ms McKay told the *Scene* she understood Arnott's Park may be purchased under a compulsory order.
At this month's Council meeting, Cr Daniel Bott called on his colleagues to back a motion calling on the State Government to rule out the acquisition.



HAVE YOUR SAY AND HELP SAVE STRATHFIELD

SEE INSERTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

THE BIG ISSUE FIGHT AGAINST AMALGAMATION

"All the pieces matter"

Cr Daniel Bott

There is a scene in the critically acclaimed television show *The Wire* where a senior police detective is mentoring a junior olice detective.

He says, "We're building something here tective. We're building it from scratch. All the ces matter."

He emphasises the last bit, "All the pieces tter". As time goes by, you see that this is more in a description of a police case.

Everybody has their own interpretation and ne is that it describes the main character. e main character is not a person. The main aracter is a city.

I often get asked, "Why did you run for public ice?" I have never said "because all the pieces tter", but maybe I should.

We live in a diverse area. There are residents o have just arrived and there are others who e been here for generations.

There are families, singles, couples, retirees and ldren everywhere. We have residents from all ions of the globe. I have met people born in Australia, Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

NOTES FROM THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

A quick visit to a citizenship ceremony will show every section of the globe is represented, with many ears at what they have achieved.

I find it almost impossible to drive past my school without some memory coming back. ere we live, there are numerous education itutions. Some people will go to school here l stay, while others will move elsewhere. wever, all current and former students will have rmanent connection to our area.

Children have their first day at school here and ple retire here. You can find a grand three- ey heritage home and an apartment on the h floor. You can go to a great café, sip coffee and e the world's problems on a Sunday morning. maybe, you have fine dining on Saturday night a first date with your future spouse.

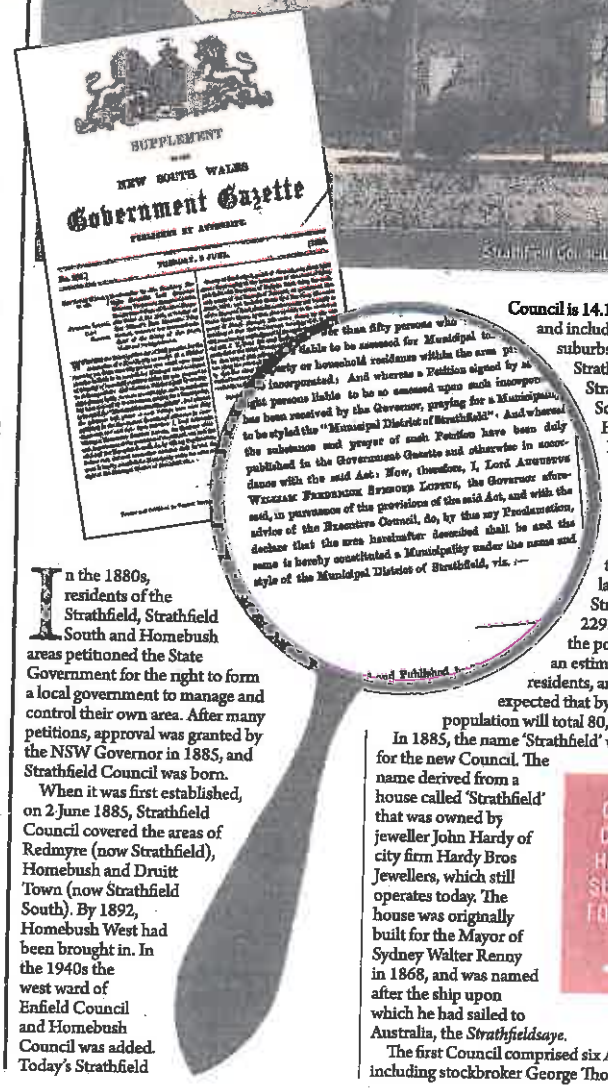
Representing every piece of Strathfield is llenging; however, it is a challenge that should mbraced. It is probably easier to represent rea where everybody is the same; however, it ld be far less rewarding.

Our council works best when we remind elves of one thing. All the pieces matter.

130 YEARS OF PROUD

130 years ago this month, residents demanded the creation of Strathfield. Today, they are fighting to keep it independent. Cathy Jones details our proud history

Strathfield Council Chambers was designed by John Sulman and completed in 1887



SUPPLEMENT TO THE NEW SOUTH WALES

Government Gazette

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

TUESDAY, 2 JUNE.

...not less than fifty persons who ... liable to be assessed for Municipal ... property or household residence within the area ... incorporated; And whereas a Petition signed by ... persons liable to be so assessed upon such incorporation ... been received by the Governor, praying for a Municipality ... to be styled the "Municipal District of Strathfield". And whereas ... the substance and prayer of such Petition have been duly published in the Government Gazette and otherwise in accordance with the said Act: Now, therefore, I, Lord Augustus William Frederick Spencer Loftus, the Governor aforesaid, in pursuance of the provisions of the said Act, and with the advice of the Executive Council, do, by this my Proclamation, declare that the area hereinafter described shall be and the same is hereby constituted a Municipality under the name and style of the Municipal District of Strathfield, viz. :—

...and Published ...

In the 1880s, residents of the Strathfield, Strathfield South and Homebush areas petitioned the State Government for the right to form a local government to manage and control their own area. After many petitions, approval was granted by the NSW Governor in 1885, and Strathfield Council was born.

When it was first established, on 2 June 1885, Strathfield Council covered the areas of Redmyre (now Strathfield), Homebush and Druitt Town (now Strathfield South). By 1892, Homebush West had been brought in. In the 1940s the west ward of Enfield Council and Homebush Council was added. Today's Strathfield Council is 14.1km² in size and includes the suburbs of Strathfield, Strathfield South, Homebush, Homebush West, Chullora and Greenacre.

In the 1891 Census, the population of Strathfield was 2292. In 2015, the population is an estimated 40,000 residents, and it is expected that by 2031 the population will total 80,000.

In 1885, the name 'Strathfield' was adopted for the new Council. The name derived from a house called 'Strathfield' that was owned by jeweller John Hardy of city firm Hardy Bros Jewellers, which still operates today. The house was originally built for the Mayor of Sydney Walter Renny in 1868, and was named after the ship upon which he had sailed to Australia, the *Strathfieldsaye*.

The first Council comprised six Aldermen including stockbroker George Thompson, grandson of retailer David Jones. Thompson's home 'Llanelly' (now 'Steephurst' 20-22 Albyn Road) was used for council meetings until the Council Chambers building at 65 Homebush Road was completed in 1887.

The Council Chambers were designed by architect John Sulman, who later lent his name to the Sulman Art Prize. This building has been continuously occupied by Strathfield Council since it opened. Strathfield's first Mayor was George Hardie.

Over its 130 years, the Council of Strathfield has aimed to create desirable areas for people to live, work, study and visit, with good-quality housing, and an abundance of parks and open space, supported by well-maintained roads and community facilities.

In the 1880s, Council adopted the 'Boulevarding' program that established the 'look' of Strathfield. The design is based on a vision of 19th Century French prefect George Haussman, involving wide, straight, tree-lined streets, with large footpaths for afternoon strolls. One of the Council's objectives was to create a pedestrian suburb with footpaths connected to civic buildings, monuments or focal points such as parks.

OVER ITS 130 YEARS, THE COUNCIL OF STRATHFIELD HAS AIMED TO CREATE AND SUPPORT DESIRABLE AREAS FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK, STUDY AND VISIT

Strathfield's streets were initially lit by gaslights, which were later replaced by electricity. The Council was a pioneer.

Strathfield was one of the first areas of Sydney to establish a water and sewerage system, completed in 1912. And it was the

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

first council to utilise the new planning powers by declaring most of the Strathfield area a residential district in April 1920.

This proclamation, which continued until 1969, prohibited the construction of commercial buildings except in restricted areas. The Council also enforced land sub-division standards to a minimum 50ft of street frontage on a large land allotment. By comparison, the average Sydney land subdivision was 40ft or less.

Community concerns regarding the potential for house fires and infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, influenza and scarlet fever were addressed by Council's imposition of health and building standards.

This included the prohibition of timber structures from 1920, increased buffer space around buildings to promote healthy living standards and rigorous programs of building and health inspections.

The earliest surviving homes in Strathfield date back to the 1870s. The area has a wide range of heritage property including Victorian, Federation, interwar and postwar architecture. Many of Strathfield's finest homes are listed as heritage items and conservation areas on Council's Local Environmental Plan.

This will preserve them for current and future generations.

In 1911, Council established a Gardener's Department to ensure the natural environment was well maintained. Strathfield Park was the first dedicated parkland in the area, and was opened in 1914.

DON'T RISK THE LOSS OF THESE ASSETS. THEY ARE YOURS. RETAIN THEM. STRATHFIELD IS YOUR MUNICIPALITY NOT THE PLAYTHING OF POLITICIANS

Since then, the Council has acquired 123 hectares of parks and open spaces, or about 9% of the total land area. Open space is dedicated to golf courses, sportsgrounds and natural areas such as Mason Park Wetlands.

Strathfield was one of the first councils to establish a public library service in the 1940s. The Council boasts two libraries, receiving more than 200,000 visitors each year. Over the 70 years since the service was established, the library has lent thousands of books, DVDs, magazines and, more recently, provided internet and Wi-Fi access to residents, students and visitors.

The first railway station in the Strathfield area was at Homebush in 1855, followed by Strathfield Station in 1877 (then called Redmyre) and Flemington in 1884.

The municipality is well-connected by major roads and arteries. Council still manages the regional and local road network and constantly lobbies the State Government for improvements to the local transport networks. Currently, it is advocating an upgraded transport interchange at Strathfield Town Centre.

The Strathfield we know today is still a desirable place to live, not just for its residential areas and schools, but also for the vibrant business centres and communities that generate over $3 billion a year in Gross Regional Product (GRP).

It also boasts one of the best-connected transport systems in Sydney.

In its 130th year, the Council gives thanks to the many men and women who have served as Mayor or as Aldermen (now Councillors), the Council staff, community volunteers, local businesses and many thousands of residents over time who have made Strathfield their home and contributed to the development of one of the most vibrant areas of Sydney.

Happy Anniversary, Strathfield Council.

THE FIGHT CONTINUES

Strathfield Council has been threatened with amalgamation on many occasions. Bills to amalgamate councils were brought to NSW parliament in 1912, 1927 and 1931 but each time they failed to gather any support, mainly due to campaigning by most local councils in Sydney against the proposals.

1948

After World War II, the NSW Government appointed a Royal Commission to reorganise local government boundaries. The Government adopted the Greater Sydney Plan to form eight cities and reduce to 16 Councils in the Sydney area. It was proposed that Strathfield be merged with Ashfield, Auburn, Burwood, Concord, Drummoyne, Enfield and Lidcombe Councils. Strathfield Council fought hard against the plan. The then Mayor, Colin Hudson stated in 1948 that "this will ring the death-knell for true democratic local government… the intimate degree of interest in and control of their councils by the citizens will be lost" and "there has been neither request nor demand for this revolutionary change in our mode of life".

1974

In 1974, the NSW Government recommended that Strathfield be amalgamated with Ashfield, Drummoyne, Burwood and Concord and in 1983, it was recommended that Strathfield be merged with Burwood Council. Both proposals inflamed the Strathfield community who vigorously campaigned against these mergers. In 1990, another proposal to amalgamate Strathfield and Burwood Councils was made, which was rejected after polling of Strathfield residents showed more than 78% were against. In 2003, Auburn Council lodged a proposal with the NSW Government to take over Strathfield Council. Strathfield residents petitioned heavily against this move.

CURRENT

In 2014, the State Government has recommended the merger of Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville to form an Inner West Council and has given Strathfield Council until 30 June 2015 to make submissions on its future.

Former Mayor Rod [illegible] and Council officers at the opening of Centenary Drive 1985

68 YEARS APART: How Strathfield battled amalgamation in 1947 (above) and today, by keeping residents informed

RIVAL COUNCILS TOLD 'HANDS OFF STRATHFIELD'

By Peter Lynch

Strathfield has written to the mayors of five Inner City councils telling them to keep their hands off its land. The move comes after a series of attempts to grab parts of Strathfield by Bankstown and Auburn councils.

Strathfield has stepped up its campaign against council mergers, passing a motion to release $10,000 immediately from its $100,000 fighting fund for communications.

It also rescinded a motion that meant only $200 could be spent without Council approval on anti-merger or overdevelopment campaigns.

Councillor Helen McLucas told councillors: "I am concerned we have only one month to get the message out to residents."

With time running out, councils have been trying to work out fall-back positions to put to government. A flurry of behind-the-scenes negotiations has resulted.

Bankstown attempted to grab Greenacre and the Enfield Intermodal Centre, while Auburn suggested Strathfield be split between its own local government area and that of Burwood. Both were immediately rebuffed.

This week, councillors passed a mayoral minute ordering that the five Inner West councils plus Auburn receive a letter "clearly and unequivocally" reiterating that Strathfield plans to stand alone.

Mayor Gulian Vaccari told councillors that as the 30 June deadline for presentations to the State Government approaches, councils are jockeying for position and various options are being discussed.

"Some of the options, by default, will need to include Strathfield LGA because the councils wishing to join together do not share a common boundary," Mayor Vaccari said.

"Still other options see some councils being broken up or having small areas moved from one council area to another by way of boundary adjustment.

"We have fought hard for the Enfield ILC and I believe we have represented the community well. We are still trying to fight for this little bit of green space for them, we are putting in monitors to examine the pollution levels, the dust, the traffic, the noise and the air quality."

"I have had a conversation with the mayor of Bankstown, Linda Downey. I have given her a clear message that Strathfield is going to stand alone. From my understanding, the motion came from the floor. There has been no correspondence between Bankstown and Strathfield Council so this completely came out of the blue."

A spokesperson for Bankstown said council officers will incorporate the motion in its Fit for the Future submission which includes streets in Greenacre as well as the controversial Enfield ILC.

Councillor Daniel Bott, a former resident of Greenacre, said he would oppose any boundary changes suggested by Bankstown.

"This is where I lived when I ran as a candidate, so I know this area well. I oppose any move that would lead to Strathfield Council losing the suburb of Greenacre," he said.

Earlier this week, Auburn unanimously voted to amalgamate with Canada Bay and Burwood.

Canada Bay has deferred a decision.

FROM PAGE 1

"WE WILL LOSE OUR VOICE"

Some young people already feel uncomfortable talking to different levels of government about their concerns in the community ... I can't stress enough the fear of losing our voice," Ms Chen said.

"I want young people to be aware that this is the possibility which looms over us – I can't stress enough how much young people contribute to the local community and its identity."

Ms Bleasel, who is a Strathfield resident, has lived in the area for most of her life and, like Ms Chen, she is concerned about the loss of facilities.

"If Strathfield is amalgamated, as young people, we would get less attention and council wouldn't be able to spread its resources to facilities like parks and libraries, which I use, and I know a lot of my peers also use," she said.

To sign Alison's petition, visit www.change.org/p/nsw-government-restart-the-community-consultation-process-on-the-parramatta-road-urban-renewal-strategy.

Save our Councils

The Save Our Strathfield residents campaign has gone statewide, providing a template for a new organisation called Save Our Councils. Save Our councils will unite local governments fighting amalgamation with a larger and better organised opposition. They are hoping for backing from the Labor Party and political figures, and will hold a public launch next week. The group has called on supporters to bring placards to the Parliament House launch next week. Nella Gaughan of Save our Strathfield has been appointed spokesman. She told the *Scene*: "We always intended to bring all councils together under one banner. Now we are doing it."

Property could fall

Real estate agent Steve Devine predicts the value of property will slowly erode if Strathfield is merged into a mega council. Mr Devine, who's been selling homes in the Inner West for 30 years, said: "I don't believe there will be a massive price change in the traditional Californian bungalow, which is what Strathfield is known for. But in other areas like around major road corridors, there may be a decrease in prices." He said easier development applications from a mega council could also lead to an oversupply and price fall.

In brief

ORCED AMALGAMATION

Council to lobby NSW Governor

ouncillor Daniel Bott tabled a otion at this month's Council eeting to write to the Governor New South Wales, David Hurley. want the Governor to have a full derstanding of how all the uncils feel and I don't want to wondering if we could have done ore," he said. "Every MP and nister who has been in term derstands Strathfield's position so ere is no harm in also writing to the vernor." Cr Bott also suggested athfield Council write any new members and ministers State Government, informing em about Strathfield's position.

ETROPOLITAN MAYORS

Council's $10k ommitment

athfield Council will commit 0,000 to the Sydney Metropolitan yors (SMM). The group, which is ited by the City of Sydney, has been cussing the State Government's for the Future program. The SMM resolved to get legal advice on ether the Independent Pricing and gulatory Tribunal (IPART) is able of doing the work the State vernment has ordered it to mplete. It also wants to know what Council's options are if IPART ermines a council is not Fit for Future, and whether the State vernment has the power to niss a council which is deemed Fit for the Future, or proceed n amalgamation through clamation rather than legislation.

COUNCIL SPELLS OUT THE FACTS AND URGES RESIDENTS: 'GIVE YOUR VIEWS ON MERGERS

Strathfield is arming residents with all the information they need to battle the arguments used by the State Government on the amalgamation issue.

A series of specially researched reports has been sent to every home in a bid to win hearts and minds to the cause of saving the 130-year-old municipality.

The Future of Strathfield Council information pack will be delivered to residents this month, spelling out what the State Government's Fit for the Future program means to them.

It spells out the Baird Government's plans for a mega council of Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt, Marrickville and Strathfield, which would produce a population of around 462,100 resident by 2031.

"Strathfield is approaching the Fit for the Future program by providing the community with information regarding the NSW Government proposals, together with relevant data about Strathfield Council and other Inner West Councils," says the report.

"All members of the Strathfield community are encouraged to review the information contained in this document. Many residents have already provided Council with feedback on the future of Strathfield Council and potential amalgamation proposals, however Council welcomes any additional feedback or comments to assist in the preparation of the submission on Council's future by the due date of 30 June 2015."

Council has been running an online petition. It has found that 97 per cent of residents are against amalgamation so far.

It compares in detail the results of a merger, and suggests the disadvantages are, among others, increased debt, loss of identity, and rate rises for businesses and households.

The report goes on to state that if Strathfield stands alone, by 2019/20, it will meet all seven of the Fit for the Future criteria.

It is also concerned that if an Inner West mega council is formed there would be:

- Increased debt burden for Strathfield
- Possible loss of Strathfield identity
- Increase in residential and business rates for Strathfield ratepayers
- The ratio of residents to councillors would increase from one councillor to 5,714 residents, to one to 23,000 by 2016
- Delivery service may not reflect local priorities
- The mega council will not meet the Fit for the Future benchmarks of asset maintenance, asset renewal and infrastructure backlogs by 2019/20
- The cost of merging six councils will most likely exceed funding available from the State Government
- The mega council may have to sell land and buildings to pay council staff redundancies
- Savings from merging councils may not eventuate depending on decisions and priorities of future councils

The report indicates that the annual estimated expenditure of the Inner West Council would amount to $380 million.

While Strathfield has stressed repeatedly to the State Government it has no debt, if it were to be merged with the five other areas, the mega council would have an estimated debt of $42.7 million.

NEIGHBOURING COUNCILS: THE VERDICT IS IN

BURWOOD
Councillors rejected an option to merge with Auburn and Canada Bay and will lodge a submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to stand alone.

ASHFIELD
Council is opposed to forced amalgamations and has commissioned a report to look into the positive and negative impacts of amalgamation.

AUBURN
Council has voted that it would be willing to amalgamate with Burwood and Canada Bay in the best interests of its residents.

CANADA BAY
Council is against forced amalgamation and would prefer to stand alone. It has examined a merged mega council but consultants found it does not stack up.

BANKSTOWN
Council is pushing to include Greenacre and the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre (ILC), part of Strathfield Council Municipality. Bankstown is moving ahead with the stand-alone option.

LEICHHARDT
Leichhardt Council is firmly opposed to any amalgamation as it believes it will not benefit its residents.

MARRICKVILLE
Marrickville Council is supportive of local government reform, but is opposed to forced amalgamations.

8. MAYORAL MINUTE (S) IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL'S CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

1. Mayoral Minute 18/15 – Amalgamations

I MOVE:

That Strathfield Council writes to the 5 Inner West Councils plus Auburn and Bankstown Councils, clearly and unequivocally reiterating its long held position that it sees itself as able to stand alone into the future. This correspondence to include:

a. the reasons why Council sees itself as able to satisfy the Fit for the Future (FFF) criteria, now or in the near future;
b. a statement that Strathfield Council will not entertain any boundary adjustments, no matter how others might justify them; and
c. a clear indication that Strathfield Council's own FFF submission will be on a 'stand alone' basis.

150/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

That Strathfield Council writes to the 5 Inner West Councils plus Auburn, Canterbury and Bankstown Councils, clearly and unequivocally reiterating its long held position that it sees itself as able to stand alone into the future. This correspondence to include:

a. the reasons why Council sees itself as able to satisfy the Fit for the Future (FFF) criteria, now or in the near future;
b. a statement that Strathfield Council will not entertain any boundary adjustments, no matter how others might justify them; and
c. a clear indication that Strathfield Council's own FFF submission will be on a 'stand alone' basis.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

2. Mayoral Minute 19/15 – New Parramatta Road/Westconnex Community Consultation

I MOVE:

1. That Council writes to Mr Rob Stokes MP Minister for Planning, thanking him for his letter of 28 May 2015 (copy attached) and acknowledging his position that community consultation for the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Program will be reopened.

2. That Council writes to Ms Jodi McKay MP Member for Strathfield, thanking her for the work she has done with the Minister for Planning on this initiative, and asking for her continued involvement.

3. That Council agrees to an extension of the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as requested by the Minister.

3. That Council advertises the Sydney 100km Oxfam Walk on the Council Page in the Inner Western Weekly and in The Strathfield Scene, at the appropriate time, with residents encouraged to support the cause.

152/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

1. That Council notes that:-

   a. the Mayor will be a participant in this year's Sydney 100km Oxfam Walk from Brooklyn to Balgowlah;
   b. the aim of the walk is to raise funds to assist some of the world's most marginalised people; and
   c. Oxfam's advice to participants regarding fund raising is that this can be optimised by contacting people and organisations on the participants personal, professional, workplace and community contact lists, as well as through social media.

2. That Council notes that in following Oxfam's advice, the Mayor may contact some people with whom the relationship has come about solely due to his work as a Councillor on Strathfield Council.

3. That Council advertises the Sydney 100km Oxfam Walk on the Council Page in the Inner Western Weekly and in The Strathfield Scene, at the appropriate time, with residents encouraged to support the cause.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

4. Mayoral Minute 21/15 – Sydney Metropolitan Mayors (SMM) – Fit For The Future Initiatives

I MOVE:

1. That Council notes the initial commitment to SMM of $10,000 is now due.

2. That Council notes the $10,000 initial commitment from member councils is 100% available for future initiatives of the group.

3. That Council notes that as the current host council, City of Sydney has offered to continue providing the secretariat to the SMM at no or minimal cost.

4. That Council notes that the SMM has resolved to obtain legal advice concerning:

   a. whether it is within IPART's charter to complete the work the State Government has asked it to do in the council amalgamation arena;
   b. what a council's options are going forward, if in fact IPART determines that a particular council is not Fit for the Future;
   c. the power of the State Government in dismissing a council which is determined to not be Fit for the Future; and
   d. the power of the State Government in proceeding with its amalgamation agenda by way of proclamation rather that legislation.

5. That Council notes the SMM members have resolved that the SMM executive committee should engage consultants to design a campaign for councils to use in a co-ordinated fashion in the period leading up to 16 October 2015 being the date that IPART provides its recommendations to the government.

6. That the SMM group encourages all councils to urgently review the IPART Assessment Methodology (due out this week), and send any questions or queries to the SMM secretariat to consider whether to seek legal advice in relation to any issues raised.

153/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

I MOVE:

1. That Council notes the initial commitment to SMM of $10,000 is now due.

2. That Council notes the $10,000 initial commitment from member councils is 100% available for future initiatives of the group.

3. That Council notes that as the current host council, City of Sydney has offered to continue providing the secretariat to the SMM at no or minimal cost.

4. That Council notes that the SMM has resolved to obtain legal advice concerning:
   a. whether it is within IPART's charter to complete the work the State Government has asked it to do in the council amalgamation arena;
   b. what are council's options going forward, if in fact IPART determines that a particular council is not Fit for the Future;
   c. the power of the State Government in dismissing a council which is determined to not be Fit for the Future; and
   d. the power of the State Government in proceeding with its amalgamation agenda by way of proclamation rather that legislation.

5. That Council notes the SMM members have resolved that the SMM executive committee should engage consultants to design a campaign for councils to use in a co-ordinated fashion in the period leading up to 16 October 2015 being the date that IPART provides its recommendations to the government.

6. That the SMM group encourages all councils to urgently review the IPART Assessment Methodology (due out this week), and send any questions or queries to the SMM secretariat to consider whether to seek legal advice in relation to any issues raised.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

4. Amalgamation

I MOVE:

1. That Council write to Mr David Hurley, Governor of NSW, informing him that:
   a. Strathfield Council opposes the forced amalgamation of any council in NSW,
   b. Strathfield Council has advised all members of the NSW Parliament of this stance.
2. That, if there are any new members to the NSW Parliament over the course of this term, Council write to him or her and advise that Strathfield Council opposes the forced amalgamation of any council.

161/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/McLucas)

1. That Council write to Mr David Hurley, Governor of NSW, and the Sydney Metropolitan Mayors informing them of the Council residents survey on Amalgamation and advise:
   a. Strathfield Council and residents oppose the forced amalgamation of any council in NSW,
   b. Strathfield Council and residents have advised all members of the NSW Parliament of this stance.
   c. Any attempt by the NSW Government to bypass parliament and democratic process denying the rights of NSW citizens to have their voice heard in the amalgamation debate will not be tolerated by the people of Strathfield and NSW.
2. That, if there are any new members to the NSW Parliament over the course of this term, Council write to him or her and advise that Strathfield Council opposes the forced amalgamation of any council.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas and Ok

Against the Motion: Councillor Soulos

5. Strathfield Chamber of Commerce

Councillor Soulos having previously declared a conflict of interest in this matter vacated the meeting room.

I MOVE:

1. That Council note that on June 5, 2012, the following Notice of Motion titled "Strathfield Chamber of Commerce Adversarial Apology" was carried by Strathfield Council;

   "That Council contact the Strathfield Chamber of Commerce requesting they cease their strategy of adversarial politics in relation to the Town Centre and formally apologise to local business and residents for their misleading information campaign. Further stating in the communication that Council and Councillors' will not tolerate this behaviour and that political point scoring should never, ever occur at the expense of our community."

2. That Council note that an apology was not given.

2. Fundraising Activity – South Strathfield Public School

I MOVE:

That Strathfield Council contribute to the fund raising activity of the South Strathfield Public School in a similar way it supports the Red Shield appeal.

The Motion was withdrawn by Councillor Datta.

D. Notice of Motion signed by Councillors Soulos and McLucas

1. Anti-Amalgamation Fight Allocation June 2015

That Council make available $10,000 for those groups that are established for this purpose:

1. For the promotion to Strathfield residents of anti-amalgamation forums, rallies and gatherings in the Sydney region.
2. To assist Save Our Strathfield participating with other like-minded communities to ensure Strathfield's community voice is heard.
3. For the distribution to Strathfield residents of further information regarding Strathfield's fight against amalgamation.

163/15

RESOLVED: (Soulos/Bott)

That Council make available $10,000 for those groups that are established for the following purpose:

1. For the promotion to Strathfield residents of anti-amalgamation forums, rallies and gatherings in the Sydney region.
2. To assist Save Our Strathfield participating with other like-minded communities to ensure Strathfield's community voice is heard.
3. For the distribution to Strathfield residents of further information regarding Strathfield's fight against amalgamation.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

E. Notice of Rescission Motion signed by Councillors Soulos, Bott and McLucas

1. Mayoral Minute 54/14 – Funding to Battle Amalgamation and Overdevelopment

WE MOVE:

That Part 3 of the following Resolution of Council (Minute No.304/14) be Rescinded:

2. Mayoral Minute 54/14 - Funding to Battle Amalgamation and Overdevelopment

304/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

That Council:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to the $100,000 fund which has been set aside for the anti-amalgamation fight and the fight against the over intensification of development on Parramatta Rd.

2. Conduct a (further) workshop before the February 2015 Ordinary meeting dealing with the battle against amalgamation and overdevelopment. This workshop is to:

   a. Review work conducted to date.

   b. Continue work on the strategies on fighting amalgamation and overdevelopment as well as funding allocations for activities within the strategy which are decided upon.

   c. Receive full financials for the budgeted $50,000, including current account balances and all expenditures to date.

3. Cap the maximum monthly expenditure (exempted from prior Council approval) for the fights against amalgamation and overdevelopment be set at $200 for each and that the General Manager, Mayor and Deputy Mayor jointly be delegated authority to approve additional expenditure in urgent circumstances.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott and McLucas

164/15

RESOLVED: (Soulos/Bott)

That Part 3 of the following Resolution of Council (Minute No.304/14) be Rescinded:

2. Mayoral Minute 54/14 - Funding to Battle Amalgamation and Overdevelopment

304/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

That Council:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to the $100,000 fund which has been set aside for the anti-amalgamation fight and the fight against the over intensification of development on Parramatta Rd.

2. Conduct a (further) workshop before the February 2015 Ordinary meeting dealing with the battle against amalgamation and overdevelopment. This workshop is to:

   a. Review work conducted to date.

   b. Continue work on the strategies on fighting amalgamation and overdevelopment as well as funding allocations for activities within the strategy which are decided upon.

   c. Receive full financials for the budgeted $50,000, including current account balances and all expenditures to date.

3. Cap the maximum monthly expenditure (exempted from prior Council approval) for the fights against amalgamation and overdevelopment be set at $200 for each and that the General Manager, Mayor and Deputy Mayor jointly be delegated authority to approve additional expenditure in urgent circumstances.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

Councillor McLucas vacated the meeting room.

GM1. Performance Improvement Order

The report by InConsult concerning the review of Council's procurement function was tabled.

165/15

RESOLVED: (Soulos/Bott)

That Council note the Improvement Plan Responses as at May 2015 to the Performance Improvement Order.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

GM2. Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2015

166/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Vaccari)

That Councillors Vaccari, Soulos and Bott represent Council as voting delegates at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2015 to be held from 11 – 13 October 2015 at Rosehill Gardens.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS1. Mayor and Councillors Annual Fees

170/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Ok)

That Council approve the increase of 2.5% as per the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal recommendation to the annual fees payable to the Mayor and Councillors for 2015/2016 under Sections 248 and 249 of the Local Government Act 1993.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS2. Investment Report as at 30 April 2015

171/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Ok)

1. That the record of cash investments as at 30 April 2015 be noted.
2. That a workshop be held to enable Councillors to be appraised of the proposed Section 94 projects.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS3. Anti-Amalgamation Campaign

172/15

RESOLVED: (Datta/Bott)

That the report concerning the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS4. Financial Assistance Request

173/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Datta)

That Council accept the invitation to be a patron of the Inner West Eisteddfod Inc and that financial assistance of $500.00 be approved.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

STRATHFIELDCOUNCIL

Fit For The Future Update and Community Survey

Home
↳ Community
↳ Fit For The Future Survey - June 2015

In October 2014, the NSW Government released its 'Fit for the Future' program which impacts the way all NSW councils operate. The program proposes to merge 41 Sydney metropolitan councils into 18, in response to the findings in the Independent Local Government Review Report (October 2013).

All NSW Councils have been invited by the NSW Government to respond to the criteria outlined in the 'Fit for the Future' program by 30 June 2015. The 'Fit for the Future' (FFF) program has proposed that Strathfield Council amalgamate with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils to create an Inner West Council of about 350,00 residents. The FFF program requires Councils to:

- Review and assess their viability against a range of financial and capacity benchmarks including scale and capacity
- Make a submission regarding the future direction of the Council by **30 June 2015**
- Make the transition to a new structure by **September 2016** or implement an improvement plan, subject to the approval of the NSW Government.

The Panel's report to the NSW Government in October 2013 proposed amalgamating Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils, or establishing a Joint Organisation made up of the six councils with specific regional functions with no changes to the existing councils.

Strathfield Council's Options

Under the Fit for the Future program, Council has two options which may satisfy the State Government's requirements:

1. SUPPORT the proposed amalgamation of Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils; or
2. PROPOSE a superior alternative which would involve no amalgamation of Strathfield Council but address scale and capacity requirements which includes establishing a Joint Organisation approach for strategic planning, delivery of services and advocacy on a regional basis.

The attached flyer contains detailed information on both options. Council requests that all residents and ratepayers read the flyer and complete the community click here.

How you can be involved

All members of the Strathfield community are encouraged to provide feedback or comments by Saturday 20 June to assist in the preparation of the submission on Council's future. There are a number of ways you can have your say:

Send a letter or email to Council - Many residents have already provided Council with feedback on the future of Strathfield Council and potential amalgamation proposals, however Council welcomes any additional feedback or comments to assist in the preparation of the Council submission. Send comments by email: council@strathfield.nsw,gov.au or in writing: The General Manager, PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135.

Attend an Information Session - Come and meet with Council representatives to discuss the proposals.

- **Saturday 6 June, 10am - 12noon, Strathfield Library**
- **Saturday 13 June, 10am - 12noon, Strathfield Library**

Online Survey - Complete the survey online, please click here.

Visit our Displays - Drop in to our display of information at Council's customer service centre and libraries, view the information and complete the community

survey.

Phone survey - A random sample community telephone survey of residents and ratepayers of Strathfield Council is being conducted in early June 2015 by IRIS Research, an independent research consultant

Website - View up to date information on Council's website at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Strathfield Fit for the Future Information Pack May 2015
Type: pdf
Size: 1.1 MB

MINUTES

Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting of Strathfield Municipal Council held on 26 May 2015, in the Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield.

COMMENCING: 6.33pm

PRESENT:
Mayor Councillor G Vaccari (Chairman)
Councillor D Bott
Councillor R Datta
Councillor S Kokkolis
Councillor H McLucas
Councillor S Ok
Councillor A Soulos

STAFF:
General Manager
Director Corporate Services
Director Technical Services
Group Manager Organisational Development
Governance Coordinator

1. OPENING: The prayer was read.

2. RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS: The Recognition was read.

3. PECUNIARY INTEREST/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. APOLOGIES

Nil.

MAYORAL MINUTE (S) IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL'S CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

1. Mayoral Minute 17/15 - Amalgamation

145/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

1. That Council once again reaffirm its previous position that it expects to meet the Fit for the Future benchmarks and its community support for Council standing alone.

2. That Council note and is greatly concerned that the Government has established the 'Scale and Capacity' criterion as the threshold criterion for councils to achieve in making their 'Fit for the Future' arguments, without actually defining 'Scale and Capacity'.

3. That Council note and is greatly concerned that the other criterion such as sustainability, effective management of infrastructure, service delivery to our community, efficiency and the

history and character of the area, will not be given any weighting in Fit for the Future considerations.

4. That Council note that the other 5 Inner West councils are not supporting the Inner West council merge recommended by the NSW Government or Independent Panel Report.

5. That any council which includes an amalgamation/merger proposal with Strathfield Council in their Fit for the Future submission be advised that Strathfield Council does not agree to any such proposals.

6. That the Mayor and any other Councillor or Council staff meeting with representatives from the other five inner west councils continue to inform them that a merger will not be entertained under any circumstances. Prior to the meeting formal advance notice of the meeting agenda and intent be given to all Councillors by the invited participant. It is understood that the participant will support Council resolution.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

5. QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

146/15

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Kokkolis)

That the Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2015 be received and adopted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.58PM.

The foregoing Minutes were confirmed at the meeting of the Council of the Municipality of Strathfield held on 2 June 2015.

Chairman_____ General Manager_____

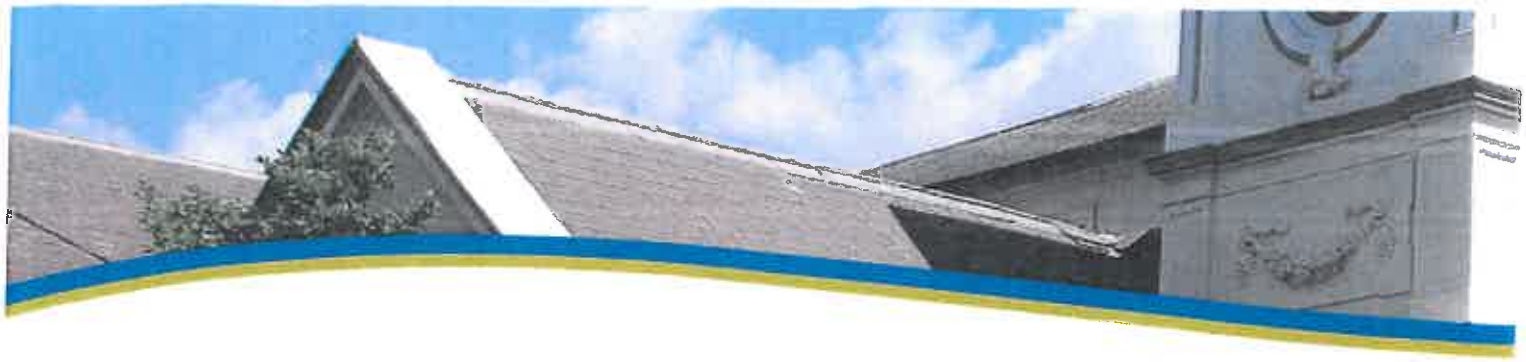
May 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

The Future of Strathfield Council: Information Pack

MAY 2015

WHAT THE NSW GOVERNMENT'S *'FIT FOR THE FUTURE'* PROGRAM MEANS FOR THE STRATHFIELD COMMUNITY



INTRODUCTION

In October 2014, the NSW Government released its 'Fit for the Future' program which impacts the way all NSW councils operate. The program proposes to merge 41 Sydney metropolitan councils into 18, in response to the findings in the Independent Local Government Review Report (October 2013).

All NSW Councils have been invited by the NSW Government to respond to the criteria outlined in the 'Fit for the Future' program by 30 June 2015. The 'Fit for the Future' (FFF) program has proposed that Strathfield Council amalgamate with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils to create an Inner West Council of about 350,00 residents. The FFF program requires Councils to:

- Review and assess their viability against a range of financial and capacity benchmarks including scale and capacity
- Make a submission regarding the future direction of the Council by 30 June 2015
- Make the transition to a new structure by September 2016 or implement an improvement plan, subject to the approval of the NSW Government

Strathfield Council is approaching the FFF program by providing the community with information regarding the NSW Government proposals, together with relevant data about Strathfield Council and other Inner West Councils. This information is based on published reports and data provided by independent consultancy firm Morrison & Low, who have been commissioned by Council to independently assess Council's finances and viability in relation to the FFF program.

The information presented in this brochure in regards to Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils has been prepared on the basis of publicly available information. Information relating Strathfield Council includes the most recent available data. The information presented in this flyer provides context to various options for Strathfield and outlines advantages and disadvantages for each of the options.

All members of the Strathfield community are encouraged to review the information contained in this document. Many residents have already provided Council with feedback on the future of Strathfield Council and potential amalgamation proposals, however Council welcomes any additional feedback or comments to assist in the preparation of the submission on Council's future by the due date of 30 June 2015.

TIMELINE

MAY – JUNE 2015

- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) appointed as Expert Advisory Panel to assess Fit for the Future submissions from NSW Councils
- Council considers community feedback and incorporates into our FFF submission.

JUNE 2015

- IPART releases final guidelines for FFF assessments
- Council makes submission to IPART by June 30

BACKGROUND

In March 2012 the Minister for Local Government announced the establishment of an Independent Local Government Review Panel which was tasked with exploring options for governance models, structural arrangements and boundary changes for councils in NSW taking into consideration:

- Ability to support current and future needs of the community
- Ability to deliver infrastructure and services efficiently and effectively
- Financial sustainability of each local government area
- Consideration of incentives for voluntary boundary changes

Over a two year period, the Panel held three rounds of consultations with NSW councils and produced three separate reports. Strathfield Council provided submissions to each stage of this process which are available on Council's website.

REVIEW PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel's report to the NSW Government in October 2013 proposed amalgamating Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils, or establishing a Joint Organisation made up of the six councils with specific regional functions with no changes to the existing councils.

The proposals were based on:

- Projected population of 462,100 residents by 2031
- Close functional interaction and economic/social links between these councils
- Need for unified local government to plan and manage Parramatta Road, the impact and integration of West-Connex, Inner West redevelopment and proposed major centre at Burwood
- Three of the Inner West councils will have fewer than 60,000 people in 2031

In September 2014 the NSW Government responded to the Panel's proposals supporting amalgamation.
In October 2014, the NSW State Government released its FFF reform program, which is intended to provide the mechanism for the long term financial viability and strategic influence of the local government sector including council amalgamations.

The FFF program proposes the amalgamation of Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils. This will result in a projected population of over 350,000 in 2016 and 462,100 residents by 2031. A key component of this program is the criteria of 'scale and capacity' which may require councils to meet minimum population sizes, however at this stage no information has been provided concerning the minimum population target which may be imposed. If population targets are imposed, most Sydney councils would be unable to satisfy these criteria without large-scale amalgamations.

OCTOBER 2015

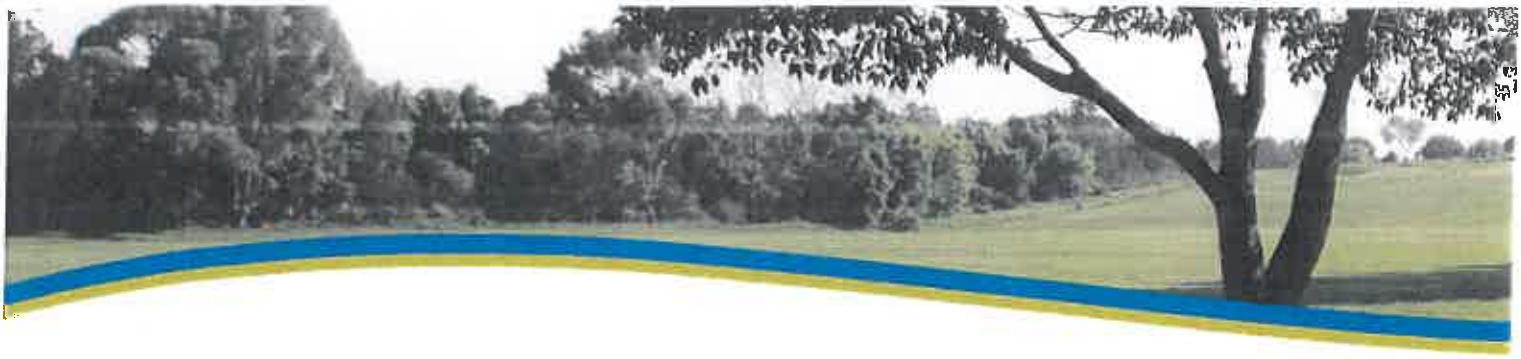
- IPART make recommendations to the NSW Government, having considered submissions

MARCH 2016

- NSW Government determines any changes to the structure of councils and new structure prior to September 2016 and begins implementation of any new structures

SEPTEMBER 2016

- Local Government elections



FIT FOR THE FUTURE BENCHMARKS

As part of the FFF program, councils are required to assess their status against criteria for scale and capacity, financial sustainability, efficient and effective management, and delivery of services and infrastructure. The NSW Government identifies seven benchmarks that councils must address in their submission.

SCALE AND CAPACITY

The NSW Government has initially identified the following key elements relating to scale and capacity of councils, however it is possible that councils will also be expected to address a minimum population threshold. At the time of writing this has not yet been confirmed. Scale and Capacity criteria include:

- More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending
- Scope to undertake new functions and major projects
- Ability to employ a wider range of skilled staff
- Knowledge, creativity and innovation
- Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development
- Effective regional collaboration
- Credibility for more effective advocacy
- Capable partner for State and Federal agencies
- Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change
- High quality political and managerial leadership

Strathfield Council meets a number of the criteria as a standalone council. In addition, Council supports strong regional alliances with neighbouring councils through the formation of a Joint Organisation with responsibility for regional strategic planning, intergovernmental collaboration, regional advocacy and shared services. Strathfield Council currently has regional agreements for services and advocacy through library services, waste services e.g. recycling services, catchment planning e.g. the Cooks River Alliance and a range of other initiatives.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE BENCHMARKS

The FFF program identifies seven key financial indicators to assess a Council's financial sustainability. These include:

- Sustainability – measures if a council has the ability to generate sufficient funds over the long term
- Infrastructure and service management – measures if a council is adequately maintaining and renewing its assets e.g. roads, footpaths, parks, facilities and buildings
- Efficiency – Assesses if a council has efficient service and infrastructure delivery, achieving value for money for both current and future ratepayers.

Strathfield Council currently meets three of the seven indicators, however it is expected that based on adoption of Council's Long Term Financial Plan that all seven indicators will be met by 2019/20.

FFF benchmarks for the six Inner West Councils were assessed by independent consultants Morrison & Low in late 2014, based on the current ability of the Inner West Councils to meet these benchmarks, and likely outcomes in the event of a merger in 2016 and by 2019/20. Based on preliminary analysis, the merged council does not meet the FFF financial benchmarks either at time of merger (2016) or at the end of the benchmark period in 2019/20.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE INDICATORS	STRATHFIELD COUNCIL (BASED ON 2013/14 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)	"INNER WEST COUNCIL" (ESTIMATES BY 2019/20)	STRATHFIELD COUNCIL (ESTIMATES BY 2019/20)
Operating Performance	✗	✓	✓
Own Source Revenue	✓	✓	✓
Debt Service Cover	✓	✓	✓
Asset Maintenance	✗	✗	✓
Asset Renewal	✗	✗	✓
Infrastructure Backlog	✗	✗	✓
Real Operating Expenditure	✓	✓	✓
TOTAL	3	4	7

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO STRATHFIELD COUNCIL?

1. SUPPORT the proposed amalgamation of Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils

2. PROPOSE a superior alternative which would involve no amalgamation of Strathfield Council but address scale and capacity requirements which includes establishing a Joint Organisation approach for strategic planning, delivery of services and advocacy on a regional basis.

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES IN RELATION TO THESE OPTIONS?

- Research and evidence
- Local democracy and representation
- Organisation performance
- Service delivery and rates
- Financial impacts
- Communities of Interest
- Scale and capacity

RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

Strathfield Council engaged the consultancy firm of Morrison & Low to assess Council as a standalone council and the Inner West Council merger proposal against the FFF benchmarks. The results of their analysis are referenced in this information pack.

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND REPRESENTATION

The Inner West amalgamation proposal of Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils would result in a residential population of 350,000 that is expected to grow to a population of 462,100 by 2031.

Under the proposed merger, based on a calculation of 15 Councillors (which is the legal maximum number of Councillors permitted), there would be a dramatic decrease in representation and reduced access to Councillors, as shown below.

	STRATHFIELD	ASHFIELD	BURWOOD	CANADA BAY	LEICHHARDT	MARRICKVILLE
Current Councillor representation	7	12	7	9	12	12
Post-amalgamation Councillor representation	1.7	1.8	1.5	3.7	2.5	3.6

ORGANISATION PERFORMANCE

A study of 35 NSW councils that were merged into ten between 2000 and 2004, compared the financial ratings of the merged entities against the ratings of all NSW councils. The study by Professor Brian Dollery found no material difference in performance between the ten merged councils and the rest of the NSW councils. In fact, the ten councils under consideration had a higher proportion of sub-standard performance than the rest of NSW councils.

In an analysis of the 2008 Queensland forced amalgamations, Drew, Kortt and Dollery (2015) found an increase in real operating expenditure in the order of 4.7% p.a., and that council rates had increased 4.9% over and above inflation. Dollery states 'far from the earlier claims of leaner more efficient local authorities, the Queensland forced mergers actually produced more expensive local government, funded in part by higher municipal rates and fees'.

SERVICE DELIVERY AND RATES

Currently there are a number of significant differences between the rating systems of Strathfield Council and other Inner West Councils. An amalgamation of these councils is likely to increase the average residential and business rates for residents of Strathfield Council.

A merged council would be required to set a rating system. The exact impact on individual households is unknown, but a key driver in determining rates would be land value, and residents with comparatively high value properties would bear a higher proportion of the rates. Independent financial analysis obtained by Council indicates that there is a likely increase of about 16% to residential rates in the Strathfield Council area.

It is difficult to compare service levels as councils describe services differently and the information across the Inner West councils is not presented consistently. However research shows that typically in a merged council, the highest level of services are adopted, and this usually results in increases in overall costs.

Strathfield Council's assets are generally well maintained, but it is likely that expenditure of available funds would be focused on other local government areas to address other council's asset backlogs. This would be detrimental to the existing Strathfield LGA.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Amalgamations have upfront costs which need to be recovered in the long term. The average cost of the 2008 amalgamations in Queensland was $8.1M per council. Modelling by the Independent NSW Parliamentary Budget Office in 2015 estimated that the total cost of amalgamations in NSW to be $445M, if all councils participated voluntarily, however 'significantly higher' costs would result if amalgamations were forced. To offset these costs, the NSW Government's assistance package amounts to $280M, with the remainder to be funded by councils.

The size of a council does not ensure financial sustainability. In the last financial year, nine of the State's biggest councils ran large operating deficits. This included the largest council in NSW, Blacktown Council.

COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

Communities of interest can be defined as the shared sense of identity held by the people in that area. It encompasses neighbourhood cohesion, shared experiences and shared places.

Local government needs to consider how adequately the elected representatives are able to represent the different communities of interest across a local government area. When looking at possible council amalgamations, this should be considered in light of the significant reduction in Councillor representation that would arise under any of the amalgamation options.

SNAPSHOT OF STRATHFIELD COUNCIL AND OTHER INNER WEST COUNCILS

	STRATHFIELD	ASHFIELD	BURWOOD	CANADA BAY	LEICHHARDT	MARRICKVILLE
Population (estimate 2014)	40,000	44,500	36,000	87,500	58,000	83,500
Projected 2031 population	80,000	53,400	47,500	111,350	67,550	102,300
Current Councillor representation	7	12	7	9	12	12
Current residents per Councillor	5,714	3,708	5,150	9,720	4,844	6,946
Merged Councillor representation	1.7	1.8	1.5	3.7	2.5	3.6
Land size (km^2)	14	8	7	20	11	17
Council staff numbers (2013/14)	150	173	170	296	466	536
Operating expenses (2013/14)	$32.4M	$40.5M	$35.8M	$72.6M	$74.3M	$94.4M
Average residential rates (2013/14)	$815.48	$1044.18	$986.60	$837.14	$1146.24	$820.40
Average business rates (2013/14)	$4577.41	$4641.49	$5050.57	$2737.45	$6772.50	$5248.61
Operating costs per capita ($)	$810	$910.15	$992.98	$829.90	$1278.03	$1127.69
Total Debt (2013/14)	NIL	$9.4M	$6.7M	NIL	$11.4M	$15.2M
Infrastructure backlog by value (2013/14)	$3.5M	$24.7M	$160M	$18.8M	$35.6M	$5M

OPTION 1

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL STANDALONE

Strathfield Council currently has an estimated population of 40,000 residents. By 2031, the Strathfield local government area is estimated to grow to 80,000 residents due to projected dwellings and population growth for Parramatta Road as well as other urban renewal which is expected to occur.

Strathfield Council as a standalone council is likely to:

- Maintain similar levels of residential and business rates
- Maintain Strathfield's local identity
- Maintain a low debt ratio (under 2%)
- Maintain high proportion of councillors to residents.
- Maintain current service levels
- Maintain low operating costs and overheads, which are currently lower than large councils such as Blacktown, Parramatta and City of Sydney

OVERVIEW

CHARACTERISTIC	STRATHFIELD
2014 Population estimate	40,000
2031 Population estimate	80,000
Land size (km²)	14
Operating expenses (2013/14)	$32.4M
Debt (2013/14)	$0
Operating cost per resident (2013/14)	$810
Average ordinary residents rates (2013/14)	$815.48
Average ordinary business rates (2013/14)	$4,577.41
Staff (2013/14)	150
Councillors (2013/14)	7
Population per councillor (estimated 2014)	5,714

Council currently meets a number of the FFF benchmarks. Based on Council's financial projections, Council expects to meet all financial benchmarks by 2019/20. To meet these benchmarks, Council has reviewed operating expenditure and identified additional sources of revenue which may include a moderate one-off rate increase in 2016/17 or 2017/18.

Council must also address scale and capacity criteria.

Council is proposing meeting the NSW Government's FFF requirements of scale and capacity through the establishment of a formal regional body such as a Joint Organisation for strategic regional planning, regional advocacy and provision of shared services, while maintaining local services and representation as a standalone council.

Council considers this proposal would provide a superior alternative to large scale amalgamation by improving Council's ability to work and advocate on regional projects and services while maintaining local representation and a cost effective service to residents and rate payers.

OPTION 2

INNER WEST COUNCIL

The NSW Government recommends the amalgamation of Strathfield Council with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils. This option would create a council with a population of over 350,000 residents in 2016. The size of the council would continue to grow with an estimated 462,100 residents by 2031.

With an estimated population of over 350,000 residents, this council would be one of the largest in the Sydney Metropolitan Area, and comprise over 6% of the population for the entire greater Sydney Metropolitan area.

The information below compares a standalone Strathfield Council with the proposed amalgamation of Strathfield Council with the other five Inner West Councils.

OVERVIEW

CHARACTERISTIC	STRATHFIELD COUNCIL (2013/14)	INNER WEST COUNCIL (ESTIMATED)
2014 Population estimate	40,000	350,000 (2016)
2031 Population estimate	80,000	462,000
Land size (km²)	14	77
Annual expenditure (2013/14)	$32.4M	$380.M
Debt (2013/14)	$0	$42.7M
Councillors (2013/14)	7	15
Estimated resident population per councillor	5,714	23,301

POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES OF THIS OPTION ARE:

- It is likely that the merged council would have access to benefits offered to complying councils by the NSW Government, which include access to TCorp borrowing facilities at a reduced cost and access to streamlined special rate variations and planning process
- Potential for greater advocacy with State and Federal Governments on behalf of the Inner West as the council would be substantially larger
- To minimise duplications in services and administration
- Real Operating Expenditure indicators in the Inner West would improve and meet benchmarks by 2019 (through sale of public assets e.g. public land and council owned buildings, reductions of council staff, rationalisation of duplications). However, it should be noted that Strathfield Council already meets the FFF benchmark for Real Operating Expenditure

POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES OF THIS OPTION MAY INCLUDE:

- Increased debt burden for Strathfield residents
- Possible loss of Strathfield identity
- The average residential rate and business rates for Strathfield ratepayers is likely to increase. The key driver for this would be land value
- The ratio of residents to councillor would substantially increase from the current rate of 1 Councillor to 5714 residents to 1 Councillor to 23,300 residents (2016 estimate)
- Decisions about service delivery may not reflect local priorities for Strathfield area
- Based on independent financial analysis, a merged Inner West Council would not meet FFF benchmarks such as asset maintenance, asset renewal and infrastructure backlogs at time of merger or by 2019/20
- Transition costs to merge six councils are difficult to estimate but are likely to be substantial and significantly exceed funding available from the NSW Government
- Rationalisation of assets and council employees may result in sale of council assets e.g. land and buildings and reductions of council staff through redundancies
- Financial savings from merging councils may not eventuate depending on decisions and priorities of future councils

HAVE YOUR SAY

All members of the Strathfield community are encouraged to provide feedback or comments by **Saturday 20 June** to assist in the preparation of the submission on Council's future. There are a number of ways you can have your say:

Phone survey

Random sample community survey conducted by independent research consultant

Online survey

Complete the survey online at:
www.surveymonkey.com/s/strathfield-merger
www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Displays

Drop in to our display of information at Council's customer service centre and libraries, view the information and complete the community survey.

Information Sessions

Come and meet with Council representatives to discuss the proposals.

Saturday 6 June, 10am - 12noon, Strathfield Library
Saturday 13 June, 10am - 12noon, Strathfield Library

Website

View up to date information on Council's website
www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Council Customer Service Centre

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield
Monday - Friday
8.30am - 4.30pm
Ph: (02) 9748 9999

Strathfield Library

65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush
Monday - Thursday: 9.30am - 8pm
Friday: 9.30am - 6pm
Saturday: 9am - 4pm
Sunday: 1pm - 5pm

High Street Community Library

64 High Street, Strathfield
Monday - Friday: 9.30am - 5pm
Saturday: 9am - 1pm
Sunday: 9am - 1pm

19 May 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Council News

New fitness equipment at Allan Davidson Oval

Strathfield Council recently completed the installation of fitness equipment outside Allan Davidson Oval in Airey Park. The new equipment has been installed in seven circuit stations around the oval, with two or three activities at each station, including:

- Stretch station
- Aerobic cycle
- Body twist
- Elliptical
- Chest press
- Pull ups
- Leg raises
- Body pulls
- Push ups
- Pull down
- Leg press
- Sit up bench

An exciting feature of the new equipment is two new ping pong tables located at the station nearest the Community Centre.
The project also includes a new concrete circuit path around the oval to link the stations, which will be installed shortly.

Delivery Program 2014-2018 And Operational Plan 2015/16

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1993*, Council has developed the draft Delivery Program 2014-2018, incorporating the 2015/16 Operational Plan.

The draft Delivery Program is a four year program, which sets out objectives for Council to achieve over that period.
The Operational Plan is a subset of the Delivery Program and sets out one year targets for Council to complete.

The draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan is on public exhibition until **9 June 2015** and can be viewed at:

- www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au
- Council's customer service centre – 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield
- Strathfield Library – 65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush
- High Street Community Library – 64 High Street, Strathfield.

Written comments are invited and should be addressed to the General Manager, Strathfield Council, PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135 or faxed to 9764 1034 or emailed to council@strathfield.nsw.gov.au. For more information please contact Council on 9748 9999.

Area Community Update

Come along to the 2015 Area Community Update for the Strathfield South, Belfield and Greenacre region to learn about Council initiatives and projects happening in the area. The update is a great opportunity to meet Councillors and talk to Council officers about issues in your local area.

Date: Wednesday 20 May
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Location: Belfield Bowling Club

WHAT'S ON

COOKS RIVER FUN RUN

Cooks River Fun Run
Sunday 21 June, 8:30am
Freshwater Park, Strathfield
cooksriverfunrun.com.au

Fitness equipment being installed outside Allan Davidson Oval in Airey Park

Community Events Grant Program now open

Strathfield Council is calling for applications for local based community groups seeking financial assistance for events planned in the Strathfield Council area. Community groups may apply for up to $4000 of financial assistance by way of cash support or in-kind assistance for an event held in Strathfield in the 2015/16 financial year.

The guidelines for the Community Events Grant Program are set out in the Community Events Grants Program Policy, and information as well as the official application forms are available at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au. For more information, please contact Strathfield Council on 9748 9999.

Cooks River Fun Run

Entries are now open for the Cooks River Fun Run, Strathfield Council's annual fitness event including a 10km, 5km, 2km kids run and a 5km walk. In a new addition to the event in 2015, participants can team up with a partner and enter a 10km relay.

The run starts at Freshwater Park, Strathfield and follows the Bay to Bay cycleway along a flat course through South Strathfield. Join us for a great, active day out. To register, visit www.cooksriverfunrun.com.au

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM
Should you wish to speak with your Councillor, please contact Council on 9748 9999 by 4pm on the Friday preceding the session to make an appointment

- 23 May - Council Offices: Cr Bott
- 30 May - Council Offices: Cr McLucas

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

With the Fit for the Future submission deadline approaching, I would like to remind residents that Strathfield Council remains opposed to amalgamation with our neighbouring councils

Council will be making a submission to the Fit for the Future process on the basis that Strathfield will stand alone and not merge.

Council has been made aware that the NSW Government has appointed the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to assess the Fit for the Future submissions made by councils. Submissions must include details on how councils meet the Fit for the Future criteria and proposed methods of improvement.

Council continues to have concerns about the criteria the NSW Government has imposed on councils in this process, and will voice these concerns in our submission.

Compared to its neighbours, Strathfield has a superior budget position, lower rates and charges, better infrastructure, and more desirable community assets, and maintains that it is Fit for the Future in its current form.

I will continue to update the community on this process, and encourage residents to remain informed about this important issue.

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield

COUNCIL MEETINGS

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
- Tuesday 2 June 2015, 7pm
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

CS1. Local Government Reform

130/15

RESOLVED: (Kokkolis/Soulos)

That Council note the preparation of a Council Improvement Proposal to be submitted to the NSW State Government in response to their reform program for Local Government.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos
Against the Motion: Nil

CS2. Investment Report as at 31 March 2015

131/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Kokkolis)

That the record of cash investments as at 31 March 2015 be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos
Against the Motion: Nil

CS3. Review of Investment Policy

132/15

RESOLVED: (Kokkolis/Vaccari)

That the proposed amendments to the Investment Policy be approved.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos
Against the Motion: Nil

CS4. Anti-Amalgamation Campaign

133/15

RESOLVED: (Kokkolis/Vaccari)

That the report concerning the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos
Against the Motion: Nil

Steagall law which functioned so successfully from its passage in 1933 until its repeal in 1999. This will protect commercial banking from $27.766 trillion of highly-risky derivatives contracts found in the Australian banking system. This figure is over 17 times GDP.

(ii) Urging that they encourage the Australian government to participate in the emerging international credit institutions that encourage economic development in basic infrastructure, which will stimulate economic activity down to the local level.

124/15

RESOLVED: (Soulos/Kokkolis)

That in the interests of protecting Local Government services from unnecessary budget austerity driven by a failing financial system, Council write to Craig Laundy MP, Federal member for Reid and Tony Burke MP, Federal member for Watson:

(i) Urging that they once again encourage the Australian Parliament to pass legislation to separate commercial banking from investment banking, modelled upon the U.S. Glass-Steagall law which functioned so successfully from its passage in 1933 until its repeal in 1999. This will protect commercial banking from $27.766 trillion of highly-risky derivatives contracts found in the Australian banking system. This figure is over 17 times GDP.

(ii) Urging that they encourage the Australian government to participate in the emerging international credit institutions that encourage economic development in basic infrastructure, which will stimulate economic activity down to the local level.

For the Motion:	Councillors Soulos and Vaccari
Against the Motion:	Councillors Bott and Kokkolis

The Motion when Put with voting being Equal the Mayor exercised his casting vote in Favour of the Motion and Declared it Carried.

D. Notice of Motion signed by Councillors McLucas and Bott

1. Fit for the Future Expert Advisory Panel

WE MOVE:

1. That Council write to the Premier of NSW, Mike Baird, regarding the appointment of IPART to perform the role of the expert advisory panel to assess Fit for the Future proposals submitted by Councils.

2. That Council express its strong concerns in relation to the following issues:

- The appointment of a temporary part time tribunal member with Local Government sector knowledge to assist IPART is completely inadequate.
- The appointment of IPART will result in issues of community identity and cohesion not being considered in the assessment of proposals.
- In view of the fact that the methodology for assessing Fit for the Future proposals will not be finalised until 1 June 2015 the deadline for the submission of proposals to the State Government of 30 June should be extended by at least 2 months.

- It is completely unacceptable and unrealistic to require Councils to prepare and submit proposals in the absence of the finalised methodology to be used by IPART in the assessment of those proposals.

125/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Kokkolis)

1. That Council write to the Premier of NSW, Mike Baird, regarding the appointment of IPART to perform the role of the expert advisory panel to assess Fit for the Future proposals submitted by Councils.

2. That Council express its strong concerns in relation to the following issues:

   - The appointment of a temporary part time tribunal member with Local Government sector knowledge to assist IPART is completely inadequate.
   - The appointment of IPART will result in issues of community identity and cohesion not being considered in the assessment of proposals.
   - In view of the fact that the methodology for assessing Fit for the Future proposals will not be finalised until 1 June 2015 the deadline for the submission of proposals to the State Government of 30 June should be extended by at least 2 months.
   - It is completely unacceptable and unrealistic to require Councils to prepare and submit proposals in the absence of the finalised methodology to be used by IPART in the assessment of those proposals.

3. That Council write to all NSW Councils, Sydney Metropolitan Mayors and LGNSW advising of Council's resolution and requesting that they write to the Premier of NSW, Mike Baird, and Minister for Local Government, Paul Toole, and request that the 30 June deadline for submission of Fit for the Future proposals be extended by at least two months.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

GM1. Performance Improvement Order

126/15

RESOLVED: (Kokkolis/Bott)

That Council note the Improvement Plan Responses as at April 2015 to the Performance Improvement Order.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Kokkolis and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

2. Council Rangers

WE MOVE:

That by the next Ordinary Council Meeting:

1. Council report on what duties Council's three rangers currently carry out.

2. Council report on what extra duties can be carried out by the employment of an additional 0.5 to 1.0 Full Time Equivalent rangers.

88/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/ Kokkolis)

That by the next Ordinary Council Meeting:

1. Council report on what duties Council's three rangers currently carry out.

2. Council report on what extra duties can be carried out by the employment of an additional 0.5 to 1.0 Full Time Equivalent rangers.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta and McLucas

The Mayor declared the Motion carried.

B. Notices of Motion signed by Councillor Bott

1. Amalgamation

I MOVE:

1. That Council writes to Ms Jodi McKay, Member for Strathfield; Mr Jihad Dib, Member for Lakemba; and Mr Luke Foley, Member for Auburn; and reaffirm our stance that we oppose any amalgamation of Strathfield Council, referencing the fact that they represent part of Strathfield Local Government Area.

2. That Council writes to Mr Mike Baird, Premier of New South Wales; and Mr Paule Toole, Minister for Local Government and reaffirm our stance that we oppose any amalgamation of Strathfield Council.

3. That Council write to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and reaffirm our stance that we oppose forced amalgamation of any council.

4. That Council follow-up on this matter after the 56th NSW Parliament has commenced.

89/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/ Ok)

1. That Council writes to Ms Jodi McKay, Member for Strathfield; Mr Jihad Dib, Member for Lakemba; and Mr Luke Foley, Member for Auburn; and reaffirm our stance that we oppose any amalgamation of Strathfield Council, referencing the fact that they represent part of Strathfield Local Government Area.

2. That Council writes to Premier of New South Wales Mr Mike Baird MP and Minister for Local Government Mr Paul Toole MP and reaffirm our stance that we oppose any amalgamation of Strathfield Council.

3. That Council write to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and reaffirm our stance that we oppose forced amalgamation of any council.

4. That Council follow-up on this matter after the 56th NSW Parliament has commenced.

For the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta, McLucas and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis and Ok

The Mayor declared the Motion carried.

2. Strathfield Town Centre

I MOVE:

1. That Council writes to Ms Jodi McKay, Member for Strathfield; Minister for Planning and Premier of New South Wales and request support for the Strathfield Town Centre project.

   - In this correspondence, Council to advise that support would include, but not be limited to, a feasibility study for an underground interchange.
   - Also, in this correspondence, council to advise of the recent unanimous decision for us to move towards an Expression of Interest (EOI).

2. That Council follow-up on this matter after the 56th NSW Parliament has commenced.

Councillor Bott raised a Point of Order during debate on this matter that the Mayor ruled Councillor Soulos' statement in relation to the Strathfield Town Centre Flood Study was correct.

The Mayor ruled there was no Point of Order.

MOTION OF DISSENT: (Bott/McLucas)

That Council dissent from the ruling of the Mayor.

For the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta and McLucas

Against the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

The Mayor declared the Motion Lost.

March 2015

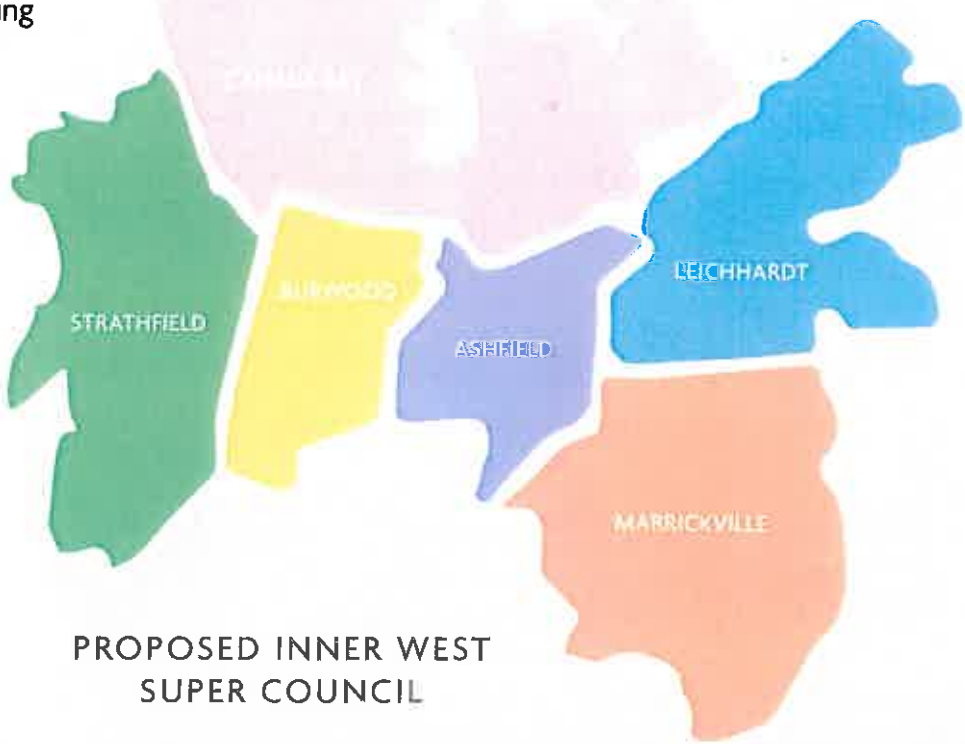
STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Amalgamation will cost you.

KNOW THE FACTS.

The NSW State Government has released its *'Fit for the Future'* program which requires NSW councils to consider amalgamating with neighbouring councils in order to reduce the number of metropolitan councils from 41 to 18.

It is proposed that Strathfield merge with five neighbouring Inner West councils to form a super council with a projected population of 432,400.



PROPOSED INNER WEST SUPER COUNCIL

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Delivery Address:
PO Box 120
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

No stamp required
If posted in Australia

Strathfield Council
Reply Paid 120
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

THIS IS HOW AMALGAMATION WOULD **NEGATIVELY** AFFECT STRATHFIELD RESIDENTS:

	Ashfield	Burwood	Canada Bay	Leichhardt	Marrickville	Strathfield (Current)	Strathfield (If merged)
Rates	$979.74	$956.95	$852.71	$1106.71	$784.24	$802.71	$913.84
Business Rates	$4443.51	$5151.37	$2593.06	$6567.21	$8393.24	$4910.61	$5343.17
Debt (per resident)	$239.99	$125.39	$4.48	$104.53	$257.02	$0.00	$125.15
Backlog	$24.7mil	$160mil	$18.8mil	$35mil	$5.06mil	$3.5mil	$41.18mil
Expenditure on roads, bridges and footpaths	$93.61	$131.99	$69.52	$122.29	$133.98	$165.38	$119.46

AMALGAMATION WILL HAVE **NO BENEFITS** FOR STRATHFIELD RESIDENTS.

1. We are financially viable
2. We have no debt
3. We have low rates
4. We provide high quality services and facilities for our community
5. It will take the local out of local government and prevent residents from having their say
6. There will be 1 Councillor representing the whole of Strathfield

FIGHT AMALGAMATION. SIGN THE PETITION AT WWW.STRATHFIELD.NSW.GOV.AU OR HAVE YOUR SAY BELOW.

For more information, contact council on 9748 9999 or email council@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

HAVE YOUR SAY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

☐ I am against Council Amalgamation ☐ I am for Council Amalgamation

Name	Email*	Why

*Please provide email address if you wish to remain informed regarding council amalgamation, however this is not a requirement

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

GM5. People Power to Crack Down on Litterbugs

58/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Datta)

That Council note Minister Rob Stokes, Minister for the Environment's announcement of a new NSW reporting system for littering from vehicles.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

GM6. Responsible Leadership Delivery Program – Six Monthly Progress Report July to December 2014

59/15

RESOLVED: (Ok/Datta)

That the Responsible Leadership Delivery Program six-monthly progress report for July to December 2014 be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS1. Investment Report as at 31 January 2015

60/15

RESOLVED: (Kokkolis/Ok)

That the record of cash investments as at 31st January 2015 be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS2. Anti-Amalgamation Campaign

61/15

RESOLVED: (Datta/Kokkolis)

That the report concerning the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

March 2015

No stamp required if posted in Australia

Delivery Address:
PO Box 120
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

Strathfield Council
Reply Paid 120
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Cost of amalgamations

Amalgamations are expensive and expected financial benefits have historically not been delivered.

For example, in 2010 Auckland Council was formed by merging eight councils. Debt has doubled and it is predicted that debt by 2012 will total over $12 billion; $12,500 per capita. 25% of Council income is now allocated to interest and debt payments and services are being cut.

Have your say

Complete the survey overleaf and return to Strathfield Council via reply paid post or in person to Strathfield Council Customer Service Centre at 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield.

Alternatively, an online survey is available at **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au**

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Amalgamation will cost you

Know the Facts

Help us fight amalgamation.

Sign the petition at **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au**

Local Representation

Strathfield Council's population is currently 38,000 people. Merging Strathfield with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils would result in a council of over 400,000 people. The consequences of this merger would be:

- The Strathfield area would be entitled to only one councillor for 38,000 people.
- Community access to councillors would be reduced.
- Council Chambers, Council administration and Council meetings would be moved from Strathfield.
- The Strathfield community would lose its voice and capacity to influence decisions.

The Strathfield area has had independent local government for 130 years. Council is completely dedicated to managing Strathfield and representing Strathfield interests to all levels of government, business and community sectors.

Finances

Strathfield Council commissioned independent experts to estimate the economic impacts of a merger on Strathfield residents. They concluded that there were no financial benefits to the Strathfield community and:

- Rates on Strathfield properties would increase by 16%.
- Strathfield would take on other Councils debts of $43 million. Strathfield is currently debt free.
- Strathfield would take on asset backlogs from other councils totalling $247 million. Strathfield currently has a small and manageable backlog.
- A merged council would direct resources to pay debt and to address infrastructure backlogs in areas other than Strathfield.
- Costs of administration would increase and direct spending on services and infrastructure would decline.

Amalgamations are expensive. The cost of merging multiple councils would cost millions. Strathfield Council believes this money could be better spent on services and infrastructure.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

☐ I am against Council Amalgamation ☐ I am for Council Amalgamation

Name	Email*	Why

*Please provide email address if you wish to remain informed regarding council amalgamation, however this is not a requirement

March 2015

"In 2004 the Carr Labor Government forcibly merged a large number of councils, and in 2014 those councils have performed worse than un-amalgamated councils of the same kind." – Professor Brian Dollery, UNE

THE BIG ISSUE

WHAT COUNCIL MERGERS WILL MEAN FOR THE OASIS OF THE WEST

The fight against council mergers is stepping up the pace. *Nella Gaughan* and *Karen Pensabene*, co-chairs of the residents' action group, Save Our Strathfield, state their case against amalgamation

In a memorable interview with the Strathfield *Scene* two years ago, the then-Premier Mr Barry O'Farrell said: "There will be no forced amalgamation of Strathfield Council."

He went on to add: "I don't think it's clear… what the benefits are for communities like Strathfield if they are amalgamated."

What has changed in the council amalgamation debate since Premier O'Farrell's statements in 2013?

There is a new NSW Premier and a new Local Government Minister and a renamed amalgamation package called "Fit for the Future", which offers Councils and Councillors financial incentives to merge.

There is little evidence that amalgamation improves Council's financial sustainability or improves service quality. There is ample evidence that amalgamation is the end of "local" – local identity, local autonomy, local choice, local jobs and, importantly, our local voice.

So why is the State Government pushing council amalgamation when it can't articulate the benefits to residents?

Council and residents are open to reform. However, there needs to be debate. Professor Brian Dollery of the University of New England's Centre for Local Government said last year: "In 2004, the Carr Labor Government forcibly merged a large number of councils, and in 2014 those councils have performed worse than un-amalgamated councils of the same kind.

"Councils are being dudded in the Fit for the Future process developed by the New South Wales Government.

"The financial ratios and benchmark values included in the Fit for the Future criteria have been deliberately modified from the original TCorp version to make it more difficult for councils to demonstrate their financial viability."

Fit for the Future has had no input from councils and no input from the residents. There is just an order from the Minister for councils to prove that they are socially and economically viable.

Strathfield Council is already Fit for the Future and will not be submitting a report.

Under an amalgamation, our assets will be stripped by neighbouring councils, services will decline and our infrastructure plans will be decimated, because surrounding councils do not have the amenity we do.

Council's role is to protect the lifestyle, property values and amenity of residents through its development and planning codes and by-laws. Council is the only authority standing between residents and over-development.

Council, councillors and residents have communicated to the State Government that we do not want to be amalgamated.

The State Government is not listening. Council and Save Our Strathfield have independently conducted polls of Strathfield's residents and confirmed beyond any doubt that most of us are opposed to council amalgamations – with 70 per cent of all residents opposed to the original proposal to merge Strathfield with Burwood, Ashfield and Canada Bay.

Residents across NSW have told the State Government they do not want to lose the "local" in local government which will have a significant financial impact and will not serve their communities' best interests.

In Strathfield the feeling is even stronger because the people here have so much pride in the identity of their community.

Why doesn't the State Government tell us why there is such an urgency to amalgamate councils? The real reason for the current State Government's amalgamation plan is political.

Councils have existed for far longer than the State Governments, and they are still going strong.

However, with residents out of the way the State Government would be able to access and use our rates and other council revenues to fund infrastructures that are the State's responsibility, such as schools, hospitals, WestConnex and the revitalisation of Parramatta Road.

When you look at it like that it makes councils an attractive target.

Are we scare-mongering? No, we have done our homework. We have wide-ranging evidence from researching the impact on amalgamated councils.

We love living in Strathfield… so let's speak up, make sure we are heard and Save Our Strathfield from council amalgamation.

[illegible]

COUNCIL MERGERS: HOW YOU'LL SUFFER

- **Loss of autonomy:** What you want for your local area will no longer be important in a 400,000-resident council. Amalgamated council research shows a shift to the "haves" and the "not haves" – one area thrives, while the rest are treated as poor cousins.
- **Loss of identity:** Strathfield has a strong local identity as the Oasis of the West. This strength of local identity is not shared by surrounding councils.
- **Loss of jobs:** Councils employ local people and award contracts to local businesses. In an amalgamated council, there will be a large number of redundancies, and contracts will be too big for local businesses to service.
- **Loss of services:** Amalgamation will create disruption to services. A lack of local knowledge and the distance of decision-makers from ratepayers will mean poorer services. Do you think we will be able to keep our two libraries?
- **Increased debt:** Strathfield Council has no debt today. The cost of amalgamations is enormous, from simple things like changing stationery to street signs, redundancy payments and IT costs.
- **Council rates will increase:** Residents' rates will rise 16% and business rates are projected to increase by 57%. These increases will only achieve parity with neighbouring councils and don't include the costs of amalgamating.
- **Lack of funding for local infrastructure:** Your rates will not be spent in Strathfield. Instead, they will be used to prop up other councils with poorer infrastructure.
- **More red tape:** Big bureaucracies attract red tape. Strathfield Council is responsive. Urgent matters get addresses within 24 hours. A mega-council cannot hope to be as responsive as a local council.
- **Less access to council staff:** We know our council staff and our councillors. In a merged council you will be most likely talking to a recording saying "your call is important to us".
- **Your rates will pay politicians:** It will cost a minimum of a $200,000 salary for a full-time, paid politician as mega-Mayor. Grassroots councillors will not be able to match the political parties' funding in an election.
- **Quality development:** Strathfield Council's mantra is quality development only. Our surrounding councils do not share the same quality ethos for development.
- **Housing prices will decrease:** Today, Strathfield is a sought-after place to live. That will not be the case under an amalgamated council where local voices will not have a say on developments and are affected by poorer amenity and services.

6. Licence – Hudson Park Oval and Amenities

39/15

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Datta)

1. That Council note the public notification undertaken regarding a proposed licence for Hudson Park oval and amenities.

2. That Council note that there were no comments received from the public notification.

3. That Council seek Crown Lands endorsement to enter into a 10 year licence with the Trustees of the Christian Brothers (St Patrick's College) for use of Hudson Park oval and amenities building.

4. That subsequent to Crown Lands endorsement, Council then endorse the General Manager to enter into a 10 year licence with the Trustees of the Christian Brothers (St Patrick's College) for use of the Hudson Park oval and amenities building.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

7. MATTERS OF URGENCY IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 241 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATIONS, 2005

40/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Vaccari)

That pursuant to Clause 241 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 the following matter be dealt with as it is considered to be of great urgency.

Amalgamation Petition

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

The Chairman ruled that the matter was of great urgency.

1. Amalgamation Petition

41/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/Vaccari)

That the results concerning the Anti-Amalgamation petition be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

10 February 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Council News

As part of the Anzac Centenary Grant Programme, funding to restore the Davey Square World War I memorial has been announced

Free Child Restraint Checking Vouchers

Strathfield Council is offering free vouchers for child car restraint fitting/checking to residents and workers within the Strathfield Local Government Area. The vouchers will cover the labour cost of a standard car restraint fitting/checking with Belmore Auto Conversions, a local business that is an RMS authorised child car restraint fitter.

Vouchers will be valid for 3 months from the date of issue and numbers are limited. To enquire about car restraint fitting/checking vouchers, please contact Council's Road Safety Officer on 9748 9999.

Local Government Amalgamation

In 2014 the NSW government recommended that Strathfield council merge with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville to form an Inner West council with a total projected population of 432,400. The majority of councils are opposed to amalgamation.

Strathfield Council is conducting an online petition so residents can have their say on this important issue. Help fight amalgamation, sign the petition at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Plantastic Picnic

Join us for a day of family fun at Edwards Park to learn about healthy living through horticulture, gardening and the outdoors. This free event will include children's activities, a jumping castle, dog training and grooming, bee keeping and gardening tips from Bunnings and the Rose Society.

Make the most of Strathfield's outdoor areas and take home some great new ideas for healthy living every day. The event will take place on Saturday 21 February from 10am to 4pm at Edwards Park, High Street, Strathfield.

Public Exhibition – Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy

UrbanGrowth NSW has proposed a strategy to renew the urban corridor from the Sydney CBD to Parramatta. The corridor covers 10 local government areas that are home to almost one million people.

The Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy proposes that the renewal will be focused in eight strategic precincts located at Granville, Auburn, Homebush, Burwood, Kings Bay, Taverners Hill, Leichhardt and Camperdown.

The Strategy proposes overriding local planning controls and could impose high density residential developments.

The Draft Strategy will be on public exhibition until **12 February 2015** and can be viewed at www.newparramatta.com.au. Strathfield Council encourages residents to view the Draft Strategy and submit feedback before the deadline.

WHAT'S ON

Movies in the Park – Divergent (M)
Saturday 21 February, 8pm
Strathfield Park
Homebush Rd, Strathfield
www.strathfieldnews.com.au

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to inform residents that Strathfield Council has been awarded $36,707 in grant funding from the Australian Government to restore the World War 1 memorial in Davey Square

This funding is part of the Anzac Centenary Grant programme, which is designed to fund community projects that recognise the contribution of servicemen and women who served during the First World War

The Davey Square Memorial is an integral part of how Strathfield residents commemorate the fallen in all fields of war, particularly on Anzac Day It is very poignant that this grant has been received in the centenary year of the Gallipoli conflict where so many thousands of Australians gave their lives so we could live better ones

I would like to thank the Australian Government for this grant, and look forward to updating residents on the progress of this project

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM
- 14 February - Council Chambers, Cr Kokkolis
- 21 February - Council Chambers Cr McLucas

COUNCIL MEETINGS

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
- Tuesday 3 March 2015, 7pm
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au** from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

CS3. Anti-Amalgamation Campaign

22/15

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Datta)

1. That the report concerning the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign be noted.
2. That approval be given to display an Anti-Amalgamation banner on Council's offices.
3. That Council approve additional expenditure of up to $20,000 for the Anti-Amalgamation campaign.
4. That Council be appraised of where this $20,000 is spent via the Councillor Bulletin on a weekly basis.

For the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta, McLucas and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis and Ok

CS4. Investment Report as at 30 November and 31 December 2014

23/15

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Vaccari)

That the record of cash investments as at 30 November 2014 and 31 December 2014 be noted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS5. Strathfield South Community Development

24/15

RESOLVED: (Bott/McLucas)

That the report concerning Strathfield South Community Development be noted and activities be endorsed.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

CS6. Draft Community Access Plan 2014-2018

25/15

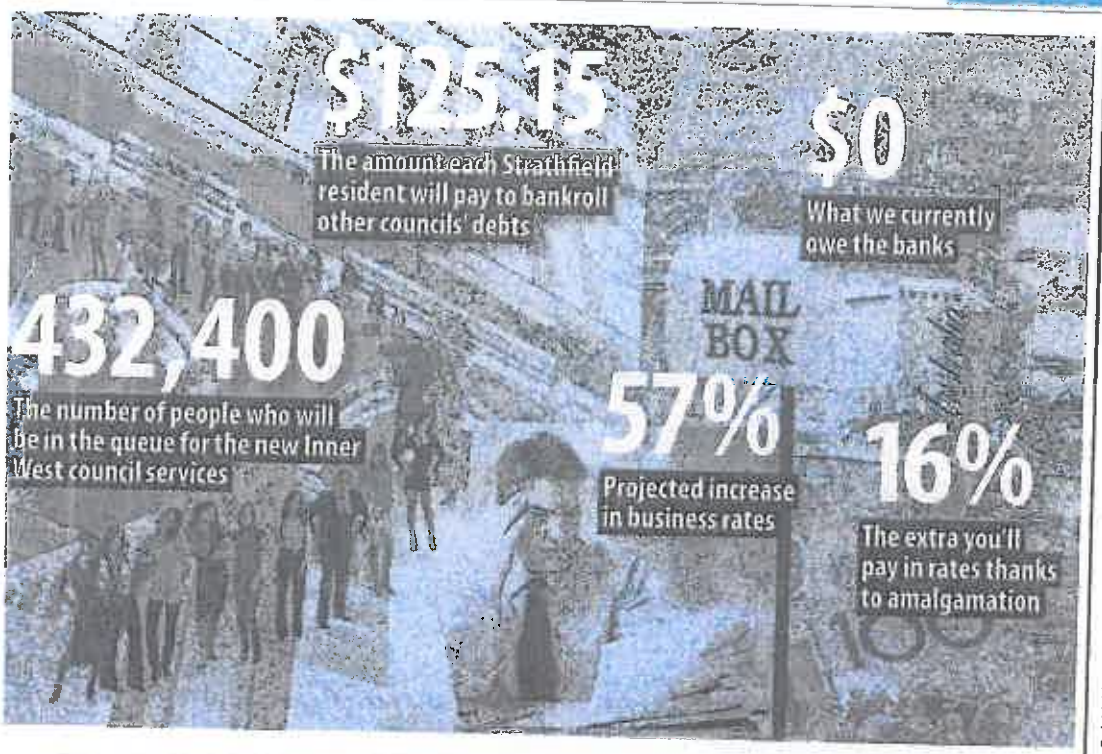
RESOLVED: (McLucas/Datta)

That the draft Strathfield Community Access Plan 2014-18 be placed on public exhibition.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

February – late 2015



RESIDENTS TO BE SLUGGED $320 N RATES INCREASES UNDER MERGED COUNCILS, STRATHFIELD WARNS

Peter Lynch

Strathfield Council, one of the fiercest opponents of council mergers, has launched a stinging attack on the State Government's amalgamation plans, ling residents they will pay a heavy price.
ie move is the first salvo in a campaign for ival, to which the Council has committed),000 worth of funds and formed a special egy committee.
is week, a further $20,000 was allocated oposed new projects, including further ications and videos.
uncil plans to erect banners and work on to use social media and events to get the age across.
ier extensive research by council alists, a freshly prepared leaflet has been ered to every home and will be sent out rates notices.
cording to the document, local government m will hit residents in the hip pocket.
gamation will mean a whopping 16% rates ase, or $320 for some households.
sinesses will be even harder hit, with cted rates increases of 57%.
r example, if you currently pay the average 900, your rates will increase by $2,800," he brochure.
e leaflet showed Strathfield is well managed s performance is among the best in the – it is certainly ranked as best among Inner councils.

Council is identifying like-minded local government authorities elsewhere in the state for support, though it is not talking to councils who have agreed to make submissions to the State Government's "Fit for the Future" program.

The program requires councils to submit financial plans and areas for potential merger to the State Government by June. Strathfield has already indicated it will refuse to file such a plan on the grounds that it appears to be amalgamation "by stealth".

The council is urging residents to help by signing a petition at www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au.

"In 2014, the NSW Government recommended Strathfield Council merge with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville to form an Inner West Council with a total projected population of 432,000," says the council leaflet.

"The majority of councils are opposed to amalgamation."

It then goes on to point out that Inner West councils have a total of $42.1 million in debt, while Strathfield has none.

"Which means $125.15 per Strathfield resident to repay other councils' debts – a merger would transfer large debts and backlogs to Strathfield residents."

Inner West authorities have a combined infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog of $243 million – Strathfield has just $3.5 million.

"Maintenance and renewal in areas with good infrastructure like Strathfield will not be a priority," says the council leaflet.

The council maintains Strathfield has one of the lowest costs for administration per resident at just $190, while the City of Sydney spends $1,102.53 and Parramatta $507.

It concludes: "Council's expenditure on roads, bridges and footpaths is the highest in the Inner West, reflecting our commitment to community priorities."

At this week's meeting, councillors agreed five votes to two to increase available funds for the campaign. Council approves expenditure plans before they can go ahead.

"It's 140 years of history and we need to do as much as possible to defend it," said Cr Daniel Bott.

Cr Raj Datta agreed, adding: "It's our job to let residents know what is happening."

In brief

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Marlborough Road

Council has requested funding from Roads and Maritime Services for pedestrian safety enhancements to be implemented. There is much concern for the safety of pedestrians crossing Marlborough Road to reach Flemington Railway Station, and the plan is to steer them away from the hazardous crossing. Works will include the installation of concrete safety barriers, a new concrete ramp, widening the footpath under the bridge, improved lighting and other minor works of landscaping and signage at a cost of $290,000.

LIGHT RAIL

Council says yes

Of the four Parramatta Light Rail options proposed at the end of last year by the Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian, Council has indicated that it supports the Parramatta to Sydney Olympic Park, and Strathfield/Burwood extension. Council will write to the Minister to outline its approval for a Light Rail extension in the area. If selected, the new Light Rail route would extend from the City of Sydney along Parramatta Rd to Homebush, and then through Olympic Park to Parramatta. The addition of Light Rail would be a welcome boost to public transport in the area and reduce congestion.

HOMEBUSH TRAFFIC

Draft proposals

Traffic Planning and Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd has been commissioned to review the current parking and traffic conditions on Burlington Road, Crane Street and the wider Parramatta Road transport corridor. The consultants initiated a draft report with proposed options to improve traffic and pedestrian safety, as well as providing enhanced landscape. After a consultation process, a further report will be submitted for the consideration of the Traffic Committee detailing any recommended changes.

CONTAINER DEPOSITS

Council in favour

The Council will be writing to Premier Mike Baird and Treasurer Andrew Constance in support of the Container Deposit System (CDS). The initiative would put a value refund on plastic beverage containers as a way of reducing rubbish going to landfill, and also to help resolve the ongoing problem of littering.

January 2015

27 January 2015

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Council News

Strathfield Citizens of the Year

Two local citizens have been recognised for their community service and health promotion being awarded Citizen of the Year accolades at the Strathfield Council Australia Day celebrations.

Citizen of the Year: Jane Pistolese
A long-term Strathfield resident, Jane represented the community in the fight against the expansion of the Australian Catholic University as the leader of the Strathfield Residents Action Group. She put countless hours into research to properly inform the community of the details around the expansion, and was the face of the campaign both when speaking in court and to the media.

Young Citizen of the Year: Sahil Bhandula
A student at Homebush Boys High School, Sahil actively participates in a range of extracurricular activities including hockey and cricket. He has displayed strong leadership qualities, as a member of the Interact Club which raises funds for Amnesty International and in organising anti-bullying week during which he mentored younger students on the effects of bullying.

Plantastic Picnic

Join us for a day of family fun at Edwards Park to learn about healthy living through horticulture, gardening and the outdoors. This free event will include children's activities, a jumping castle, dog training and grooming, bee keeping and gardening tips from Bunnings and the Rose Society.

Make the most of Strathfield's outdoor areas and take home some great new ideas for healthy living every day. The event will take place on Saturday 21 February from 10am to 4pm at Edwards Park, High Street, Strathfield.

Public Exhibition – Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy

UrbanGrowth NSW recently released the Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy. The strategy aims to facilitate the revitalisation of the Parramatta Road corridor from Paramatta to Sydney CBD, including Homebush.

The Draft Strategy proposes renewal in precincts suitable for large increases in housing density, and aims to create new housing choices and jobs and improve public and active transport connections.

The Draft Strategy will be on public exhibition until **12 February 2015** and can be viewed at www.newparramattard.com.au. Strathfield Council encourages residents to view the Draft Strategy and submit feedback before the deadline.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM
- 7 February - Council Chambers Cr Datta
- 14 February - Council Chambers Cr Kokkolis

The free Go4Fun healthy kids program returns to Strathfield this year

Go4Fun

Strathfield Council is pleased to announce that the Go4Fun healthy kids program is returning to Strathfield in 2015. Council is proud to support this free, fun program to help children to become fitter, healthier and happier.

The Go4Fun program is a healthy lifestyle program aimed at children aged 7 to 13 and their parents. Go4Fun aims to improve eating habits, fitness, teamwork and overall health in children who are above a healthy weight.

The program will return on Saturday 31 January, and will include 10 interactive sessions led by qualified health professionals. The sessions focus on games and activities to help children learn new skills and make friends in a fun environment.

For more information and to register, visit www.go4fun.com.au

Winter Seasonal Hire of Sportsgrounds

Strathfield Council is proposing to enter seasonal hire agreements for the use of sporting facilities during the 2015 Winter Season that commences on Tuesday 7 April 2015 and ends on Sunday 30 August 2015 inclusive. The sporting grounds that are available for seasonal hire include Airey Park, Bark Huts, Begnell Field, Bressington Park, Cooke Park, Hudson Oval, Mason Park, and Strathfield Park.

For more information about each field and application forms visit www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au or contact Council on 9748 9999. Applications close Monday 9 February 2015.

WHAT'S ON

Movies in the Park – The Fault in Our Stars (M)
Saturday 7 February, 8pm
Strathfield Park, Homebush Rd, Strathfield
www.strathfieldmovies.com.au

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy has been released by UrbanGrowth NSW. It is on exhibition until 12 February 2015. Council urges residents to raise concerns with UrbanGrowth NSW, the Minister for Planning, the Transport Minister, Roads Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for Planning by making a written submission and sending it to **info@parramattard.com.au**

We await details on public transport plans, open space for sporting fields and playgrounds, childcare centres, schools or community facilities to support the significant increase in population proposed

It appears to suggest that 33% of the overall population growth will be in the Homebush precinct even though it only represents less than 10% of the length of Parramatta Road

In addition to the Urban Growth of Parramatta Road, there is the issue around Amalgamation

In 2014 the NSW government recommended that Strathfield council merge with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville to form an Inner West council with a total projected population of 432,400

The majority of councils are opposed to amalgamation. Help fight amalgamation, sign the petition on **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au**

Yours sincerely,

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council is in recess until 2 February 2015
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
- Tuesday 3 February 2015, 7pm
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au** from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

Ways in which Strathfield Council is doing its best for its residents right now:

BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

- Council's expenditure on administration is the lowest in the Inner West and lower than many 'big' councils.

Council	Admin overheads per resident
City of Sydney	$1102.53
Parramatta	$507
Liverpool	$327
Strathfield	$190

HIGH EXPENDITURE ON ROADS, BRIDGES AND FOOTPATHS

- Council's expenditure on roads, bridges and footpaths is the highest in the Inner West, reflecting our commitment to community priorities.

* Based on actual figures, not predictions. All figures have been made publicly available.

Expenditure on roads, bridges and footpaths per resident

Fight amalgamation

Sign the petition at
www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Contact council at 9748 9999
council@strathfield.nsw.gov.au
www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Cr Gulian Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield

Cr Andrew Soulos
Deputy Mayor of Strathfield

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Amalgamation will cost you!

Don't merge us.

Help us fight amalgamation.
Sign the petition at **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au**

In 2014 the NSW government recommended that Strathfield Council merge with Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville to form an Inner West Council with a total projected population of 432,400.

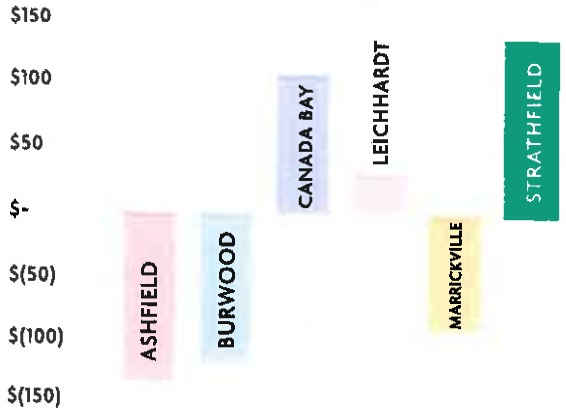
The majority of councils are opposed to amalgamation.

This is how amalgamation would directly impact Strathfield residents:

RATES INCREASES

Strathfield has low residential rates in comparison to all other Inner West councils.

Average residential rates redistribution in event of a merger (Increase of 16% for Strathfield)

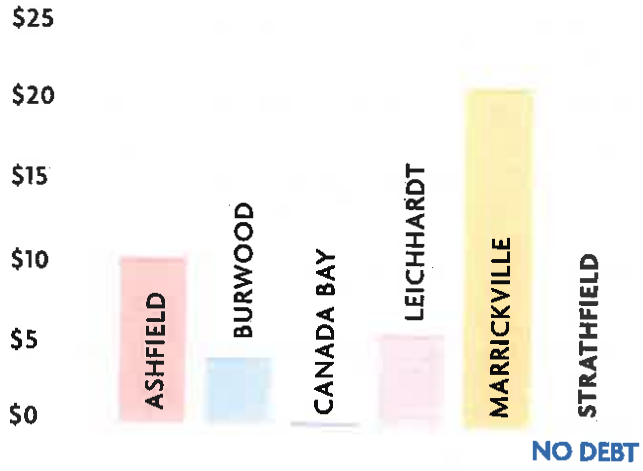


- Residential rates in Strathfield are projected to increase by 16%. For example, if your current rates are $2000 it will increase by $320.
- Business rates are projected to increase by 57%. For example, if you currently pay an average of $4900 your rates will increase by $2800.

TRANSFERRED DEBT AND BACKLOGS

- Strathfield Council has **NO debt**
- Inner West councils have total debts of **$42.1 M.**
- Which means **$125.15 per Strathfield resident to repay other council's debts.**
- Merger would **transfer large debts and backlogs** to Strathfield residents.

Total borrowings by councils ($ millions)



Council	Debt per resident
Marrickville	$257.02
Ashfield	$239.99
Burwood	$125.39
Leichhardt	$104.53
Canada Bay	$4.48
Strathfield	$0.00

- The Inner West council's combined backlog is **$243M** compared to Strathfield's **$3.5M.**
- Maintenance and renewal in areas with good infrastructure like **Strathfield will not be a priority.**

Council	Infrastructure backlog
Burwood	$160 million
Leichhardt	$35 million
Ashfield	$24.7 million
Canada Bay	$18.8 million
Marrickville	$5.06 million
Strathfield	$3.5 million

In brief

STRATHFIELD ANZACS

Memorial display

Strathfield will celebrate our very own ANZAC, Corporal Francis Reynolds Cowdery in an exhibition at Strathfield Library as part of the ANZAC centenary. Organisers, the Emnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee hope to find Corporal Cowdery's family and invite them to the exhibition in early March.
Corporal Cowdery of the 7th Australian Light Horse Regiment was 25 when he died at Gallipoli on 10 August 1915. He is buried on Emnos alongside 234 of his mates. The exhibition features photographs taken by Private A W Savage.

MULTICULTURAL CENTRE

New facility

Councillors voted for a new multicultural community facility to be built within Elliot Reserve in Strathfield South. The next stage in the process is to develop a steering committee to advise Council on how to establish and operate the new centre. Council has allocated $20,000 for the initial stages and will be looking for private investors to help fund the rest of the project.

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Christmas message

Strathfield Council has wished all residents and business owners a merry Christmas and a prosperous new Year. At the last meeting for 2014, Mayor Gulian Vaccari said: "This is a special time for everyone, no matter whether you celebrate Christmas or not." Council will be in recess from 17 December 2014 until February 2015. Authority has been granted to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager, except in relation to development application matters.

'DON'T FALL INTO COUNCIL MERGER TRAP' WARNS Cr DATTA

Strathfield councillors are to hold a strategic workshop over how to handle a proposed Memorandum of Understanding with neighbouring authorities slated for amalgamation.

The MOU has been drawn up by Leichhardt, but Strathfield councillors are divided over whether or not to work with authorities that have agreed to submit a 'Fit for the Future' plan to the State Government.

All NSW councils have been told they must submit plans for merging their services by June next year. Strathfield has decided it won't co-operate.

Cr Raj Datta told the December council meeting he believed it was a "trap" and amounted to "voluntary amalgamation".

He maintained Strathfield had a "unique opportunity to provide leadership" by not co-operating with the process.

Mayor Gulian Vaccari, Cr Sang Ok and Cr Stephanie Kokkolis, on the other hand, argued that holding a dialogue with "like-minded" councils was important.

"Not to do so would be to sell ourselves short," Mr Vaccari maintained.

Cr Daniel Bott said he had done an analysis of what a future council – where Strathfield was amalgamated with Burwood, Ashfield, Canada Bay, Marrickville and Leichhardt – might look like.

"Labor is going to do really well," he said, adding that his results showed 22 Labor councillors, 17 Liberal, nine Greens and 11 independents.

Strathfield Labor candidate Jodi McKay (left) signs the SOS pledge against mergers with Nella Gaughan (right)

> "STRATHFIELD HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP BY NOT CO-OPERATING WITH THE PROCESS."
> Cr Raj Datta

At the end of a debate, Cr Datta withdrew his motion calling on the council not to sign MOUs nor work with councils who had agreed to take part in the Fit for the Future program, pending the outcome of the workshop.

The council also decided to take a tighter control over the spending for its anti-amalgamation fund.

It was decided earlier this year that an additional $50,000 would be dedicated to fighting against the plans and increased density in areas like Homebush.

Council committed $50,000 two years ago which was used for promotional material and a media campaign.

But councillors entered into a heated debate over Mayor Gulian Vaccari's idea to cap expenditure to $200 a month for any emergencies that arise.

"Expenditure should be pre-authorised, and I don't think it's appropriate for community groups to spend a figure and then hand in receipts. Costs can easily get out of hand without appropriate checks and balances," he said.

Councillor Helen McLucas said $200 is not enough to be taken seriously, adding that in the past, Save Our Strathfield had not submitted any claims.

"This sum is not enough to produce anything and I find this capping highly restrictive. I suggest that the figure be changed to $10,000. The $200 allowed a month is a disservice to our residents and expenditure should be up to all councillors," she said.

Cr Daniel Bott, like Cr McLucas, said the $200 sum would be an injustice to the community and said Labor candidate for Strathfield Jodi McKay had signed the Save Our Strathfield pledge.

"I don't think we should cap the figure. We have had a good fight against amalgamation and we are clearly one of the leading councils against this State Government move," he said.

Just last month, Ms McKay was pictured with SOS spokesperson Nella Gaughan signing the pledge.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS


MAYOR GULIAN VACCARI
Tel: 0498 201 304
Fax 9764 1034
gulian.vaccari@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


DEPUTY MAYOR
ANDREW SOULOS
Tel 0427 507 837
Fax 9764 1034
andrew.soulos@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


COUNCILLOR DANIEL BOTT
Tel 9748 9924
Fax 9748 9902
daniel.bott@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


COUNCILLOR RAJ DATTA
Tel 0432 457 129
Fax 9764 1034
raj.datta@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


COUNCILLOR STEPHANIE KOKKOLIS
Tel 0427 521 467
Fax 9764 1034
stephanie.kokkolis@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


COUNCILLOR HELEN McLUCAS
Tel 0406 703 044
Fax 9764 1034
helen.mclucas@strathfield.nsw.gov.au


COUNCILLOR SANG OK
Tel 0427 090 695
Fax 9764 1034
sang.ok@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

First Tuesday of the month: Ordinary Council at 7pm, Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Third Tuesday of the month: Planning Committee at 6.30pm in the meeting room, Strathfield Library, 65-67 Rochester Street, Homebush

Meet Your Councillors

Council meetings are held in the Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield, unless otherwise advertised.

PLEASE CALL 9748 9924 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
Business papers for Council and committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, public libraries and at *www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au* – from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

6. Anti-Amalgamation Campaign

In accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice Ms Nella Gaughan addressed the meeting.

342/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Kokkolis)

1. That the report concerning the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign be noted.
2. That Council approve internal Council expenditure of up to $21,700 for the Anti-Amalgamation Campaign.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis, and Ok

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta and McLucas

The Motion when put with voting being equal the Mayor exercised his casting vote in Favour of the Motion and declared it carried.

7. Code of Conduct Complaints

343/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Kokkolis)

That Council note the report concerning Code of Conduct Complaints.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Ok

Against the Motion: Nil

8. Financial Sustainability

344/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/McLucas)

That as part of normal pre budget discussions Council determine whether to investigate a special rate variation and other additional revenue streams by way of a workshop.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Ok

Against the Motion: Councillor Bott

2. Mayoral Minute 54/14 –Funding to Battle Amalgamation and Overdevelopment

I MOVE:

That Council:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to the $100,000 fund which has been set aside for the anti-amalgamation fight and the fight against the over intensification of development on Parramatta Rd.

2. Conduct a (further) workshop before the February 2015 Ordinary meeting dealing with the battle against amalgamation and overdevelopment. This workshop is to:

   a. Review work conducted to date.

   b. Continue work on the strategies on fighting amalgamation and overdevelopment as well as funding allocations for activities within the strategy which are decided upon.

   c. Receive full financials for the budgeted $50,000, including current account balances and all expenditures to date.

3. Cap the maximum monthly expenditure (exempted from prior Council approval) for the fights against amalgamation and overdevelopment be set at $200 for each and that the General Manager, Mayor and Deputy Mayor jointly be delegated authority to approve additional expenditure in urgent circumstances.

304/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

That Council:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to the $100,000 fund which has been set aside for the anti-amalgamation fight and the fight against the over intensification of development on Parramatta Rd.

2. Conduct a (further) workshop before the February 2015 Ordinary meeting dealing with the battle against amalgamation and overdevelopment. This workshop is to:

   a. Review work conducted to date.

   b. Continue work on the strategies on fighting amalgamation and overdevelopment as well as funding allocations for activities within the strategy which are decided upon.

   c. Receive full financials for the budgeted $50,000, including current account balances and all expenditures to date.

3. Cap the maximum monthly expenditure (exempted from prior Council approval) for the fights against amalgamation and overdevelopment be set at $200 for each and that the General Manager, Mayor and Deputy Mayor jointly be delegated authority to approve additional expenditure in urgent circumstances.

267/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Datta)

That the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 28 October 2014, a copy of which has been furnished to each Councillor, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting and that the Chairman and General Manager be authorised to sign such minutes.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

5. APOLOGIES

Nil.

6. DEFERRED/OUTSTANDING MATTERS AWAITING REPORT

1. Strathfield Plaza Car Parking

Noted.

7. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Nil.

8. MAYORAL MINUTE (S) IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL'S CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

1. Mayoral Minute 48/14 –Anti-Amalgamation Fund

I MOVE:

1. That Council reaffirm its commitment to the $50,000 currently budgeted for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund.
2. That Council reaffirm its commitment to an extra $50,000 (currently unbudgeted) for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund as per Council resolution of 7 October 2014.
3. That full financials for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund, since inception and including current account balances and all expenditures to date, be presented by way of officer report to the December Ordinary Council meeting.
4. That all future expenditure from the Anti-Amalgamation Fund be prior approved by a resolution of Council.
5. That the Anti-Amalgamation Fund be used to support:
   a. Appropriate internal Council activities; and
   b. Any local community organisation which can demonstrate that its aims are in parallel to those of Strathfield Council in the Anti-Amalgamation space.

6. With regards Point 5 above that Council internally coordinate and control all its own future media and promotion in the Anti-Amalgamation space.

MOTION: (Vaccari)

1. That Council reaffirm its commitment to the $50,000 currently budgeted for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund.

2. That Council reaffirm its commitment to an extra $50,000 (currently unbudgeted) for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund and limiting urban renewal development of Parramatta Road as per Council resolution of 7 October 2014.

3. That full financials for the Anti-Amalgamation Fund, since inception and including current account balances and all expenditures to date, be presented by way of officer report to the December Ordinary Council meeting.

4. That all future expenditure from the Anti-Amalgamation Fund be prior approved by a resolution of Council.

5. That the Anti-Amalgamation Fund be used to support:
   a. Appropriate activities; and
   b. Any local community organisation which can demonstrate that its aims are in parallel to those of Strathfield Council in the Anti-Amalgamation space.

6. With regards Point 5 above that Council internally coordinate and control all its own future media and promotion in the Anti-Amalgamation space.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis and Ok

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta, McLucas, and Soulos

The Motion when Put was Lost.

2. Mayoral Minute 49/14 – Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre Zoning

I MOVE:

That Council prepare a report on the feasibility of preparing a Planning Proposal that attempts to rezone the southern portion of the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre as 'RE2 Private Recreation' as a part of 2 stage process to rezone the land eventually to 'RE1 Public Recreation'. This should take into consideration the outcomes of the upcoming meeting between NSW Ports, Department of Planning & Infrastructure and Strathfield Council.

268/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

That a report be submitted to the December 2014 Ordinary Council Meeting on the feasibility of preparing a Planning Proposal that attempts to rezone the southern portion of the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre as 'RE2 Private Recreation' as a part of 2 stage process to rezone the land eventually to 'RE1 Public Recreation'. This should take into consideration the outcomes of the

10. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Report of Strathfield Traffic Committee Meeting held on 21 October 2014

270/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Vaccari)

That the minutes of the Traffic Committee meeting held on 21 October 2014 be noted and the recommendations (if any) be adopted.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

11. MOTIONS PURSUANT TO NOTICE

A. Notice of Motion signed by Councillor by Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis and Soulos

1. Amalgamation

WE MOVE:

That council urgently contacts the office of the Minister for Local Government to:

a. Seek clarification with regards recent announcements to do with council amalgamations especially the financial incentives to amalgamation and greater planning controls.
b. To again indicate to the Minister that Strathfield Council continues to strongly reject the TCorp (April 2013) analysis of Council's finances and sustainability, and insists that a more reliable 'Sustainability Index' be developed which incorporates Council's preferred KPI's including debt levels, workplace productivity, infrastructure backlog, resident satisfaction levels.
c. Indicate that Strathfield Council already sees itself as a **Fit for the Future** council and that by the Minister's own definitions Strathfield Council has the ability to stand alone but be that as it may Strathfield Council looks forward to working with the Minister's office to address any outstanding issues.
d. Indicate its concern that profligate council's, having mismanaged their residents' finances for years, will now be rewarded with millions of dollars of State tax payers money, whilst councils which have been sustainably managed will be penalised.
e. Indicate its concerns that the hundreds of millions of tax payer dollars dedicated to this project could much better be spent on essential services such as schools or hospitals.
f. Indicate its concern that some councils which have not assisted the State Government with the obvious need to densify Sydney from a planning perspective may now be rewarded with greater planning controls if they merge with similarly obstructive councils, whilst councils such as Strathfield Council which have been of assistance, will be left with nothing.
g. Insist that in his response to the Sansom report on Local Government he address the 'elephants in the room' when it comes to LG funding- those being- the massive restrictions which Rate Pegging, the Ad Valorum valuation system, and the freezing of Federal Assistance Grants are placing on Local Government in NSW.

271/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Kokkolis)

That council urgently contacts the office of the Minister for Local Government to:

a. Seek clarification with regards recent announcements to do with council amalgamations especially the financial incentives to amalgamation and greater planning controls.
b. To again indicate to the Minister that Strathfield Council continues to strongly reject the TCorp (April 2013) analysis of Council's finances and sustainability, and insists that a more reliable 'Sustainability Index' be developed which incorporates Council's preferred KPI's including debt levels, workplace productivity, infrastructure backlog, resident satisfaction levels.
c. Indicate that Strathfield Council already sees itself as a **Fit for the Future** council and that by the Minister's own definitions Strathfield Council has the ability to stand alone.
d. Indicate its concern that profligate council's, having mismanaged their residents' finances for years, will now be rewarded with millions of dollars of State tax payers money, whilst councils which have been sustainably managed will be penalised.
e. Indicate its concerns that the hundreds of millions of tax payer dollars dedicated to this project could much better be spent on essential services such as schools or hospitals.
f. Indicate its concern that some councils which have not assisted the State Government with the obvious need to densify Sydney from a planning perspective may now be rewarded with greater planning controls if they merge with similarly obstructive councils, whilst councils such as Strathfield Council which have been of assistance, will be left with nothing.
g. Insist that in his response to the Sansom report on Local Government he address the 'elephants in the room' when it comes to LG funding- those being- the massive restrictions which Rate Pegging, the Ad Valorum valuation system, and the freezing of Federal Assistance Grants are placing on Local Government in NSW.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Datta, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott and McLucas

B. Notices of Motion signed by Councillors Vaccari and Soulos

1. 100 Litre Trees

WE MOVE:

That a report be provided to Council addressing the pros and cons of compulsorily making all future Development Application approvals incorporate into the Landscaping criteria requirements that all trees, be of a minimum 100 litre size, in lieu of the current 50 litre size.

272/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/McLucas)

That a report be provided to Council addressing the pros and cons of compulsorily making all future Development Application approvals incorporate into the Landscaping criteria requirements that all trees, be of a minimum 100 litre size, in lieu of the current 50 litre size.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Nil

2. United We Stand Divided

WE MOVE:

That Council conduct a workshop within the next three weeks to discuss an approach to working with Burwood, Ashfield, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils to fight amalgamation.

273/14

RESOLVED: (Vaccari/McLucas)

That Council's Local Government Anti-Amalgamation Reform Taskforce conduct a workshop within the next three weeks to discuss an approach to working with Burwood, Ashfield, Canada Bay, Leichhardt, and Marrickville Councils as per previous Council resolution to fight amalgamation.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Kokkolis, Ok and Soulos

Against the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta and McLucas

C. Notices of Motion signed by Councillor Bott

Councillor Soulos having declared a conflict of interest in this matter vacated the meeting room.

1. 43 Mackenzie Street

I MOVE:

1. That Council obtain legal advice in regard to the recent Land & Environment Court decision concerning 43 Mackenzie Street and determine if there are sufficient grounds for appeal.
2. That if there are sufficient grounds for appeal, then Council move immediately to appeal the Court's decision.

274/14

RESOLVED: (Bott/McLucas)

1. That Council obtain legal advice in regard to the recent Land & Environment Court decision concerning 43 Mackenzie Street and determine if there are sufficient grounds for appeal.
2. If there are sufficient grounds for appeal, then Council move immediately to appeal the Court's decision.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Ok

Against the Motion: Nil

Councillor Soulos returned to the meeting room.

4. Referendum

I MOVE:

That Council write to the State Government and request a referendum on council amalgamations for the March 2015 State Election.

277/14

RESOLVED: (Bott/ McLucas)

That Council write to the State Government and request a referendum on council amalgamations at the March 2015 State Election.

For the Motion: Councillors Vaccari, Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos
Against the Motion: Councillor Ok

5. Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Program

I MOVE:

That Council write to the Minister for Planning & Environment and Minister for Roads & Freight indicating:

1. That if the Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Program is to propose significant increases in dwelling densities in this precinct, then they should first undertake detailed traffic and transport modelling studies to determine whether increased dwelling capacities can be accommodated and to determine what traffic and transport infrastructure is necessary to support any increases.

2. That the State Government implement any necessary improvements in traffic and transport infrastructure before any significant dwelling increases are endorsed.

278/14

RESOLVED: (Bott/McLucas)

That Council write to the Minister for Planning & Environment and Minister for Roads & Freight indicating:

1. That if the Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Program is to propose significant increases in dwelling densities in this precinct, then they should first undertake detailed traffic and transport modelling studies to determine whether increased dwelling capacities can be accommodated and to determine what traffic and transport infrastructure is necessary to support any increases.

2. That the State Government implement any necessary improvements in traffic and transport infrastructure before any significant dwelling increases are endorsed.

3. That the State Government, in cooperation with Strathfield Council, make appropriate planning and budgeting for provision of amenities including schools, hospitals, childcare and parks.

10. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Report of Strathfield Traffic Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2014

247/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Kokkolis)

That the minutes of the Traffic Committee meeting held on 16 September 2014 be noted and the recommendations (if any) be adopted.

For the Motion:	Councillors Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos
Against the Motion:	Nil

11. MOTIONS PURSUANT TO NOTICE

A. Notice of Motion signed by Councillor McLucas

1. Amalgamation Fighting Fund

I MOVE:

That Council confirm $50,000 as a fighting fund against the current volunteer/forced amalgamation by the State Government and Local Government Minister.

248/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Bott)

1. That Council confirm $100,000 as a fighting fund against the current volunteer/forced amalgamation and Urban Renewal Development of Parramatta Road recent increases in density beyond Council's LEP proposed by the State Government.

2. That a report be provided concerning the expenditure incurred in relation to the anti amalgamation campaign.

3. That a Councillor Workshop be held prior to the November Council meeting on anti amalgamation with a view to developing a strategy and budget including an itemised account on how funds will be spent over the next 12 months.

For the Motion:	Councillors Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas and Soulos
Against the Motion:	Nil

"I have had good discussions with stakeholders, mayors and general managers and I know they have been talking about ways to remove obstacles" – *Local Government Minister Peter Toole*

AMALGAMATION

QUESTIONS THE PREMIER WOULDN'T ANSWER

The "Fit for the Future" package announced by Premier Mike Baird and Local Government Minister Paul Toole last month has reignited speculation that Strathfield is in the Government's cross-hairs for amalgamation.

But both Mr Baird and Mr Toole were unwilling to tackle the critical questions on specific issues when they called a press conference to announce the new package.

Premier Baird and Mr Toole insisted no one was being singled out, despite the Independent Review Panel report which specifically mentioned Strathfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Ashfield, Marrickville and Leichhardt.

Strathfield is seeking State support for a new Town Centre project worth more than $800 million. The *Scene* asked the Premier and Mr Toole how the council's requests would be dealt with if it refused to merge, as the Review Panel's report proposed.

Mr Toole declined to answer, claiming instead several councils had come 'charging up' to Parliament demanding to be amalgamated.

All NSW councils have to come up with a Fit for the Future plan, which should also include consideration of amalgamation. They have to submit the plan by June 2015, meaning the issue will be hotly contested at next March's election.

Councils will be given financial incentives to merge – but the plight of those councils that refuse remains unclear, and the Premier and his minister could give no promises that the State Government would not force councils to amalgamate.

The announcement comes as the State Government claims the State's 152 councils are losing up to $1 million a day and that massive reforms are needed to deal with Sydney's growing population.

Strathfield maintains that more than 70 per cent of its residents said they do not want to be amalgamated with surrounding councils in a poll conducted last year, and more than 80 per cent are aware of the issue.

The Fit for the Future package is the first official reaction to the Review Panel.

Councils' plans submitted by June next year will be judged by an independent panel. Those that are approved will receive cheap loans and finance for infrastructure projects such as roads.

"All councils are asked to put in a submission by 30 June and this is part of the Fit for the Future package. I have had good discussions with stakeholders, mayors and general managers and I know they have been talking about ways to remove obstacles. Councils have come forward to me that want to amalgamate," said Mr Toole.

But his remarks are starkly at odds with a *Sydney Morning Herald* report, which claims just four out of 41 Sydney councils agree with the plan, suggesting the scheme may be doomed.

The State Government will be offering an incentive to Sydney councils of $153 million and $105 million to regional councils to merge and spend on infrastructure projects like roads, parks and pathways.

Broken down, metropolitan councils can receive up to $22.5 million, but a quick calculation by one journalist estimated that left room for just seven metropolitan councils.

Toole and Baird: high hopes for the "Fit for the Future" plan

October 2014

AMALGAMATION

100,000 FUND O SAVE OUR OUNCIL

athfield, one of the most ıtspoken councils against nalgamation, has voted to its fighting fund in the face of e Government's "Fit for the initiative.

ıg a passionate debate, lors dealing with a request ıcrease of $50,000 for anti-nation initiatives decided it nough and agreed to double

voted to include soon-to-ıanced changes to building s in their campaign.

cil also voted to explore a coalition of "like-minded" to help in the merger fight.

ew moves, along with ıs not to submit plans under or the Future program, puts ı a collision course with the overnment.

tate Government's Fit for ıre program demands that ıncil submit plans to merge ghbouring authorities by 15.

ıe Government's first official to the Independent Review ndings that ld should ed with d, Ashfield, rdt, Canada

ville to nega of more),000 s. elected ulian a Liberal, that the merger would be his one priority.

ıe future of our community, nited. Amalgamation is the one issue that will unite us next 12 months," he said election.

At their October council meeting, councillors lashed the State Government for the way in which Fit for the Future had been announced without warning or consultation.

Cr Raj Datta accused the State of "hypocrisy and duplicity", adding he did not believe $50,000 was enough to take them on.

Cr Helen McLucas, who moved the motion, said more money was needed for an education campaign so residents understood the issues and what they might be losing.

Cr Stephanie Kokkolis said it was time to put party differences aside and fight for the sake of residents.

At an earlier Extraordinary meeting Cr Daniel Bott asked for a formal commitment from Minister for Local Government Paul Toole and Premier Mike Baird that any amalgamation of councils would be "truly voluntary".

The motion asked for assurances that Strathfield would not face "punitive measures" for "prioritising the interests of residents".

Cr Helen McLucas proposed an amendment for Strathfield to approach other councils to form a coalition against amalgamation

She maintained some councillors were being offered $5,000 a month to serve on a steering committee – "that's the worst kind of bribe, and I think it's disgusting".

She said the $1 billion offered to all councils who provide the State Government with voluntary plans to merge by next June amounted to an offer to "sell out your residents and you will be given $10 million".

She added: "If we die as a council, head office will be in Burwood and we'll be lucky if we get two councillors. Who will speak up for our residents?"

"Throughout the Local Government Reform process, the NSW Government has consistently stated that there will be 'no forced amalgamations'," said Cr Bott.

"Yet in promoting the new 'Fit for the Future' reform package, Minister Toole and Premier Baird appear biased towards the recommendations of the Local Government Review Panel's report.

"The former Premier Barry O'Farrell said that he saw no argument in the Independent Local Government Review Panel as to why Strathfield should be amalgamated. I hope our council doesn't die over a bottle of grange."

Councillors voted unanimously to write to the State Government.

Cr McLucas said a united coalition would put councils in a stronger position to fight the proposed merger.

"We should find like-minded councils and clearly communicate to them that amalgamation is not in the interest of residents. The efforts of the coalition should say to the Government 'no deal'," said Cr McLucas.

"This so-called strategic government plan says that they have been working with us, but they sent out a media release without even consulting us. It was an extremely arrogant move."

Cr Raj Datta said the offer to submit a plan by next June was "a trap to fool councils into making a submission" so it could be claimed they had volunteered for amalgamation.

"We need this campaign to expose the hypocrisy of this government – the same Government made an election promise to not amalgamate councils," he said.

"Strathfield is one of the best performing councils."

Cr Stephanie Kokkolis, Cr Helen McLucas and supporter Marlene Doran with the banner before this week's council meeting

SAVE OUR STRATHFIELD COMES OUT FIGHTING

Save Our Strathfield is gearing up for a renewed fight against amalgamation, kicking off with a new banner, which will be hung outside the Strathfield Council Chamber.

The group issued a statement saying:

"The Save Our Strathfield group is calling on NSW Premier Mike Baird to rule out deploying a series of threats and bribes to force Strathfield into amalgamating.

"Former Premier Barry O'Farrell promised Strathfield there would be no mergers in November last year.

"We know amalgamation is not in our interests. To be coercing our Council into doing something against resident interests is disgraceful.

"Why should our taxpayer dollars be used by the State Government to undermine the control we have over our community? Strathfield has managed itself for over a century into one of the most desirable postcodes in NSW.

"Save Our Strathfield has campaigned for nearly two years on this issue. We have spoken to thousands of residents and commissioned an independent phone poll. Our community wants Strathfield to stay self-governed."

For more information visit *www.saveourstrathfield.com.au*

HAT OTHER COUNCILS SAY

of Burwood **John Faker** *Scene*: "Burwood doesn't mergers. We will lose the r of local government – est form of government eople. Why is the NSW nent setting timelines after election?"

ld Council's Mayor **Lucille** na said she is worried about the scarce amount of detail provided in the State Government's initial report.

"Our Council has previously taken a position against amalgamation and at this stage the detail of the proposals, including the financial inducements, are yet to be worked through by Ashfield Council. The final outcome will be a decision for Council," she said.

"My personal thoughts are that a merger of six councils proposed in the final report of the Independent Review Panel is absolutely ridiculous. This would create chaos far into the future. And make a gaggle of consultants wealthy."

Jo Haylen, the former mayor of Marrickville, said: "While we are supportive of local government reform, it would be refreshing if the State Government was a bit more upfront and honest about what is proposed. Mega-amalgamations, as proposed by the Fit for the Future program, could create years of uncertainty and inaction.

"There's evidence that restructures prevent organisations from doing their job for up to 18 months while they focus on internal matters.

"Marrickville Council is already progressive and innovative and financially stable. I worry that amalgamations will be disruptive and do little to enhance service delivery and quality of life. Bigger bureaucracies do not necessarily mean better or faster."

28 September 2014

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Council News

Gapyeong County Mayor Mr. Sungki Kim with Mayor of Strathfield Daniel Bott

Council hosts Sister City visitors

Strathfield Council hosted a delegation of visitors from its Sister City in Gapyeong County in Korea earlier this month.

The delegation, including Mayor Mr. Sungki Kim came along to Council's Spring Festival event and enjoyed performances from Elly Oh and meeting families enjoying a Father's Day out. They were also given a tour of the area, including educational visits to Bressington Park, site of the proposed Australian and Korean Memorial Garden, Strathfield Library, Homebush Boys High School and the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre.

New playground at Henley Reserve

Strathfield Council will commence installation of a new playground at Henley Reserve in 2015 with the assistance of a $25,000 grant from the NSW Office of Communities – Sport and Recreation. Council will contribute $72,257 to complete the new facilities, which will offer an exciting play environment to encourage social interaction and healthy lifestyles in the local community.

Henley Reserve is located in an area of increasing growth in Homebush West, and has been identified as a location where new playground facilities would meet the needs of residents in the area who have limited recreational space. The new playground will include equipment to encourage use of upper body strength, and improve balance, flexibility and cardiovascular health.

Strathfield Food Festival returns as part of Good Food Month

Come down to Strathfield Square on October 26 to sample the best Asian flavours Strathfield has to offer. The annual Strathfield Food Festival returns with a selection of food stalls showcasing their signature dishes, live cooking demonstrations from celebrity and local chefs sharing their food secrets and walking food tours to discover Strathfield's hidden culinary secrets.

With free entry and some fantastic food on offer, you won't leave hungry. Join us from 11am to 5pm. For more information, visit www.strathfieldfoodfestival.com.au.

Garage Sale Trail

If you're looking for some bargains, want to spring clean or get to know your neighbours, Garage Sale Trail is for you. Mark Garage Sale Trail in your calendar for Saturday, 25 October. Australia's fastest-growing sustainability and reuse event is a great chance to clean out, make some money and meet the locals.

Join all the fun by either hosting your own garage sale or visiting some in your neighbourhood. Strathfield Council is offering all residents who register and hold a garage sale as part of the event an additional clean up collection free of charge to dispose of leftover items unwanted after the sale.

To register a sale or to see what's on offer at other local sales, visit www.garagesaletrail.com.au.

Go4Fun Program

The Go4Fun healthy kids program is returning to Strathfield in term 4. The 10 week healthy lifestyle program is aimed at children aged 7 to 13 and their parents. Go4Fun aims to improve eating habits, fitness, teamwork and overall health in children who are above a healthy weight.

The program will commence on Saturday 11 October, from 1pm – 3pm at the Dutton Centre, and run each week until Saturday 13 December. The interactive sessions are led by qualified health professionals, and include games and activities to help children learn new skills and make friends in a fun environment.

For more information and to register, visit www.go4fun.com.au.

WHAT'S ON

Movies in the Park - Despicable Me 2
Saturday 11 October, 7.30pm
Strathfield Park, Homebush and Strathfield
www.strathfieldmovies.com.au

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Strathfield residents may be aware that the NSW Government recently announced $1 billion of cash incentives for Councils who choose to voluntarily amalgamate with their neighbours

I am extremely disappointed that the Premier of NSW is issuing bribes to persuade us to disregard the interests of our community

Council has considered this from every angle and it is demonstrably not in the interests of Strathfield residents for us to amalgamate with Burwood, Ashfield or anywhere else

Compared to its neighbours, Strathfield has a superior budget position, lower rates and charges, better infrastructure, and more desirable community assets, which would be put at risk by amalgamation

Strathfield residents have consistently voiced their opposition to amalgamation, and have the right to be concerned about the reported incentives on offer

I would like to assure residents that Strathfield Council remains strongly opposed to amalgamation and will not respond to bribes and threats. We have not heard a single compelling argument that amalgamation is in the interests of Strathfield

I encourage residents who feel strongly about this issue to make their voice heard and let the NSW Government know they do not support amalgamation. Register your details with Strathfield's pledge to fight amalgamation at **saveourstrathfield.org**

Cr Daniel Bott
Mayor of Strathfield

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

SATURDAYS FROM 10AM - 11AM

- 27 September - Council Chambers Cr Kokkolis
- 11 October - Council Chambers. Cr McLucas

COUNCIL MEETINGS

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

- Tuesday 7 October 2014, 7pm.
  Council Chambers, 65 Homebush Road, Strathfield

Business papers for Council and Committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and **www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au** from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

Drop plans to blackmail and bribe Strathfield into selling out residents

MEDIA RELEASE: Wednesday, 10 September 2014

Plans to use a combination of punitive measures and cash incentives to coerce Strathfield into amalgamating with surrounding LGAs is a completely inappropriate use of taxpayer money, according to the Mayor of Strathfield.

Media reports today suggest Premier Mike Baird is looking to spend $1 billion on cash 'incentives' to councils to amalgamate with neighbours. The Premier has also reportedly flagged withholding planning controls from LGAs that reject amalgamation. The Mayor of Strathfield, Cr Daniel Bott, said the plan was deplorable.

"This is the state government offering councils thirty pieces of silver to sell out the interests of their communities," Cr Bott said.

"Council has considered this from every angle and it is demonstrably not in the interests of Strathfield residents for us to amalgamate with Burwood, Auburn, Ashfield - or anywhere else. Compared to its neighbours, Strathfield has a superior budget position, lower rates and charges, better infrastructure, and more desirable community assets. Amalgamation would put all of that at risk.

"Yet here we have the Premier of NSW issuing bribes and threats to persuade us to disregard the interests of our community. Strathfield residents, and NSW taxpayers in general, have every right to feel aggrieved their hard-earned money is being spent on such loaded 'incentives.'"

Councils agreeing to amalgamation are being offered greater planning controls under the reported plan, a concept Cr Bott described as even more disturbing than the cash incentives.

"So communities that decide they want to keep their local government local will be punished by having control over their LGA stripped from them. That is disgraceful, and represents a fundamentally undemocratic concept," Cr Bott said.

A 2013 independently conducted phone poll of Strathfield residents found 70 per cent to be against amalgamation. Cr Bott said residents had every right to be concerned.

"If an offer is a good one, bribes and threats are not typically required," Cr Bott noted.

"Strathfield residents should be suspicious about a government that feels the need to use such extreme measures to convince them to do something it claims is in their interests. We have carefully considered the findings and the recommendations of the Sansom Local Government Review Panel report. We have stood by our residents as they asked questions at the community forums. And we have not heard a single compelling argument that amalgamation is in the interests of Strathfield.

"Amalgamation is not a one-size-fits-all solution. We will not sell out our residents and their community in the face of bribes and threats. And we deeply resent being put in the position where we have to make that call."

For further information please contact:

Group Coordinator Communications
Carly McLoughlin
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.mcloughlin@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

That a report be prepared on the feasibility of the formation of a Strathfield Business Association that represents large businesses operating in the Strathfield Municipality and that current associations and chambers be consulted.

Councillor Ok withdrew as mover of the Motion.

MOTION: (Bott/McLucas)

That a report be prepared on the feasibility of the formation of a Strathfield Business Association that represents large businesses operating in the Strathfield Municipality and that current associations and chambers be consulted.

For the Motion: Councillors Bott, McLucas and Ok

Against the Motion: Councillors Datta, Kokkolis, Soulos and Vaccari

The Motion when Put was Lost.

B. Notices of Motion signed by Councillor McLucas

1. Proposed Amalgamation

I MOVE:

1. That Council writes, in the strongest terms, to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole and state his announcement of proposed amalgamation of Strathfield Council by media release (Inner West Courier Article: Government to make push for bigger Councils 26th August 2014) is totally unacceptable to Strathfield Council and its residents.

2. That Council provides a report to residents on the current media campaign by the Liberal State Government to ignore their voice and propose an amalgamation agenda.

3. That Council make it clear to the Minister for Local Government, Liberal State Government and our residents that Strathfield Council will embark on an open and transparent program to engage all stakeholders to ensure the views of Strathfield residents and business are heard and that their views are respected and taken into account during any proposed Council amalgamation debate or other debate on Council reforms by the current State Government.

203/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Bott)

1. That Council writes, in the strongest terms, to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole and state his announcement of proposed amalgamation of Strathfield Council by media release (Inner West Courier Article: Government to make push for bigger Councils 26th August 2014) is totally unacceptable to Strathfield Council and its residents.

2. That Council provides a report to residents on the current media campaign by the Liberal State Government to ignore their voice and propose an amalgamation agenda.

3. That Council make it clear to the Minister for Local Government, Liberal State Government and our residents that Strathfield Council will embark on an open and transparent program to engage all stakeholders to ensure the views of Strathfield residents and business are heard

and that their views are respected and taken into account during any proposed Council amalgamation debate or other debate on Council reforms by the current State Government.

For the Motion: Councillors Bott, Datta, Kokkolis, McLucas, Ok, Soulos and Vaccari

Against the Motion: Nil

2. Enfield Intermodal

I MOVE:

1. That Council provides a report on Strathfield Council and NSW State Government initiatives on local area compliance monitoring and benchmarks, pre- and ongoing-operation, for all areas in the Strathfield LGA that have the potential to be affected by the Enfield Intermodal which is due to commence operation mid to late October 2014.

   That the compliance benchmarking and ongoing monitoring include, but not be limited to:
   a. Road safety including traffic volumes in affected streets and local streets likely to be used as rat runs;
   b. Community health and wellbeing including noise, dust and air pollution;
   c. Productivity and Economic Growth Impacts;
   d. Environmental Impacts.

2. That Council's costs for any Enfield Intermodal compliance benchmarking and ongoing monitoring, now and in the future, are billed to the NSW government authority that authorised the construction of Port Enfield in a residential area.

3. That regular and transparent reporting of compliance monitoring and benchmarks, including all non-compliances is available to residents on request.

4. That emergency and other action plans, in case of non-compliance being detected, be documented and reported to Council and available to residents.

5. That Traffic Management Plans and Emergency Traffic Management Plans be provided to Council by the Port Enfield Management authority and be made available to residents prior to the site becoming operational.

204/14

RESOLVED: (McLucas/Soulos)

1. That Council provides a report on Strathfield Council and NSW State Government initiatives on local area compliance monitoring and benchmarks, pre- and ongoing-operation, for all areas in the Strathfield LGA that have the potential to be affected by the Enfield Intermodal which is due to commence operation mid to late October 2014.

   That the compliance benchmarking and ongoing monitoring include, but not be limited to:
   a. Road safety including traffic volumes in affected streets and local streets likely to be used as rat runs;
   b. Community health and wellbeing including noise, dust and air pollution;
   c. Productivity and Economic Growth Impacts;
   d. Environmental Impacts.

HY RESIDENTS VE THEIR UNCIL

ustomer satisfaction survey showing residents are happy the response they received council staff should be sent tal Government Minister Toole

Raj Datta made the estion, saying it would be d response to the minister's on to issue a Performance on the council over minor dural matters

stomer service staff received ustomer satisfaction after rvey was conducted during nd June

02 people surveyed, 96 per ated their experience as ctory or better

e than 80 per cent rated it ost satisfied"

omers evaluated staff on their courteousness and iness, level of knowledge, ness to help and time o handle enquiries

ty-five percent of people most satisfied' with urteously council staff ded with their queries.

most common enquiries regards to Development tions – 37 per cent of ers required assistance ese

elen McLucas commended staff on the impressive results

of all, I would like to ulate council staff on their g work, Cr McLucas said. an extraordinary result ryone should be highly nded for this result."

urvey shows that face contact is still nt for residents. More per cent visited the r service desks while ier cent phoned

'Arrogant' state out to amalgamate

By Bernadette Chua

Claims that the NSW Government might be planning to amalgamate Strathfield Council with other Inner West local authorities led to an angry exchange between Mayor Daniel Bott and Cr Gulian Vaccari at this month's council meeting.

Cr Helen McLucas called on colleagues to write to Local Government Minister Paul Toole after she maintained he made comments in a number of local papers about amalgamation.

She said the minister's remarks were "totally unacceptable to Strathfield Council and residents".

Cr McLucas added:

"Everyone needs a voice and by amalgamating, our residents will lose their democratic voice.

"The arrogance of this State Government astounds me. They are out of touch and they don't understand what the people want," Cr McLucas said.

"Our mayor and general manager have both written to him, asking for a meeting, which he has refused. He doesn't care about what the residents want and there is no room for movement. It is like God handing Moses a tablet – it is done this way and that's it.

"I urge you councillors to support this motion."

The motion was passed unanimously.

The Liberal Cr Vaccari said he was supporting the motion to demonstrate the council was standing united.

Cr Vaccari quoted figures concerning Council's financial stability, saying Strathfield was among the top 10 councils that did not require financial assistance from the State and Federal governments.

"We need to constantly remind the State Government that this is not fair," he said. "We are a financially viable council and we need to remind the State Government that we are viable. Some councils require 40 per cent of their grants from the State and Federal governments.

"But out of the 152 councils, we come eighth in the councils that do not require funding. We have only received $1 million in grants while there are some councils that need $10 million and more. I do not think Mr Toole will be knocking at our door."

Cr Raj Datta, who has been a leading advocate of the anti-amalgamation campaign, proposing among the first motions condemning State Government moves, said many residents he had spoken to were worried by the constant threat of amalgamation.

"It worried a lot of people and Strathfield has taken a definite stand against amalgamation," he added. He maintained that Premier Mike Baird had not pledged, as the previous premier had, that there would be no forced amalgamations.

There were heated exchanges at this month's council meeting when Cr Bott called the Local Government Minister a "repulsive, barbaric, knuckle-dragging low-life".

Cr Vaccari stood up in the middle of Cr Bott's speech, telling the Mayor to calm down and watch his language.

Local Government Minister Paul Toole has declared to merge Strathfield's services and council management

"EVERYONE NEEDS A VOICE AND BY AMALGAMATING, OUR RESIDENTS WILL LOSE THEIR DEMOCRATIC VOICE."
Cr Helen McLucas

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

R DANIEL BOTT
Strathfield
48 9924
48 9902
field.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR SANG OK
Deputy Mayor of Strathfield
Tel 0427 090 896
Fax 9764 1034
sang.ok@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR RAJ DATTA
Tel 0432 457 129
Fax 9764 1034
raj.datta@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR STEPHANIE KOKKOLIS
Tel 0427 521 467
Fax 9764 1034
stephanie.kokkolis@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR HELEN McLUCAS
Tel 0405 703 044
Fax 9764 1034
helen.mclucas@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR ANDREW SOULOS
Tel 0427 507 837
Fax 9764 1034
andrew.soulos@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCILLOR GULIAN VACCARI
Tel 0408 201 304
Fax 9764 1034
gulian.vaccari@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

PLEASE CALL 9748 9924 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Business papers for Council and committee meetings are available from Council's Customer Service Centre, public libraries and at *www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au* – from the Saturday prior to each meeting.

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

Media Release

Strathfield Council rejects report's merger recommendations

For immediate release
9 January 2014

Strathfield Council has rejected the recommendations of a State Government-commissioned report, which suggests Strathfield Council should merge with Burwood, Ashfield, Canada Bay, Marrickville, and Leichhardt.

The amalgamation proposal is contained in the Local Government Review Panel's final report, released today.

Strathfield Mayor Daniel Bott said such a move would clearly not be in the interests of Strathfield residents.

"The critical mistake this report makes is believing amalgamation is a one-size-fits-all solution. It is not," Cr Bott said.

"At no stage during this long and drawn-out report process has anyone bothered to explain to the residents of Strathfield how amalgamating with five other surrounding councils could possibly be in their interests.

"Polling indicates that some 70 per cent of Strathfield residents are opposed to any form of merger. Strathfield has its own carefully cultivated identity and the majority of its residents rightly wish to manage their own area. Taking control away and handing it to a remote super council authority would be a disaster locally."

Cr Bott said while the recommendations of the report were disappointing, the stance of the State Government appeared to have shifted.

"While the recommendations contained in this report are impractical and poorly reasoned, my fellow councillors and I have been heartened by the apparent change in tone from the State Government," Cr Bott said.

"We now have Ministers on the record categorically ruling out any forced amalgamations. And in a recent interview with the Strathfield Scene, the Premier was at pains to put distance between himself and the report's findings. While it is disappointing to chalk this whole process up as a costly waste of time, it is at least better than committing to its flawed recommendations.

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

"Although it is far too early to call the proposed amalgamation of Strathfield as dead and buried, residents can take considerable comfort from the fact that their Council's position remains steadfast: we want Strathfield to remain independent."

The report is available on the Division of Local Government's website at www.dlg.nsw.gov.au.

ENDS

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

their campus expansion on an alternative site such as within the Sydney Olympic Park precinct.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

2. Mayoral Minute 34/13 – Premier States that Benefits of Amalgamating "Communities Like Strathfield" Unclear

297/13
RESOLVED: (Bott)

That Council commends State Premier Barry O'Farrell on his comments regarding amalgamation and the reports released by the Independent Local Government Review Panel.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

3. Mayoral Minute 35/13 – WestConnex – Section 94 Levies and Land Acquisitions

298/13
RESOLVED: (Bott)

That Council prepares a report regarding the WestConnex project relating to the use of Section 94 levies as part of the project and the acquisition of properties in Homebush West.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

4. Mayoral Minute 36/13 – Transport of Radioactive Waste

299/13
RESOLVED: (Bott)

1. That Council prepares a report dealing with the proposed contingency plan to transport radioactive waste from the Hunters Hill Remediation Project site to Lidcombe, specifically dealing with whether there are public health and safety concerns.
2. That Council object to the transport of radioactive waste through the Strathfield LGA.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

9. COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR

Nil.

10. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Nil.

104/13
RESOLVED: (McLucas/Kokkolis)

That the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29 May 2013, a copy of which has been furnished to each Councillor, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting and that the Chairman and General Manager be authorised to sign such minutes.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

5. APOLOGIES

An apology was tendered on behalf of Councillor Ok for non attendance.

105/13
RESOLVED: (McLucas/Kokkolis)

That the apology tendered on behalf of Councillor Ok for non attendance be accepted and leave of absence granted.

Voting on this matter was unanimous.

6. DEFERRED/OUTSTANDING MATTERS AWAITING REPORT

Nil.

7. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Nil.

8. MAYORAL MINUTE (S) IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL'S CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

1. Mayoral Minute 12/13 – Local Councils Against Amalgamation

106/13
RESOLVED: (Vaccari)

1. That Strathfield Council's position against amalgamations of any form is included in a joint submission to the Local Government Independent Review Panel, together with Ashfield Council, Burwood Council and Canada Bay Council.

2. That Council make its own submission to the Local Government Independent Review Panel.

3. That Council inform the community through mayoral columns, newsletter and website, of the discussion paper released by the Independent Review Panel and encourage residents and stakeholders to submit comments and feedback to the Panel.

GM2. The 2013 Redistribution of State Electoral District Proposals and Maps

112/13
RESOLVED: (Bott/Kokkolis)

That Council note the report on the 2013 Redistribution of State Electoral District Proposals and Maps.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

GM3. TCORP Report on Council Financial Sustainability

113/13
RESOLVED: (Vaccari/Soulos)

That the report concerning Council Financial Sustainability be noted.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

GM4. Local Government Reform – Regional Proposals

114/13
RESOLVED: (Bott/McLucas)

That Council note the report concerning Local Government Reform Regional Proposals.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

GM5. Community Polling - Amalgamation

115/13
RESOLVED: (McLucas/Datta)

That Council note the results of a poll conducted of the Strathfield community regarding amalgamation.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

CS1. Investment Report as at 30 April 2013

116/13
RESOLVED: (Bott/Vaccari)

That the record of cash investments as at 30 April 2013 be noted.

Voting on this item was unanimous.

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

Media Release

Fighting to save Strathfield from amalgamation is the only responsible course

For immediate release
11 February 2013

Strathfield Council is resolutely sticking by its commitment to assist the community campaign against amalgamation, despite the Mayor of the Gold Coast telling Strathfield residents to simply accept merger.

Last week, Strathfield Mayor Gulian Vaccari secured unanimous council backing to actively support the Save Our Strathfield community group. Today, Gold Coast mayor Tom Tate has been quoted in *The Daily Telegraph* criticising the Council for the move and advocating acceptance of merger, a position Mr Vaccari says he cannot support.

"It would be completely irresponsible for our Council to simply sit on its hands while Strathfield residents are threatened with higher rates, lower house prices and budget uncertainty," Mr Vaccari said.

"Our Council understands fiscal responsibility, which is why Strathfield's budget is in surplus. The decision to deploy money to assist with the anti-amalgamation campaign was not taken lightly, but the fact is that Strathfield's council rates are likely to rise dramatically if amalgamation is allowed to happen. If Strathfield fights amalgamation hard and wins, we will save residents an enormous amount of money in the long run.

"Our rates are currently among the lowest in Sydney. The Gold Coast mayor should know that the introduction of forced amalgamations in Queensland caused rates to skyrocket across the state and ended up causing a landslide election defeat of the Bligh Government. Many areas in Queensland are now considering the expensive process of de-amalgamation.

"It's all very well for the Gold Coast mayor to lecture Strathfield about the broad theoretical benefits of amalgamation, but, frankly, I don't care about the broader amalgamation debate - I care about the community I was elected to represent. It is my job to represent the best interests of Strathfield, and the fact is that this community has far more to lose than we do to win if amalgamation is forced upon us.

The Council's amalgamation taskforce co-chair, Councillor Helen McLucas, said the case for Strathfield to remain independent was clear.

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Officer
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Joe Sumegi
9748 9609 or 0411 897 339
joe.sumegi@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

"Our budget is in surplus, our rates are low, our amenities and services are envied and our home values are high," Cr McLucas said. "We look after our own community well. Strathfield residents are absolutely right to demand that the rates they pay should stay in Strathfield.

"I urge members of the community to join the Save Our Strathfield campaign (www.saveourstrathfield.com.au) and add their weight to this fight. Strathfield has fought and won against amalgamation proposals from Macquarie Street before, and we can certainly do it again if we make our voices heard clearly."

ENDS

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Officer
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Joe Sumegi
9748 9609 or 0411 897 339
joe.sumegi@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

Media Release

Mayor of Strathfield moves to resist State Government's amalgamation push

6 February 2013

Strathfield Council last night voted in favour of Mayor Gulian Vaccari's motion to actively resist the NSW Government's plans to amalgamate Strathfield Local Government Area.

Councillor Vaccari's Mayoral Minute called to deploy $50,000 to the resistance campaign, and to support local community groups that are fighting against the proposed change.

"I, along with every other elected councillor in 2012, campaigned to fight amalgamation. I know for a fact that the majority of people in Strathfield want it to stay intact," Cr Vaccari said.

"Strathfield residents have nothing to gain, but much to lose from being amalgamated. We currently have a healthy surplus and our council rates are among the very lowest in Sydney. The experience of Queensland and Victoria demonstrates that amalgamations typically lead to sharp rate increases, and that's a fate I am determined to avoid.

"People who live in this area know that it is well-managed and they are understandably proud of it. They want their council rates to stay in Strathfield and pay for local services and amenities.

"I am aware that plans to amalgamate our council are still in their infancy, which is why I'm hopeful that the NSW Government will come to realise that amalgamation is not a one-size-fits-all solution. However, we need to make our case loudly and clearly, which is why I have moved to dedicate some of Strathfield Council's energy and resources to this cause."

The Council's amalgamation taskforce co-chair, Councillor Helen McLucas, said the Strathfield community had a long and proud history of resisting amalgamation.

"Since the end of World War II, people in this area have resisted the plans of various State Governments to amalgamate our council area, because it has never been in our interests," Cr McLucas said.

"Once again we are seeing grassroots resistance in the form of 'Save Our Strathfield' and I think that's a great thing. I believe the Mayor has made the right call in moving to offer council support to community efforts to fight amalgamation.

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Officer
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Joe Sumegi
9748 9609 or 0411 897 339
joe.sumegi@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135
Telephone 02 9748 9999 | Facsimile 02 9764 1034

"I commend the Mayor for standing up for Strathfield, even though the push to amalgamate has this time come from a Liberal Government in Macquarie Street."

ENDS

For further information please contact:

Communication and Cultural Services Officer
Carly Hackett
9748 9993 or 0421 080 036
carly.hackett@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Communication and Cultural Services Coordinator
Joe Sumegi
9748 9609 or 0411 897 339
joe.sumegi@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

READ THE LATEST NEWS AT OURSTRATHFIELD.COM.AU

OUR HIGH ACHIEVERS

Strathfield schools blitz the HSC results

PAGE 15

PROPERTY MARKET

On the move

PAGE 23

PAGE 19

NEW YEAR SNAKE BITES

Tasty snacks for New Year

FREE

OurStrathfield

ONLINE AT www.ourstrathfield.com.au • FEBRUARY 2013

$50,000 FIGHTING FUND

MERGER BATTLE BEGINS

- COUNCILLORS CLAIM RATES WILL SOAR
- RESIDENTS SIGN PEOPLE'S PETITION
- MAYOR TO MEET MINISTER

The battle for Strathfield's survival has begun, with a $50,000 fighting fund, a people's petition and the backing of every councillor in the municipality.

Just two months before a State Government report believed to advocate the merging of Strathfield with Burwood and Ashfield, a council taskforce has swung behind the residents' group Save our Strathfield.

General manager David Backhouse has been tasked to hire expert advocates to put out the message: Hands off Strathfield.

Taskforce chairperson Helen McLucas warned amalgamation might mean rates would soar.

"In one Queensland council they went up by 400 per cent," she said.

"Our people will lose their jobs and these are our local residents.

"Mothers and fathers who want to stay close to their children, schooling in the area will no longer have this option. Local jobs will go and our businesses will fail."

Mayor Gulian Vaccari, the taskforce deputy chair, said he would be seeking a meeting with Local Government Minister Don Page as quickly as possible to ensure the minister understood Strathfield was well managed, well financed and should stand alone.

Cr Raj Datta said if Strathfield was to amalgamate with the surrounding councils, there would be a significant loss of services.

FULL REPORT PG 4-5

Nine-year-old Tony Gaughn joins the fight.

INSIDE

LAST STAND

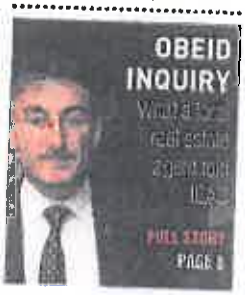
Residents protesting the ACU's expansion will address a special meeting later this month to try to halt the $55m plan

FULL STORY PAGE 8

FAT BUSTERS

Youngsters battling the bulge can sign up for a new course with their families

FULL STORY PAGE 3



FULL STORY PAGE 8

$50,000 TO FIGHT AMALGAMATION

By Bernadette Chua

Strathfield has declared war on amalgamation – voting for a $50,000 fighting fund for Save our Strathfield, the community group leading the campaign, and issuing a series of press releases warning the State Government to keep its hands off.

Councillors have also agreed to swing the assets of the council behind the residents' group, including communications.

The council chamber in Homebush Road will be festooned with anti-amalgamation banners. Libraries and other buildings will also display posters.

The tree outside the chamber is already decorated with red ribbons – a throwback to the successful 2000 anti-amalgamation campaign.

General Manager David Backhouse has been charged with finding credible experts to develop an evidence-based Strathfield anti-amalgamation strategy.

Mayor Gulian Vaccari and Backhouse are seeking an urgent meeting with Local Government Minister Don Page.

The moves – and funds – were outlined in a mayoral minute passed by all sides of council.

Save our Strathfield (SoS) has already launched a petition, aiming for 10,000 signatures.

If it reaches the target, it can present its case in front of the state Legislative Council as a People's Petition should an amalgamation be enforced.

SoS has launched a website – www.saveourstrathfield.org.au – where residents can sign the petition.

The moves come ahead of a State Government-backed report, due to be presented in mid-April, that is expected to advocate for amalgamations among NSW's 152 councils.

Strathfield, Ashfield and Burwood councils were singled out as possible targets in a newspaper report late last year.

SoS, led by Nella Ganghn, Karen Pensabene and Paul Austin, opened a stall outside the council offices this month to collect signatures. About 50 people signed the petition and pledged support by hanging red and white ribbons on the tree outside the council chambers.

"In Queensland, resident surveys showed around 67 per cent of people want to de-amalgamate due to loss of services and the lack of voice they have in their council.

"In Noosa, 97 per cent of the residents want to revert back," said Pensabene

"Some areas suffered a 400 per cent rate increase and we don't want this to happen to Strathfield."

When Mayor Vaccari announced the grant and council's support for SoS, an elated gallery cheered.

But councillors conceded they have a long fight ahead of them.

Strathfield's request to become a city has been put on hold, indicating that changes could be on the way.

Cr Helen McLucas, who is the council's representative on amalgamation, said petition signatures are needed before the Independent Local Government Review Panel release a final report in April.

"We are facing imminent amalgamation like what has happened in Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland," said Cr McLucas.

"Our people will lose their jobs and these are our local residents.

"Mothers and fathers who want to stay close to their children, schooling in the area will no longer have this option.

"Local jobs will go and our businesses will fail."

Cr Raj Datta said if Strathfield was to amalgamate with the surrounding area, there would be a significant loss of services.

"If this council does amalgamate, they will not just lose their service and amenities, but their voice."

WHERE THEY STAND
THE MAYORS OF THE INNER WEST ON AMALGAMATION

BURWOOD COUNCIL
JOHN FAKER
AGAINST

"The amalgamation in NSW will mean local residents will no longer be heard. If local councils merge, the needs of residents will be compromised in order to appease the wider constituency."

ASHFIELD COUNCIL
MORRIS MANSOUR
AGAINST

"Ashfield Council is opposed to amalgamations for a variety of reasons, including the loss of contact residents will have with their local representatives, the ability of community representatives to pursue residents' issues being diminished, centralised bodies tending to lead to more centralised decision-making, local villages within 'super' councils losing their voice and their ability to maintain their unique identity."

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL
GULIAN VACCARI
AGAINST

"I obviously think amalgamation is terrible. It's true a lot of councils around Sydney and NSW are unsustainable – not because they can't pay the bills on Friday, but because they can't deliver serious infrastructure. But that's not the case for Strathfield. It has well maintained infrastructure, has been well run and has money in the bank. It can stand alone."

"We yelled and screamed, but the Beattie and Bligh Government were adamant. They were deadset on amalgamation." — *Terry Dredge, the former mayor of Kilcoy*

A PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

The battle for the hearts and minds of Strathfield began in earnest this week as Save our Strathfield representatives took to the streets to raise petition signatures and awareness.

Tony Gaughn, nine, was perhaps the youngest crusader.

Standing outside the council chambers holding a Save our Strathfield placard, he told the *Scene*: "I don't want my council to merge with anyone else."

Marlene Doran, a veteran of two anti-amalgamation campaigns, agrees. "We've fought this fight before and we'll continue to do it again," she said. "We can't lose our democratic voice.

"We will lose what we know as Strathfield. We will lose our identity as a community."

WHAT IS A PEOPLE'S PETITION?

A people's petition is a document signed by at least 10,000 people requesting the Legislative Council to change legislation. The subject must be a matter the house has the power to act on. The petition can only be presented to the Legislative Council by a member of the house although any member can present a petition. Members of the public can ask a member to present the petition. Once the document has been presented, it will be forwarded to the relevant minister for consideration.

REPORT DUE IN APRIL

Chairman of the Independent Local Government Review Panel Professor Graham Sansom said the panel will release its final report on council amalgamations by mid-April. A treasury will be appointed to examine the financial positions of all Sydney metropolitan councils.

"The panel will be looking at the 25 year sustainability of each council and an external treasury is going to be looking at how financial viable each council is," he said.

"We have to look at all factors. One council might be in a strong position now, but might not be in 25 years."

CITY STATUS REJECTED

WHY AMALGAMATION DOESN'T WORK

By Joanne Tran

AMALGAMATION IS LARGELY being sold as a way for councils to save costs by achieving "economies of scale".

But after experiencing amalgamation firsthand, some residents in our Queensland sister city Somerset believe it has left residents disconnected and financially worse off.

Terry Dredge, the former mayor of Kilcoy, which was amalgamated with Esk to form the Somerset Regional Council, believes the merger is robbing Kilcoy residents with higher rates.

Dredge was appalled when he heard the New South Wales State Government was citing economic benefits as an advantage of larger amalgamated councils.

"Economic efficiency as an excuse is a load of..." he said before stopping to recompose himself. "Cost efficiency doesn't come into it.

"There's a bigger administration, but smaller work forces and less people on the ground. I'd say it costs more."

Dredge also laments the rate hike imposed on residents in his area.

"Rates have gone up 27 per cent for Kilcoy," he said. "Valuations are done by the valuer general and because land values are higher in some areas, Kilcoy is 30 per cent higher than others places, our rates went up."

But rates aren't the only way Kilcoy residents are being "rorted". Dredge has seen pensioners lose out on the previous benefits his smaller council provided.

"They upped the service charge on pensioners. I know pensioners who own two properties. Previously we'd only charge them one water rate, but in a larger administration they don't notice this," he said. "It happened to me as well and I went through the complaints system and got it fixed but not everyone realises you could do that.

"And the complaints system is so long. Some people complained but gave up after council dismissed them a few times and gave them only a complaints number."

This is just one example, Dredge believes, of the way the larger council overlooks the ordinary citizen.

"Before I would just walk past things and see them, whereas now they drive past and don't notice," he said.

"Previously, we could prompt staff and have something done about problems in the area. Now they just can't see what needs addressing."

But he warns Strathfield their complaints could go unheard.

"We yelled and screamed, but the Beattie and Bligh Governments were adamant. They were deadset on amalgamation," he said.

In September last year, Kilcoy's bid to de-amalgamate from Somerset Regional Council was turned down by the Queensland Government.

Out of 19 similar bids, only four are being referred.

In Queensland, if a bid to de-amalgamate is successful, the council seeking de-amalgamation bears any cost of the process.

It must also have the support of at least 20 per cent of the voting population in the de-amalgamating council in a signed petition.

Costs include that of a poll, additional staff, contractors and consultants required to assist with the de-amalgamation process.

Strathfield Council Amalgamation Flyer – March & April 2015

Community Information was distributed to every household in Strathfield Local Government Area.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were for or against being amalgamated with neighbouring Councils. Comments from this process are listed below.

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	Current set up works fine.	20/06/2015 17:45
Yes	Strathfield is well-managed, with good services, reasonable rates, and has its finances well in hand.	19/06/2015 14:59
Yes	Strathfield is financially viable and debt free; amalgamation equals loss of identity, big population means little voice for individuals, big councils will encourage party politics. Local councils are in touch with local issues. Local Heritage areas and items will probably not mean much if the sense of our locality is lost. not mean much	19/06/2015 13:46
Yes	Strathfield Council does a terrific job so why amalgamate? There will be an increased burden on residents with increased rates.	18/06/2015 22:35
Yes	No benefit to the community	28/05/2015 8:51
Yes	rates will increase, too big if residents want things done, resident has been living in this LGA for over 50 yrs and has fought against it before. happy the way it is	26/05/2015 16:01
Yes	I would like to keep our local government local. In any case, DO NOT amalgamate with Auburn!	23/05/2015 16:46
Yes	our council is the most successful in the inner west and any amalgamation would be detrimental to the residents	13/05/2015 11:51
Yes	Because it will cost millions causing issues for council in regards to expansion and development of this urban area.	12/05/2015 21:00
Yes	strathfield will disadvantaged taking on other council bad debt which will increase rates	11/05/2015 12:44
Yes		7/05/2015 17:08
Yes	Higher costs for Strathfield residents & will be more bureaucracy. Very happy with Strathfield Council service to date.	6/05/2015 10:31
No	Cost effective	6/05/2015 1:05
Yes	rates increase/Debts	5/05/2015 12:19
Yes	Low rates, keep council as it is	4/05/2015 12:14
Yes		23/04/2015 14:48
No	It will be better for Strategic Planning	21/04/2015 11:03
Yes	I dont want to pay extra for other councils loans	16/04/2015

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
		11:42
Yes	concerned about possibly higher rates after amalgamation	15/04/2015 21:40
Yes		15/04/2015 14:52
Yes	Believe that services provided will be lesser due to a larger area being serviced with less staff.	14/04/2015 10:45
Yes	higher rates, too big area to control,	14/04/2015 10:27
Yes	I do not see any benefit for Strathfield residents from council amalgamation. Rather it will create unnecessary costs to bear for Strathfield residents.	13/04/2015 20:03
Yes	Strathfield council is an efficient well run council and should not be merged.	13/04/2015 20:00
Yes	because of rate increase	13/04/2015 9:51
Yes	It will increase cost and lower standard.	7/04/2015 13:21
Yes	It will increase cost and lower standard.	7/04/2015 13:20
Yes	It will increase cost and lower standard.	7/04/2015 13:19
Yes	It will increase cost and lower standard.	7/04/2015 13:18
Yes	jobs!!!! the loss of jobs and opportunities!	4/04/2015 18:07
Yes	Quality of services will suffer.	4/04/2015 10:41
Yes	We do not want higher rates.	4/04/2015 10:40
Yes	It will affect value of properties.	4/04/2015 10:39
Yes	I am very happy as it is.	4/04/2015 10:37
Yes	Loss of identity. Increased rates	2/04/2015 10:36
Yes	Preservation of unique culture	1/04/2015 22:27
Yes	Strathfield Council is already too big	30/03/2015 9:44
Yes	I believe everything will be more cumbersome with amalgamation	30/03/2015 2:15
Yes		28/03/2015 15:49
Yes		28/03/2015 15:44

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	My family already has a hard time trying to pay our mortgage. We do not need a higher council fee on top of our heavy burden. My dad sleeps 4-5 hours a day working 3 jobs, and full time father for 2 children. Also, strathfield council has done a great job at keeping the community together.	28/03/2015 9:48
Yes	As the current local council area has an already dense and fast growing population, I have found Strathfield council already has enough to manage. As the other councils proposed for the amalgamation are similar in situations, I think a super council would struggle to meet residents needs as well	27/03/2015 17:29
Yes	Councils should be responsible for their local areas.	27/03/2015 12:59
Yes	Larger councils become less efficient at managing local issues. After a merger, issues in Strathfield would not be high priority when compared to management by Strathfield council without a merger.	26/03/2015 23:18
Yes	I dont believe it will be in the best interests of the residents of Strathfield	25/03/2015 22:13
Yes		25/03/2015 21:12
Yes		25/03/2015 21:10
Yes	Strathfield council is doing fine on its own and that's the way it should stay. We don't want to be amalgamated, we want our area to stay as it is.	25/03/2015 17:13
Yes	less efficient and slower local services	24/03/2015 8:33
Yes	am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils. Strathfield manage very efficient and no debt and low rate.	23/03/2015 23:37
Yes	Its not broke	23/03/2015 16:56
Yes	should have to inherit council debt from others & wants people that represent local area	23/03/2015 9:54
Yes	Debt, Quality of Service will be affected	22/03/2015 16:18
Yes	$$$$ costs-plus we are not in debt. Ive been paying SMC rates for 29yrs- I want my $$ to stay in Strathfield	22/03/2015 14:23
Yes	Potential increase in cost and deterioration in services	22/03/2015 12:43
Yes		21/03/2015 10:38
Yes	Reduced accountability.	21/03/2015 10:24
Yes	Rates will go up and I think having one Councillor representing all the five Councils is not a good idea as resident will not be able to communicate freely with the Councillor as and when they need. Thanks	20/03/2015 12:45
Yes	Loss of services, Delays in implementing services. Extra costs. Bearing the debts of other councils.	19/03/2015 14:30
Yes	I enjoy Strathfield	18/03/2015

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
		18:43
Yes	I love strathfield	18/03/2015 18:40
Yes		17/03/2015 20:21
Yes	Suburb value / independence	16/03/2015 10:31
Yes	cant see the benefit of it	13/03/2015 15:39
Yes	Don't want to pay other council's debt	11/03/2015 17:44
Yes	Not in the best interest of strathfield residents	11/03/2015 17:42
Yes	Strathfield would lose its identity and amenities	11/03/2015 13:53
Yes	possible rate increases, closure of customer service centres, loss of services, potential job loss	11/03/2015 13:24
Yes		11/03/2015 12:59
Yes	do not see why we should fund other councils mismanagement of rate payers money.	11/03/2015 12:42
Yes	I am extremely against to have our Strathfield council to be amalgamated with other councils due to the following reasons: 1st reason is that there has been already a big increase (nearly 16%) in the rates that we pay. If we amalgamate with other councils, we will have to pay even more rates because other council€™s debt would come to us. I am totally against the amalgamation and do not want this to happen at all because when I bought my property I bought with the intention to live in Strathfield council. Strathfield council is known for its greenery and beauty. It is like a paradise in the west. Why should we include substandard councils in our vicinity? I am sure you are aware of the book Oasis in the West: Strathfield€™s first 100 years by Jones, M. A. (Michael Anthony). If the other councils were in our position and we had lower standards they would have never allowed us to join them. We have very high parameters in the Strathfield council therefore we simply do not want to join substandard councils that would destroy our image. More buildings and more traffic: as we all know already it is getting more and more congested on the roads. Other councils are having a big increase of new buildings built all the time which means more resident and more cars. I do not want to support the amalgamation for this reason. Decision making: we have a councillor for a certain number of people in our area. If we amalgamate with other councils that means same councillor will represent lot more people. When it comes to decision making our decisions will be impacted by people living in other councils. They have their own issues and priorities and I do not want our decisions to be influenced by them. Therefore please leave us alone and do not amalgamate Strathfield council with other councils.	11/03/2015 12:12

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	lower rates	11/03/2015 10:24
Yes	Bigger size does not mean better	11/03/2015 8:48
Yes	Job security for council workers and delay in response to enquiries	10/03/2015 19:24
Yes	Because then Strathfield residents will need to pay for the debts of the other councils	10/03/2015 18:14
Yes	We do not want to increase our rates by 16% . our roads are congested. we do not want any more increase in that congestion. There is very little parking. By amalgamation this will be even worse . we are retired and old we cannot afford to amalgamate.	10/03/2015 9:25
Yes	I don't want to pay other debt, We are fine at Strathfield council	10/03/2015 5:59
No	Economies of scale from larger, more professionally run councils	10/03/2015 0:39
Yes		9/03/2015 11:20
Yes		8/03/2015 22:29
Yes	Residential rates must remain low, Council services must remain local.	8/03/2015 12:53
Yes	Increased rates and debt at risk of decreased levels of services.	7/03/2015 11:33
Yes	Increased rates and debt and decline in current levels of services.	7/03/2015 11:30
Yes	Loss of voice	6/03/2015 18:04
Yes	We should not have to shoulder other council's expenses. Better on our own. better managed on our own	5/03/2015 18:25
Yes	Interests; welfare of Strathfield will be subverted if amalgamation occurs	4/03/2015 15:15
No	Bigger council, better efficiency	4/03/2015 14:08
Yes	Bigger is not always better	4/03/2015 7:22
Yes	This will not help us	4/03/2015 7:21
Yes	bad for strathfield	3/03/2015 18:06
Yes	too expensive	3/03/2015 14:02
Yes	A small council is easy to manage and easy to communicate	2/03/2015 12:47
Yes	Amalgamation causes a loss of focus on individual areas; needs.	2/03/2015 11:56

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	I am happy with the service I get and amalgamation will cost more to resident	2/03/2015 9:05
Yes	Happy with service currently provided don't want rates to increase	2/03/2015 9:00
Yes	Other councils mentioned do a terrible job and for Strathfield Council to be merged with them would bring no positive benefits to Strathfield.	1/03/2015 19:14
Yes	Taking on debt from other councils	1/03/2015 12:45
Yes	I like having a small, close community	1/03/2015 12:30
Yes	too big more problems	1/03/2015 7:38
Yes	Rates will increase; the merger would transfer large debts and backlogs to Strathfield residents; maintenance & renewal in Strathfield will no longer be a priority	28/02/2015 13:07
Yes	One size fits all will not be efficient and the character of Strathfield will be compromised.	27/02/2015 20:13
Yes	Rates will increase	27/02/2015 13:53
Yes		27/02/2015 13:41
Yes	Rising costs of rates	27/02/2015 12:17
Yes	low rates, better oversight what is happening being a smaller council	27/02/2015 10:24
Yes	Keep it local. Loss of representation	26/02/2015 12:37
Yes	I think Strathfield council is large enough on its own.	26/02/2015 10:59
No		26/02/2015 10:35
Yes	Strathfield Council concentrate on what its residents want	26/02/2015 10:14
Yes	Strathfield identity will be lost, Strathfield council looks after Strathfield residents, merger will create mega bureaucracy , increase in debt only a few reasons why we don't need to amalgamate	26/02/2015 8:39
Yes	I don't want more traffic in the morning, and I don't want to have to pay for the debts of other councils	25/02/2015 21:54
Yes	Increased financial burden on local Strathfield residents due to debt of other councils	25/02/2015 14:48
Yes	Strathfield council residents will have to cross-subsidise inefficiencies of the other councils. Standard of living of Strathfield council residents will be compromised.	24/02/2015 11:11
Yes	It’s not fair for strathfield	24/02/2015 8:11

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	we do not want other councils to impose higher residential rates for those of us living in strathfield and why should we have to take on the financial burden of other councils; debt and thus we strongly oppose the amalgamation of strathfield with neighbouring councils	23/02/2015 20:01
Yes	it is not good for our Council area or others, amalgamations are also bad for the staff as well as ratepayers	23/02/2015 9:45
Yes		23/02/2015 7:26
Yes		23/02/2015 7:13
Yes		22/02/2015 22:59
Yes	Strathfield is unique	22/02/2015 8:45
Yes	It will be a disaster for Strathfield	22/02/2015 8:44
Yes		20/02/2015 16:57
Yes		20/02/2015 16:35
Yes	costly	20/02/2015 14:28
Yes	I don't want our fees to go up or for us to pay for their debts!	20/02/2015 9:37
Yes	Because of the debt of the other councils and I think Strathfield council is pretty good. They provide lots of excellent services for seniors.	19/02/2015 16:09
Yes	not needed	19/02/2015 12:19
Yes	happy with how things are	19/02/2015 11:39
Yes	happy with how things are	19/02/2015 11:39
Yes	very satisfied	19/02/2015 11:38
Yes	Amalgamation would not improve services	19/02/2015 10:03
Yes		19/02/2015 8:59
Yes	No amalgamation, better amelioration in all areas of inner west.	19/02/2015 8:58
Yes	I'm happy the way things are	18/02/2015 17:33
Yes	Uniqueness of strathfield will be lost	18/02/2015 15:36
Yes	Rates will go up, customer service will no longer exist, and service provided by strathfield council will not be the same standard when all councils merge	18/02/2015 11:01

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	negative impacts on environment	17/02/2015 22:03
Yes	Strathfield council is excellent at providing excellent value for money services for its ratepayers.	17/02/2015 15:52
Yes	Too large to govern if amalgamated.	17/02/2015 12:19
Yes	Rising council rates, lowering house prices	17/02/2015 9:45
Yes	I didn't want to repay the debts of the other councils when we didn't benefit from those. That's ridiculous	17/02/2015 0:24
Yes	Because of the Council Rates. Why the residents of Strathfield council have to pay for the debt of other council? this does not make any sense to me	16/02/2015 12:16
Yes	do not want amalgamation with any other council	16/02/2015 10:18
Yes		15/02/2015 23:45
Yes	Less efficient councils means Strathfield resident will pay more rates and will not have local needs addressed	15/02/2015 20:24
Yes	will join less efficient councils-will cost Strathfield tax payers- less control on our area more	15/02/2015 20:18
Yes	While I would be excited for Strathfield to work with other inner west councils to develop effective transport and amenities between them (bike paths etc) I don’t support paying for other councils debt and having to redirect spending away from local infrastructure	15/02/2015 18:48
Yes		15/02/2015 11:23
Yes		15/02/2015 11:22
Yes		15/02/2015 11:21
Yes	Strathfield council is well run and ratepayers will need to subsidise less efficient councils	15/02/2015 10:18
Yes	strathfield council is well run and ratepayers will need to subsidise less efficient councils	15/02/2015 10:16
Yes	There is no compelling case for amalgamation	14/02/2015 13:46
Yes	Councils provide local services and should be locally based.	14/02/2015 10:24
Yes	I will not pay extra rate increase for other councils debts	13/02/2015 13:44
Yes	It will make the council too wieldy. In addition our council is well run and we will lose our voice.	13/02/2015 12:53
Yes	I don’t want my council rates to increase due to other councils transferred debt and backlogs	13/02/2015 10:45
Yes	super councils are less in touch with community issues	13/02/2015 9:59

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes		13/02/2015 9:42
Yes	Because it will cost me the ratepayer a lot more money and we don't need an empire...Strathfield council should look only after Strathfield residents and same for the rest of the other councils. And in addition some of the other council are in debt and they want our council to bail them out.	12/02/2015 14:34
Yes	Local issues will be lost in a big council. The good financial and management position of Strathfield will also be absorbed by other suburbs.	12/02/2015 11:03
Yes	Been here for over 50 years, been an ongoing battle with surrounding councils, happy with how strathfield council is today.	12/02/2015 9:12
Yes		12/02/2015 7:54
Yes	It will mean higher rates	12/02/2015 7:04
Yes	I want one mayor and a group of councillor looking out for the best interest of my suburb.	11/02/2015 22:43
Yes	I want my council to focus on my suburb - not on another 4 whose demographics, community needs, maintenance and infrastructure is totally different to my suburb.	11/02/2015 22:40
Yes	I don't want STRATHFIELD to be a small entity run by a large bureaucratic body. As a resident of 45 years we deserve better than this. Amalgamation will destroy our suburb.	11/02/2015 22:34
Yes	Lack of evidence for amalgamation improving Strathfield	11/02/2015 22:34
Yes	I don't want our suburb to be destroyed. Want it to remain a separate entity.	11/02/2015 22:30
Yes	other councils have too much debts	11/02/2015 21:06
Yes	other councils have too much debts	11/02/2015 21:05
Yes	High cost of rates	11/02/2015 15:32
Yes	Loss of Jobs and or Job Security and reduced quality services to ratepayers.	11/02/2015 15:31
Yes	Leichhardt council is too big already so bigger isn't always better	11/02/2015 13:53
No	Strathfield Council more efficient as a stand-alone entity.	11/02/2015 8:51
Yes	Accountability and profitability. Keep it controlled and keep it manageable.	10/02/2015 14:56
Yes	I don't want to pay more rates.	10/02/2015 13:36
Yes	Less focus on suburbs	10/02/2015 9:47
No	One council can do all works.	9/02/2015 19:56

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	I am happy with current management	9/02/2015 19:03
Yes	It does NOT make any sense. Too wide, too much difference, loss of characteristics, cause confusions, and conflicts of interest.	9/02/2015 18:59
Yes	increase in costs, decrease benefit to Strathfield residents, lower our residential prices	9/02/2015 18:43
Yes	I'm against subsidising other economically irresponsible councils that will compromise on our quality of services we receive.	9/02/2015 17:10
Yes	Strathfield should not be burdened with other underperforming councils; debts and backlogs	9/02/2015 13:09
Yes	The area will be large. It will be too cumbersome to meet the needs of a diverse array of needs by residents. It will make resolving issues much slower. Some other council needs will reduce amenities growth in Strathfield which already has to cope with a huge unit thus population explosion.	9/02/2015 10:54
Yes		9/02/2015 10:34
Yes	maintain low residential rates	9/02/2015 0:27
Yes	Because I don't want Strathfield council rates to be used to fund projects in other areas ... what is the benefit to me?	8/02/2015 18:16
Yes	Rates will increase and services will not be appropriately prioritised in a larger council area	8/02/2015 14:16
Yes	It will lead to increased debt and reduced services.	8/02/2015 14:15
Yes	increase in rates	8/02/2015 11:14
Yes		8/02/2015 11:13
Yes	Extra Costs, Unfair, Loss of value for Strathfield.	8/02/2015 9:39
Yes	Unnecessary transferred backlogs	8/02/2015 9:32
Yes	rates increases, transferred debt	7/02/2015 16:15
Yes	Because it will cost us more	7/02/2015 15:37
Yes	the cost	7/02/2015 12:01
Yes	I feel the quality of services will be reduced and my council rates will be increased. Also, Strathfield has no debt and if there is a merger I will be paying off the debt of the other councils.	7/02/2015 10:49
Yes	It is unfair if Strathfield residents have their rates increases and infrastructure projects in Strathfield given less priority simply because of other councils; poor planning and reckless expenditure	7/02/2015 8:28

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	I am happy that the Strathfield council has been responsible with expenditure and it is unfair we will now have to pay for other councils debts	7/02/2015 8:25
Yes	Quality of services and maintenance will diminish, rates may increase	6/02/2015 20:18
Yes	Amalgamation will lead to decreased services and maintenance of Strathfield homes,	6/02/2015 20:15
Yes	Strathfield Council has no debt and is better equipped to service the needs of the	6/02/2015 17:09
Yes	Strathfield Council has no debt like other councils	6/02/2015 17:04
Yes	Administration nightmare, reduction in the quality of service	6/02/2015 16:48
Yes	I don't really want to absorb others debts	6/02/2015 14:58
Yes		6/02/2015 14:42
Yes		6/02/2015 12:31
Yes		6/02/2015 12:30
Yes	bigger is not better	6/02/2015 12:04
Yes	We will lose our independence	6/02/2015 10:01
Yes	Not in the best interests of the collective residents.	5/02/2015 22:04
Yes	Increasing cost!!!!	5/02/2015 21:47
Yes	I don't want to accumulate other councils debt	5/02/2015 21:11
Yes	Why should Strathfield bear the brunt of the costs of other councils?	5/02/2015 20:17
Yes	Do not wish to subsidise other councils	5/02/2015 20:09
Yes	I would rather Strathfield council focus on improving the areas within their boundary than have a mega council that has to disperse their attention across a larger area.	5/02/2015 19:50
Yes	should not have to pay their debts	5/02/2015 19:42
Yes	inherit other councils debt	5/02/2015 19:39
Yes	inherit other councils debt	5/02/2015 19:38
Yes	We will lose support and services for our area yet will still pay the same as for our current level of services.	5/02/2015 19:32
Yes		5/02/2015

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
		18:38
Yes	Don't need other council's debt and mismanagement.	5/02/2015 17:43
Yes	I am happy with the services and management of Strathfield council - it is better run than other councils - amalgamation is a false economy - bigger equals more bureaucracy and higher costs and inefficiencies we've seen this all before!	5/02/2015 17:41
Yes	Do not want rates to increase and to have an increase of high density residential developments in our area	5/02/2015 17:11
Yes	We do not want to have a high density residential developments in our area	5/02/2015 17:10
Yes		5/02/2015 15:51
Yes	Far better off by maintaining the status quo.	5/02/2015 15:10
Yes	Can't see how larger councils can keep up the standards of a smaller council.	5/02/2015 14:28
Yes	Strathfield Council has 0 debt and we do not want rates increases	5/02/2015 13:18
Yes	There will be a greater cost passed on to the residents of Strathfield Council	5/02/2015 12:37
Yes	Under an amalgamated council there will be less focus on localised issues	5/02/2015 12:36
Yes		5/02/2015 11:53
Yes		5/02/2015 11:52
Yes		5/02/2015 11:01
Yes		5/02/2015 7:02
Yes	We don’t want to take on other councils debt	4/02/2015 23:08
Yes	Council fee will increase if merged	4/02/2015 22:38
Yes	against rate rises	4/02/2015 22:08
Yes	We are not in debt and under good management.	4/02/2015 21:42
Yes	Local governments need to represent the residents in their area. They know and respond to local issues and support the needs of those in their area. Local knowledge and understanding is vital to the success of effective Councils. This is why I do not support amalgamation into very large areas.	4/02/2015 21:36
Yes	Disapprove of big government. Don’t trust state government	4/02/2015 21:29
Yes	Why?	4/02/2015

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
		21:22
Yes	Increased rates and heavier debt burden	4/02/2015 20:56
Yes	It will cost more to live in Strathfield. I don't want to pay other councils debts. My mortgage is already too much.	4/02/2015 20:54
Yes		4/02/2015 20:10
Yes		4/02/2015 20:08
Yes		4/02/2015 20:05
Yes		4/02/2015 19:28
Yes	do not wish to absorb other councils debt	4/02/2015 18:57
Yes		4/02/2015 17:57
Yes	Strathfield is ahead of all councils	4/02/2015 17:50
Yes	Strathfield has good management	4/02/2015 17:47
Yes	Low rates	4/02/2015 15:04
Yes	Low rates	4/02/2015 15:03
Yes	Low rates	4/02/2015 15:03
Yes	Low rates	4/02/2015 15:02
Yes	Rates Increase and services diminished	4/02/2015 11:26
Yes	Strathfield Council has quite a good record of looking after its residents and is currently in a better financial position than most of the other Councils recommended for amalgamation. As far as I can tell Strathfield Council also has less debt, lower residential rates and better budget management than most of the proposed merger Councils. I therefore oppose any merger that cannot provide positive outcomes for Strathfield residents.	4/02/2015 11:22
Yes	Bigger council means more inefficiencies and higher costs	4/02/2015 11:21
Yes	Why should Strathfield pay for other council debts?	4/02/2015 11:13
Yes	Opposed to rates increases	4/02/2015 11:11
Yes	Local Council should provide a localised view on the needs of their communities. I can't see that there is a capacity for them to represent the needs of local communities if they are no longer localised themselves.	4/02/2015 11:06

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	It will lead to higher costs, strathfield is a more efficient council with lower debt.	4/02/2015 10:37
Yes	Financial loss, Strathfield's identity	4/02/2015 10:11
Yes	Loss of Strathfield identity, financial disadvantage.	4/02/2015 10:09
Yes	Our council does not want to take on the debts of surrounding areas. Our council needs to focus on the growing municipality of Strathfield only.	4/02/2015 9:07
Yes	Against merging because Strathfield is a unique area with more heritage that has been carefully managed for over a century by its council.	4/02/2015 8:20
Yes	Strata Fee will increase more	4/02/2015 7:32
Yes	Our rates will go up. Strathfield is in better financial position.	4/02/2015 5:45
Yes	Our Council has proved itself to be capably managed over the years and kept our rates low. We don't need the debt of neighbouring councils to be a millstone around our necks.	3/02/2015 23:46
Yes	strathfield have different needs to other suburbs	3/02/2015 23:17
Yes	strathfield council can focus on servicing Strathfield's need	3/02/2015 23:13
Yes	Strathfield resources should be used for Strathfield benefit	3/02/2015 23:11
Yes		3/02/2015 22:07
No		3/02/2015 22:01
Yes	as per Strathfield Council letter Jan 2015	3/02/2015 21:39
Yes	as per Strathfield Council letter January 2015	3/02/2015 21:37
Yes		3/02/2015 20:40
Yes	Local councils need to look after their own local areas. Amalgamation will dilute this focus.	3/02/2015 20:33
Yes	To look after strathfield.	3/02/2015 20:26
Yes	Strathfield has no debt but we have to repay other council's debts. This is ridiculous. there is no infrastructure but more resident in Homebush	3/02/2015 20:23
Yes	Increased residential rates, transferred debt & backlogs	3/02/2015 20:20
Yes	I want my Council to be debt free	3/02/2015 20:19
Yes	the most silly idea	3/02/2015 20:18

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	Why should we increase our living cost?	3/02/2015 20:18
Yes	Too much cost is involved	3/02/2015 20:17
Yes	It will increase the cost of my living	3/02/2015 20:16
Yes	Bigger is not better and Strathfield, while a smaller council manages to operate with no big debts and meeting the needs of the residents. I do not want to be part of an enormous municipality.	3/02/2015 19:49
Yes	Debt transfer	3/02/2015 19:46
Yes	Transfer of debt from other councils to Strathfield council, rate increases and less focus on taking care of Strathfield's infrastructure due to competing priorities with other council areas.	3/02/2015 19:45
Yes	Strathfield needs to stand alone	3/02/2015 19:38
Yes	I don't like this large amalgamation, we will have to pick up others councils debts. Small is better	3/02/2015 19:30
Yes		3/02/2015 19:16
Yes	Higher debt pressure for the residents	3/02/2015 18:54
Yes	Strategy with no plan for infrastructure or support network, merge with councils that carry huge debts are unfair to local residents	3/02/2015 18:10
Yes		3/02/2015 16:53
Yes		3/02/2015 16:50
Yes	infrastructure requirements for Strathfield will not be prioritised	3/02/2015 16:34
Yes	Agree with Strathfield councils reasons	3/02/2015 16:27
Yes	Agree with Strathfield councils reasons	3/02/2015 16:27
Yes		3/02/2015 16:06
Yes		3/02/2015 15:55
Yes		3/02/2015 15:54
Yes	Cheaper rates in the Strathfield area.	3/02/2015 15:36
Yes	We need to keep our council rated down and be an independent council to keep our suburb the way it is and not be controlled by others.	3/02/2015 15:31
Yes	100% against No No No	3/02/2015 15:09

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	We don't need the other councils	3/02/2015 15:07
Yes	help you to fight amalgamation	3/02/2015 14:26
Yes		3/02/2015 14:09
Yes	Potential for increased rates and subsidising infrastructure in surrounding areas. Increased bureaucracy in a super council.	3/02/2015 13:35
Yes	Strathfield is a well-run Council and we are happy with it. Amalgamation will not bring any advantages with it; indeed, it probably bring problems, which we don't need.	3/02/2015 11:49
Yes	People in strathfield care	3/02/2015 11:16
No	Residents would be better off having an amalgamated council. Strathfield Council would make a chook raffle look sophisticated. This survey alone shows how small minded the council really is.	3/02/2015 11:06
Yes		3/02/2015 10:34
Yes	I don't believe merge would bring any benefits to local community.	3/02/2015 7:59
Yes		3/02/2015 7:00
Yes	increased cost	2/02/2015 19:13
Yes	increased cost	2/02/2015 19:13
Yes		2/02/2015 13:58
No	It should be amalgamated to save money and duplication of resources	2/02/2015 11:29
Yes	I like it as is !	2/02/2015 9:33
Yes	Think rates will increase with amalgamation.	2/02/2015 5:58
Yes	Not for our benefit	2/02/2015 0:08
Yes	does not benefit Strathfield council	2/02/2015 0:06
Yes	Not benefit the local residents	2/02/2015 0:05
Yes	Cost will increase	1/02/2015 23:04
Yes		1/02/2015 19:13
Yes	Strathfield Council must remain a separate entity to better service its LGA community. One giant council cannot understand the areas concerns and	1/02/2015 16:30

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
	even character in the way a dedicated local council can	
Yes	Well managed now small - Res 43 yrs	1/02/2015 15:59
Yes	It's unfair to the residents of Strathfield	1/02/2015 12:49
Yes	It will not benefit Strathfield residents to take on debt from other councils and be forced with higher rates as a result.	1/02/2015 12:16
Yes	Other council's debt and infrastructure back log and potential rate rises is concerning. Canada Bay appears to be in a good financial position so I would support a merge in that case. Only once the other councils they got their finances right would a merger be acceptable	1/02/2015 11:12
Yes	Because Strathfield is working well as it is and Strathfield will be saddled with other councils; debts.	1/02/2015 10:47
Yes	Only new to the area. Happy the way thing are	1/02/2015 9:32
Yes	I am happy with the way thing are and my rate are reasonable. I am just managing my bills	1/02/2015 9:31
Yes	I do not to take on someone else's debts or have to pay excessive rates	31/01/2015 13:08
No	Because I don't think Strathfield residents should be saddled with other council's debts; backlogs	31/01/2015 12:45
Yes	I want to keep our local council and local support	31/01/2015 11:55
Yes		31/01/2015 11:48
Yes	Loss of local representation, takeover by professional politicians with no obligations to local people, no demonstrated benefits, costs and rates will increase as Council becomes a huge government department, impersonal service, inevitable movement of council chambers to Drummoyne or Leichhardt and lack of access by Strathfield residents, amalgamations are only wanted by developers and big business - not supported by communities - again the average person loses out	31/01/2015 11:05
Yes	Ours is a better managed council. Want to keep our rates low.	31/01/2015 10:30
Yes	Don't want other council's liabilities. Ours is a better run council.	31/01/2015 10:28
Yes	logistics will be too complicated	31/01/2015 10:20
Yes	Stupid idea/ what's wrong with the way it is now?	31/01/2015 10:19
Yes	Strathfield Council has worked well in the past and has no reason to take on the problems of surrounding councils. These council needs to deal with their own problems and amalgamation with Strathfield and other councils can only lead to more problems.	31/01/2015 10:15
Yes	increased costs, reduced services	31/01/2015

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
		8:56
Yes	Because there is no advantage for Strathfield residents to do so, in fact we would lose our positive position without any benefits whatsoever!!!!!!!!	31/01/2015 8:48
Yes	There are so many reasons why Strathfield should not be amalgamated with neighbouring councils. One of them being the fact that the Strathfield council is in such a financial position. Our council has no debt, uses money wisely on things including roads, bridges and footpaths. Also, amalgamation means increased rates for us Homebush and Strathfield residents to cover the cost of people living in other areas and their debts which is unfair and unjust. The money collected from local residents should only be spent locally and not for residents in other areas. In addition, Homebush is going to have an increasing population so we need better infrastructure and our rates are best spent on these than being spent on other councils; debt.	30/01/2015 22:17
Yes	STRATHFIELD COUNCIL HAS NO DEBT, AND SHOULD NOT BE AMALGAMATED WITH OTHER COUNCILS JUST SO THAT STRATHFIELD COUNCIL RATEPAYERS ARE USED TO PAY THE DEBTS OF OTHER COUNCILS. SPEAKING AS A LONGTERM RESIDENT, STRATHFIELD HAS ALWAYS PROVIDED WELL FOR ITS RESIDENTS WITHOUT THE NEED FOR AMALGAMATION.	30/01/2015 21:58
Yes	strathfield council is sustainable as it is, and the individual ratepayer has less say in their local affairs when the unit of local government is multiplied in size	30/01/2015 21:49
Yes	To maintain our low rates and against overcrowding and destruction of our suburb. Take a look at Burwood and Ashfield absolutely wrecked.	30/01/2015 16:03
Yes	because affects personally	30/01/2015 13:15
Yes	Concerned area will lose its charm and character	30/01/2015 13:04
Yes	Residents will be better served by a standalone council which will concentrate on Strathfield needs.	30/01/2015 13:04
Yes	Cannot afford any more increase in rates	30/01/2015 12:32
Yes	Good management and prudent citizenship should not be punished.	30/01/2015 11:41
Yes	Strathfield council is serving its residents more cost effectively. The council responds to our concern more promptly. Strathfield residents should not be cross subsidising other councils that are not run cost effectively.	30/01/2015 11:38
Yes	There are no advantages	30/01/2015 10:41
Yes	smaller council provides better service than amalgamated ones	30/01/2015 10:09
Yes	Unfair for us as it should not be our responsible. We have already had enough burden for our household.	30/01/2015 10:07
Yes		30/01/2015 9:31

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	Strathfield residence will lose control of their outcomes both financially and developmentally	30/01/2015 7:38
Yes		30/01/2015 1:08
Yes	Increased debt	29/01/2015 23:36
Yes	Increase in rates	29/01/2015 23:35
Yes	rate increases, more debt, less development	29/01/2015 21:45
Yes	rate increases, less development	29/01/2015 21:41
Yes		29/01/2015 20:53
Yes		29/01/2015 20:52
Yes	we don't need higher rates and being a part of other inefficient councils	29/01/2015 20:17
Yes		29/01/2015 20:15
Yes	Strathfield's financial position far stronger than other councils. Infrastructure projects up to date unlike other councils especially Burwood.	29/01/2015 20:08
Yes	Keep the council streamline, with low debts and low rates	29/01/2015 19:48
Yes	Rates will increase	29/01/2015 19:24
Yes	Rates will increase	29/01/2015 19:23
Yes	Strathfield is better managed as it stands.	29/01/2015 18:49
Yes	Too expensive	29/01/2015 16:59
Yes	higher rates, debts, poorer management	29/01/2015 16:28
Yes	High cost	29/01/2015 16:15
Yes	Strathfield is good as is!	29/01/2015 15:42
Yes	I'm listened to. Strathfield has no debts.	29/01/2015 14:55
Yes	I prefer a local council	29/01/2015 12:39
Yes	We will lose our local identity. If amalgamations are put into place we may as well get rid of all Councils and just have two levels of Government State and Federal. The public will then be completely ignored with the control handed over to the bureaucrats	29/01/2015 12:05

I am against Strathfield being amalgamated with neighbouring councils	Why/why not?	Created
Yes	Strathfield council is doing a good job on its own	29/01/2015 11:11
Yes	not desirable increase in rates	29/01/2015 10:27
Yes	I like our Council to remain as it is. As we are a built up area. If we amalgamate we may have to wait in line if we need something done. I prefer to stay with what we know.	28/01/2015 15:12
Yes	j	28/01/2015 11:10
Yes	Less focus on residents; specific needs	27/01/2015 19:56
Yes	Strathfield Council does a great job independently and therefore should not be amalgamated	27/01/2015 16:05
No	After writing several emails to all Strathfield councillors about parking issues and other issues in Strathfield only one has ever replied to me. A larger council will hopefully remove amateur councillors who are only there for their own interest and not the communities. Also what is happening to the proposed Korean Garden at Bressington Park? or the completed bike path along Powells creek?	27/01/2015 15:19

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

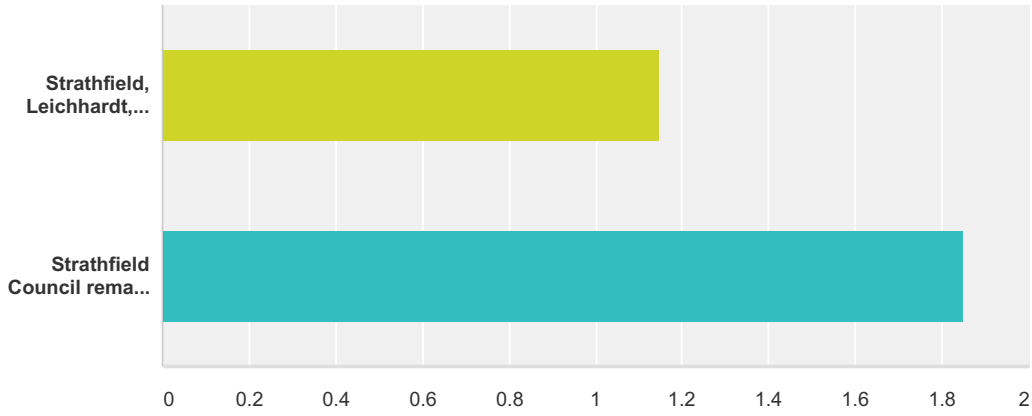
‘Fit for the Future’ Options

Community Online Survey Results

Survey open
1 June – 28 June 2015

Q1 The NSW State Government has released its ‘Fit for the Future’ program which requires most NSW councils to consider amalgamation options with neighbouring councils. Strathfield Council is asking its residents what is their preferred option.Please rank these options in order of preference from 1 being your preferred option to 2 being your least preferred option.

Answered: 202 Skipped: 0



	1	2	Total	Score
Strathfield, Leichhardt, Marrickville, Canada Bay, Ashfield and Burwood councils amalgamate to create an Inner West Council.	**14.85%** 30	**85.15%** 172	202	1.15
Strathfield Council remains a standalone council, but works in collaboration with other Councils on regional issues.	**85.15%** 172	**14.85%** 30	202	1.85

Q2 What are the main reasons you chose your most preferred option?

Answered: 161 Skipped: 41

#	Responses	Date
1	Keep us safe from Auburn Council running and ruining this area like they ruined their own	6/28/2015 2:58 PM
2	Since living in Strathfield, I have always been happy with our community. There is no need for change, our council has no debt so why should our council take on the financial burden of sharing the debt of neighbouring councils and thereby reducing our ability to maintain the quality of services that enhance our community	6/25/2015 11:23 PM
3	As we paid more money when we buy the property and pay more councils rates, why don't cant we be by ourself.	6/25/2015 5:26 PM
4	Local Council will deal with local matters, rather than having an amalgmated council and matters won't be dealt with swiftly.	6/25/2015 5:16 PM
5	better asset management, , asset renewal, better infrastructure backlog	6/25/2015 4:50 PM
6	I believe individual councils work better on issues and they can represent their area more efficiently. It is not necessary to amalgmate.	6/25/2015 4:48 PM
7	flatter management structure, greater redistribution of wealth!!	6/25/2015 4:25 PM
8	It is time to keep moving forward. Its time for a change.	6/25/2015 4:23 PM
9	Less bureaucracy, less politicians, less changes of wastage (time, money, effort)	6/25/2015 3:58 PM
10	Transport	6/25/2015 3:56 PM
11	High standard of community service will continue. Access to local councilors. Regional focus. High level of good financial management will continue.	6/24/2015 2:13 PM
12	debt	6/23/2015 2:45 PM
13	To maintain a close knit comunity with a responsive local council that reacts to local concerns and can control local development.	6/23/2015 1:54 PM
14	To stand on our own	6/23/2015 11:00 AM
15	Independent	6/23/2015 10:58 AM
16	Strathfield concil did not work properly to manage our community.	6/23/2015 9:49 AM
17	Loss of representation and cooperation between provision of public services	6/22/2015 10:12 PM
18	Rremain independent to cater for the needs of Strathfield residents	6/22/2015 10:00 AM
19	Strathfield Council does not have the debt level of other councils. Avoid additional cost of other councils,	6/20/2015 1:05 PM
20	Council amalgamations are just an attempt to remove the voice of the community as a whole and the right of individuals to have a say in their local community. Strathfield Council is approachable and responsive and should stay as it is. Strathfield is unique and should stay that way.	6/20/2015 10:48 AM
21	I want Strathfield to remain independent. Keep our rates low and debt low.	6/20/2015 8:55 AM
22	independence & more local representation	6/19/2015 7:17 PM
23	It's working best in the current form.	6/19/2015 10:45 AM
24	No clear evidence that amalgamation is will produce any savings or efficiencies as is claimed by some.	6/19/2015 6:41 AM

25	Strathfield should merge as: * It has 4x the projected population growth - literally a 100% increase - of any of the other councils listed in the May 2015 info pack. * For context, Burwood has the second biggest increase of just 25% and Burwood has been the one actively building more high density housing, including the ~10 storey one starting behind Strathfield's CBA. * A growth of this magnitude should mean it requires a lot more infrastructure than is currently planned. * To fund this, it would seem appropriate that it be shared with other councils. * I don't buy the explanation that no current debt and lower current per resident costs somehow magically leave room to double the population, it sounds fishy at best, when considered in light of the 2025 Local Environment Plan Map, e.g. that's a lot of people to squeeze into a small area on Parramatta Road when other councils like Canada Bay have easily 3x as much Parramatta Rd by length but half the projected population growth. * I note that the info pack, when compared with the 2014 ABS figures, arguably used a creative rounding up from 39,481 residents to 40,000 residents, while all other areas rounded to 500 correctly or rounded down. * However I would be interested in additional information packs that explained the discrepancies - especially where and how the council plans to manage the population growth, assuming it indeed does plan to do its bit in housing the extraordinary number of new immigrants to Australia (more power to the council and I would change my vote if this new construction were adequately explained and pushed for rather than appearing to be a pipe dream).	6/19/2015 12:48 AM
26	Strathfield Council is perfectly capable of functioning alone. The figures clearly show that Strathfield Council is much more efficient than several other of the councils involved. If we merge, they will benefit the most while we will be pulled down.	6/19/2015 12:07 AM
27	Strathfield needs to retainits own identity	6/18/2015 10:51 PM
28	Our area has unique needs which can be readily met by a local authority. Council provides adequate services at the moment.	6/18/2015 4:31 PM
29	Strathfield has the least overhead costs, no debt and is currently running at maximum efficiency - why ruin that	6/18/2015 3:14 PM
30	Strathfield Council is not competent. Accordingly an amalgamation will involve spreading certain costs over a greater area, and hopefully achieve greater accountability, responsibility and competence in providing services to residents.	6/18/2015 2:01 PM
31	Independent and there is no debt and better representation of the communitu	6/18/2015 10:07 AM
32	After living in Strathfield for over 50 years our Council has maintained a high standards of maintenance for the area. I don't want to lose this.	6/18/2015 12:37 AM
33	worried about increased rates and paying other councils debts, dont want any change , no merger!	6/17/2015 11:36 PM
34	Strathfield council should be independant as this is why we all moved here. We dont want to be agroup council	6/17/2015 10:09 PM
35	Strathfield council is an inept pathetic group	6/17/2015 8:44 PM
36	I bought a house to live in Strathfield Council and not other councils; our budget is better and don't want the financial burdens of other councils	6/17/2015 8:35 PM
37	I believe that Council is doing well and can continue to do well in coordination with others	6/17/2015 8:33 PM
38	Ability to tailor services to needs of focused community	6/17/2015 8:31 PM
39	Ability to tailor services to need of focused community	6/17/2015 8:29 PM
40	Diversification	6/17/2015 8:28 PM
41	-	6/17/2015 8:27 PM
42	-	6/17/2015 8:23 PM
43	Strathfield council is self sufficient and doesn't need to be dependent on any other councils	6/17/2015 8:19 PM
44	-	6/17/2015 8:16 PM
45	I don't want the peoples voice lost	6/17/2015 8:15 PM
46	Keen to retain local identify and services	6/17/2015 8:13 PM
47	Low debts indicate that the council is very well run -unless you can guarantee Strathfield management controls the other councils, we will have a change situation.	6/17/2015 8:11 PM
48	Strathfield functions management wise, economically and representatively. It is easy to contact councillors and keep in touch, Council rates are realistic and balanced across the community, Strathfield identity	6/17/2015 8:07 PM
49	Strathfield council doing well for the residents. Just don't want to change it.	6/17/2015 8:00 PM

50	Strathfield Council has no debt, rates would not increase, the services would be maintained.	6/17/2015 7:58 PM
51	losing identity, losing primary needs unfulfilled, higher taxes, neglect of infrastructure	6/17/2015 1:35 PM
52	As a resident of Strathfield since 1975, I cannot accept that there are beneits to be obtained - especially financially - from ANY amalgamation.	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
53	cost saving	6/17/2015 2:16 AM
54	Retain local democracy, preserve environmental and heritage values, control overdevelopment, better chance of retaining local character	6/17/2015 1:00 AM
55	It's important to stand alone for the people of Strathfield for consistency of decision making to support the needs of residents. Amalgamation would take away the independence of our close knit community.	6/16/2015 11:29 PM
56	Strathfield Council knows the needs of residents and how to meet those needs	6/16/2015 10:25 PM
57	Don't want to merge with a bunch of incompetent councils	6/16/2015 9:48 PM
58	We have a great council - debt free, runs smoothly. Why "fix" it if it's not broken?	6/16/2015 6:55 PM
59	Strathfield is currently financially stable (in the black) and ANY amalgamation would erode the funds to a deficit STRATHFIELD is currently efficient local and offers all the services required	6/16/2015 6:37 PM
60	Strathfield is financially viable and debt free.	6/16/2015 6:11 PM
61	Loss of services such as libraries, dilution of representation, take over of major parties and executive mayors	6/16/2015 5:31 PM
62	Strathfield council have done a good job and I can't see any reason to change	6/16/2015 5:29 PM
63	we have a better track record than any of these councils and our rates are lower - they have experienced corruption, inability to hold meeting because of culture of councillors, less poor and expensive bad decisions, more community activities and consultation with residents	6/16/2015 4:30 PM
64	Strathfield Council is out of debt. It has good co-operation between councillors of differing political parties eg electing a mayor. Social harmony is best fostered at a local level in multi-cultural areas. Local councils led the way for Indigenous recognition and fostering local cultural groups. A mega council would not have representatives at local functions. Security for everyone is best addressed locally.	6/16/2015 3:58 PM
65	Strathfield council is managing very well independently . satisfied residents	6/16/2015 3:49 PM
66	prefferd have our local identity	6/16/2015 3:25 PM
67	Why change something that works so well.	6/16/2015 3:15 PM
68	We are a solvent council, others are not. We have low rates and hight services, others don't The character / culture of my suburb is very different to the others	6/16/2015 3:13 PM
69	Local government has a greater impact on amenity than any other level of government. Smaller councils are more in touch with the community.	6/16/2015 2:51 PM
70	To maintain a closer connection between Council and local ratepayers. Maintain local decision-making.	6/16/2015 2:42 PM
71	Strathfield Council is out of debt and it would be better to work alone.	6/16/2015 2:27 PM
72	Less than 2 councillors to represent Strathfield is high risk. It is too easy to outvote a councillor in an amalgamated council so that standards deteriorate and the identity of the suburb diminishes. I am not in favour of Strathfield becoming a ghetto of inferior apartments amidst homes; of mediocrity as opposed to pleasing identity.	6/16/2015 2:22 PM
73	Our Council is beautifully run and free of debt. Why change that?	6/16/2015 2:12 PM
74	Better representation of our community, localised approach and planning for our community.	6/16/2015 2:05 PM
75	I want a council to remain as it is as there is a strong voice in our area as the size of Strathfield council is able to be managed more efficiently and effectively.	6/16/2015 2:01 PM
76	Strathfield is doing fine,low rates ,no debt,,good community,,plenty of care re health issues,good bus trips,,all services great just has to watch overdevelopment.	6/16/2015 1:57 PM
77	to keep Strathfield standered as it is, house prices, council rate.....etc	6/16/2015 1:55 PM
78	The levels of service and engagement with the community can best be maintained if Strathfield Council did not amalgamate.	6/16/2015 1:40 PM
79	Strathfield has managed its finances very well over the years and will be disadvantaged by amalgamation. Also strathfield is unique in its large number of heritage protected areas that need to be protected against against over development	6/16/2015 1:17 PM

80	Strathfield Council is already running by itself efficiently. I do not see the need to merge with other council. Why change something that is already working? Also, I do not want to lose the local decision making power to other non-Strathfield residents.	6/16/2015 1:13 PM
81	Smaller councils can manage their resources and finances well.Strathfield Council has been providing excellent services on its own.	6/16/2015 1:13 PM
82	I believe that we as a council have worked tirelessly to uphold a level of a close knit sense of belonging. Strathfield council has long held the values and voices of its people.	6/16/2015 1:10 PM
83	being independent the residents can chooes the path they wish to follow	6/16/2015 1:02 PM
84	We currently enjoy benefits of Strathfield being run as a smaller independent council - lower rates, tailored to the needs of residents by being more in touch with issues of this area, low density. We are concerned this will be changed if we move to an amalgamated council.	6/16/2015 12:53 PM
85	Strathfield Council has a proven record of maintaining reasonable rates stability	6/16/2015 12:51 PM
86	Loss of voice 1 in 5714 per councillor and secondly why should we amalgamate when we are not in debt and have to take on Burwood, Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville's debt.	6/16/2015 12:42 PM
87	Strathfield is a well managed council and a unique suburban area within the Sydney inner west. Also residents need a voice regarding planning and domestic issues that need resolving.	6/16/2015 12:41 PM
88	Happy with the present deal.	6/16/2015 12:39 PM
89	Strathfield Council works efficiently for strathfield residents. Financial records confirm Strathfield is well managed.	6/16/2015 12:18 PM
90	Strathfield has no debt, easy to get in touch with a councillor, rates are lower than many other councils and footpaths etc are kept quite good.	6/14/2015 1:22 PM
91	Being a stand alone Council ensures that the interests of the Strathfield area would be attended to and the standard maintained rather than resources and services being spread thinly across a number of areas.	6/13/2015 8:14 PM
92	A resident of Strathfield for past 40 years, I feel there is a strong need to retain the Strathfield identity and to maintain the currently independent Strathfield Council Management Team to effectively administer our rates to benefit all residents and local parks, libraries, health centres, roads and the housing boom.	6/13/2015 3:18 PM
93	better run economy by Strathfield.	6/13/2015 12:35 PM
94	Locals have more say/control over Council Services in a smaller stand alone Council. Our rates are the cheapest in the West and jobs at Strathfield Council preserved.	6/13/2015 10:38 AM
95	Leave Strathfiekd alone	6/12/2015 9:43 PM
96	Maintain local identity & keep rates low	6/12/2015 9:42 PM
97	stay out of debt	6/12/2015 8:04 PM
98	low rates, low liability	6/12/2015 5:00 PM
99	Council meets all community needs and requirements. I don't agree with the purpose for amalgamation.	6/12/2015 11:10 AM
100	Strathfield Council is financial (in the Black) The residents have an ability to contact their Councillors and staff at council with any problem that arises that is a concern. Does not need to be merged with any one else and has great historical value to NSW.If forced to merge the developers will ruin this Council Municipality.	6/11/2015 11:33 PM
101	I belive that the councils are too small in a modern era. Howver this should only be done if the lower council rates can be maintained by strtafield residnets for a least 10 years over this period the rtaes could be brought into alignment. Councilers can still represent thir prginal reas but look to reduce the number consistent with the population	6/11/2015 5:56 PM
102	Council is running perfectly fine as it is.	6/11/2015 4:09 PM
103	increased debt burden for strathfield residents, loss of strathfield identity, increased residential and business rates for payers, staff redundancies and significant costs to NSW government	6/11/2015 3:53 PM
104	No debt, low rates	6/11/2015 3:31 PM
105	a	6/11/2015 3:29 PM
106	No loss of identity Likely lower rates Low borrowings	6/11/2015 9:29 AM
107	Strathfield belongs to Strathfield Local Identity	6/10/2015 10:19 PM

108	I want my local council to listen to concerns of each resident - I don't want my voice to be lost amongst thousands.	6/10/2015 9:08 PM
109	Maintain Strathfield identity, maintain similar levels of residential rates, current service levels and low debt ratio.	6/10/2015 8:44 PM
110	Saves money for everyone. It's a joke that councillors are so self interested .	6/10/2015 5:41 PM
111	A bigger Council will sort out inefficiencies within smaller councils.	6/10/2015 5:09 PM
112	because I think small councils look after population better, bigger is losing identity	6/10/2015 4:23 PM
113	unique nature of the Strathfield Council area different needs of other council areas Strathfield's positive financial position joining with other councils will make the combined areas too large, more difficult to manage and not provide cost savings	6/10/2015 3:37 PM
114	Strathfield Council is the most efficient among the others.	6/10/2015 2:41 PM
115	No debt n the least infrastructure backlog.	6/10/2015 2:34 PM
116	Strathfield Council is the most efficient council with only 150 staff and operation costs per capita is $810 compare with other councils.	6/10/2015 2:22 PM
117	A collaborative approach is more effective and efficient	6/10/2015 12:07 PM
118	More control over local area, Burwood and developers will control area.	6/10/2015 11:13 AM
119	Rates will increase and nothing would improve	6/10/2015 1:00 AM
120	Local identity	6/9/2015 8:30 PM
121	Centralized services.	6/9/2015 7:00 PM
122	we currently have good Council management, with a low debt ratio.	6/9/2015 5:52 PM
123	Low Council Rates and Stathfield having No debt	6/9/2015 5:23 PM
124	Better resource sharing to provide services	6/9/2015 4:58 PM
125	more effective management as smaller council.	6/9/2015 3:32 PM
126	The other councils mentioned would not work in the best interests of Strathfield.	6/8/2015 11:24 PM
127	There are too many levels of government and we need economies of scale	6/8/2015 8:32 PM
128	to maintain Strathfield's identity and character	6/8/2015 4:52 PM
129	The inner west councils have a very poor track record of working with each other. They are very inward looking.	6/8/2015 2:34 PM
130	I don't want a increase of council rates of 16 % or any further rise. Strathfield is better as standalone council as the value of the area would decrease amalgamating. Local Councillors understand their local people their represent.	6/8/2015 11:59 AM
131	Local solution to local issues Maintain status quo & rates	6/7/2015 5:54 PM
132	I would prefer Strathfield to remain a standalone council	6/7/2015 9:04 AM
133	Strathfield Council is well run and residents have few complaints. Compared to how State and Federal are run and their financial management, the local council looks brilliant in comparison.	6/7/2015 8:33 AM
134	Maintain identity and local representation of Strathfield.	6/6/2015 10:39 PM
135	We have far too many 'small' councils and far too any councillors, merging small councils will remove inefficiencies and duplication.	6/6/2015 8:47 PM
136	Concerned about ghe loss of identity of strathfield if there was a merger. Also in a bigger council the strathfield area will not have strong representation on cohncil. We have no debt , it would be an unfair burden for strathfield residents to pay higher rates for mistakes made by other councils	6/6/2015 8:40 PM
137	lower council rates	6/6/2015 3:43 PM
138	I believe that Strathfield council is the best doing a great job as is	6/6/2015 12:13 PM
139	Can make decisions for the locals	6/6/2015 12:02 AM
140	While a bigger area might have more capacity to bargain with the NSW government, I cannot believe it will mean decisions made at a local level will be better. The area proposed to join together is a diverse area with diverse needs.	6/5/2015 9:28 PM

141	I do not wish the character of Strathfield to change.	6/5/2015 6:20 PM
142	FWEE	6/5/2015 4:47 PM
143	I want Strathfield Council to stand alone as before.	6/5/2015 4:46 PM
144	Prefer more personal service. Local issues handled faster and with more efficiency in a local focused Council. Attention to local issues delivered faster. Having interest of own area at heart of things verses competing in the crowd.	6/5/2015 3:59 PM
145	The essence of good Local Government is to provide a community spirit. The information contained in the recently distributed booklet sows no evidence why Strathfield should be amalgamated	6/5/2015 12:07 PM
146	Strathfield is an affluent suburb with a favourable identity and demographics. As much as there are positives to be gained from merging councils I'm concerned the negatives will outweigh the positives. Additionally if a merge was to take place Strath council has no debt, would a merge result in Strath residents taking on the burden of other councils debt incurred prior to the merge?!	6/5/2015 10:37 AM
147	strathfield council should remain independent. it preserves our identity. we have no debt. we're well managed.	6/5/2015 12:19 AM
148	To prevent the slowness in council's payments from occurring.	6/4/2015 9:24 PM
149	Strathfield Council's representation of its local community. 130 years of listening to the local voice.	6/4/2015 4:27 PM
150	we must fight against any amalgamation, Strathfield Council can stand alone.	6/4/2015 4:14 PM
151	Local identity prompt and easy access to council services and personnel Strathfield is financially healthy	6/4/2015 1:02 PM
152	Council is a good council and cares about the local community	6/3/2015 8:17 PM
153	To many councils need to cut down on admin staff and use funds for real progress.	6/3/2015 2:45 PM
154	I see no reason to change	6/3/2015 7:47 AM
155	Because I think that only Strathfield council will have Strathfield's best interest at heart, and continue to make the time to organise activities fro it's residents, as well as address any issues.	6/2/2015 6:16 PM
156	Strathfield Council is a well run council and provides high quality services for its residents. This would be lost in a huge Council.	6/2/2015 5:57 PM
157	(1) Too small i.e. Not enough expertise in-house by numbers or by standard - eg. Demonstrated lack of professionalism and expertise in Strategic Planning (2) Similar to (1) above. Demonstrated lack of in-house business expertise due to its small staff size. e.g. Its carriage of the underground Bus Terminal component of the MasterPlan - without 'having engineers in the room' especially re the flooding issue was amateurish. $2m has been wasted (3) Small size has encouraged Councillor partisanship & rampant populism at the expense of cost-effectiveness & 'unattractive' micro-economic reform for long-term economic benefit. e.g. Its rush to get private enterprise EOI for partnering with the Masterplan without having the $700K funding approved/ provided first to confirm its business plan/ engineering viability was wasteful & counterproductive in attracting private involvement	6/2/2015 3:20 PM
158	z	6/2/2015 12:30 PM
159	I can not see why not	6/2/2015 12:46 AM
160	There is no reason to amalgamate councils, most people are happy with the council and it provides a good service - why change?	6/1/2015 11:22 PM
161	no debts	6/1/2015 4:25 PM

Q3 What are the main reasons you chose your least preferred option?

Answered: 161 Skipped: 41

#	Responses	Date
1	Are you serious? Just what we need a mega council, with over-paid politicians taking no notice of communities and 'making decisions' for our own good	6/28/2015 2:58 PM
2	I see no substantial advantages for Strathfield council to amalgamate with neighbouring councils	6/25/2015 11:23 PM
3	i wish to still keep our own council in strathfield and not combine together. I am from a small country but we are not a rich country, but we still have our own council in our place, even it is a small town. It is a big joke in the world as Australia Sydney is a very good place that this for me is disappointing.	6/25/2015 5:26 PM
4	Too much input from other councils, who do not know the local issues in our area adn therefore, will not hear our concerns over these issues.	6/25/2015 5:16 PM
5	worse debt status, worse bureaucracy	6/25/2015 4:50 PM
6	Less representiation of your local area and taking on the problems and finances of other councils.	6/25/2015 4:48 PM
7	small council area keep wealth in small areas. poor management in the past.	6/25/2015 4:25 PM
8	Its time at present and in the past show poor decision made	6/25/2015 4:23 PM
9	-	6/25/2015 3:58 PM
10	Development	6/25/2015 3:56 PM
11	Opposite of all the above 4 reasons.	6/24/2015 2:13 PM
12	debt	6/23/2015 2:45 PM
13	Loss of control over local development. Potential increase in rates, No authority has given a writen guarentee that rates will not increase beyond the CPI if mergers take place.	6/23/2015 1:54 PM
14	-	6/23/2015 11:00 AM
15	We have no debt	6/23/2015 10:58 AM
16	Strathfield concil did not work properly to manage our community.	6/23/2015 9:49 AM
17	The second option is of local concern and too much power will be concentrated elsewhere.	6/22/2015 10:12 PM
18	Will be too big to manage resources	6/22/2015 10:00 AM
19	Avoid additional cost of other council areas	6/20/2015 1:05 PM
20	Bigger councils are just giant soulless entities with no concern for people or the environment or anything other than numbers on reports. Bigger councils dont care about small communities or small groups. They are just rubber stamps for State Government and developer sanctioned development at all costs.	6/20/2015 10:48 AM
21	This will lead to rate rise.	6/20/2015 8:55 AM
22	the opposite for question 2	6/19/2015 7:17 PM
23	It might be difficult to reach our local council	6/19/2015 10:45 AM
24	Same as 2 above. Some savings can be achieved by co-operation without amalgamation.	6/19/2015 6:41 AM
25	Strathfield should not remain stand-alone as: * Strathfield is already the second smallest council - it seems ludicrously wasteful of scarce resources to have 7 representatives spending their time (and implicitly ratepayers money). * Fewer representatives per head of population sounds suspiciously similar to the theory that smaller school class sizes are a good use of scarce taxpayer funds. Asian schools often have class sizes of 50 or more yet they deliver some of the best educational outcomes for their students, while Australia has tended to lag the pack and get a very poor return on new funds put towards education. So I am not convinced that fewer councillors per resident will cause less representation in practice. * I was disappointed that I could not make either information session due to both being on a Saturday morning. * Perhaps a larger council might be more likely to have someone say post a Youtube / Vimeo of those discussions for those who could not make it in person?	6/19/2015 12:48 AM

26	Strathfield has the third largest projection population by 2031, yet has one of the lowest per capita operating costs and nil debt. It is unfair and frankly reeks of corruption that councils such as Leichhardt which operate at unfairly high costs and have lower projected populations should benefit from merging resources with Strathfield Council. We will have one of the lowest representations in the proposed new council. This is unacceptable.	6/19/2015 12:07 AM
27	The areas are too different	6/18/2015 10:51 PM
28	Strathfield's needs and services can be lost in a large administrative Council.	6/18/2015 4:31 PM
29	amalgamations will increase demands on councils, slow response times down and get everyone to share the unwanted debts of other councils	6/18/2015 3:14 PM
30	Collaboration will simply involve more incompetent people holding more meetings with other people under the pretence of collaborating to get something done.	6/18/2015 2:01 PM
31	Because there is no other option	6/18/2015 10:07 AM
32	Gobbled by larger councils who could not care about Strathfield or its residents the same way we are now.	6/18/2015 12:37 AM
33	nil	6/17/2015 11:36 PM
34	We are fed up with all the development going around us with so many apartments coming. Merging councils will just increase this	6/17/2015 10:09 PM
35	its obvious, your hopeless	6/17/2015 8:44 PM
36	I just don't like the idea of amalgamation that will cause more population, more traffic and more rates - just not happy	6/17/2015 8:35 PM
37	-	6/17/2015 8:33 PM
38	-	6/17/2015 8:31 PM
39	-	6/17/2015 8:29 PM
40	-	6/17/2015 8:28 PM
41	We don't have the service we have now	6/17/2015 8:27 PM
42	-	6/17/2015 8:23 PM
43	-	6/17/2015 8:19 PM
44	-	6/17/2015 8:16 PM
45	Same as above	6/17/2015 8:15 PM
46	If this was the case my preferences would be an amalgamation of inner west councils (not auburn council/city of Olympic park option)	6/17/2015 8:13 PM
47	large councils don't deliver more cost effective servcies	6/17/2015 8:11 PM
48	Amalgamation leads to empire building within council departments leading to increased costs and decreased representation. Rates for Strathfield would increase due to large blocks compared to other councils and residents would be priced out of the locality.	6/17/2015 8:07 PM
49	Don't want change	6/17/2015 8:00 PM
50	Too large council - less services	6/17/2015 7:58 PM
51	this is not my preferred option if I have to choose.	6/17/2015 1:35 PM
52	I cannot accept that the unique nature of Strathfield will be enhanced in any way with any other Council. I am sceptical of the motivation/s behind amalgamations; as far as I can see, the only winners will be developers, and residents do not deserve to be surrounded by high-rise and poor infrastructure that cannot sustain it. We are at critical mass already - please, NO amalgamations for what are at best spurious reasons!	6/17/2015 1:15 PM
53	n/a	6/17/2015 2:16 AM
54	It will lead to overdevelopment with state government control and no chance for community to have input	6/17/2015 1:00 AM
55	Amalgamation would be the worst possible decision for all residents concerned due to loss of independence of each community network.	6/16/2015 11:29 PM
56	Too many and therefore far too big to care about the needs of individual councils lost in the Hugh numbers	6/16/2015 10:25 PM
57	Actually I can't see any good arguments for this merger	6/16/2015 9:48 PM

58	We would inherit debt, the area becomes bigger and we would probably not get the level of care and maintenance we currently get.	6/16/2015 6:55 PM
59	The huge COUNCIL would be just too large lose identity probably service the Councils proposed are very diverse in character and would be a financial drain	6/16/2015 6:37 PM
60	The other councils are larger in area, debt and unfunded future work commitments.	6/16/2015 6:11 PM
61	There are no economies of scale in the equation of mega councils.	6/16/2015 5:31 PM
62	get too impersonal rate will rise lost Strathfield's identity properties will lost value.	6/16/2015 5:29 PM
63	higher rates, corruption, different culture and needs of residents	6/16/2015 4:30 PM
64	Bigger is not necessarily better economically. It is certainly harder to get a sense of 'belonging' which so many migrants are seeking. Already, the supervision of development leaves a lot to be desired - the bigger the council, the less chance of finding out corruption. Strathfield Council has better systems of collecting garbage/street dumping than Burwood, in terms of my local observation. Only Canada Bay and Strathfield are free of debt. Forced amalgamation would not solve other councils financial problems. Our rates are likely to rise. Why force a ' one-size-fits-all' solution when losses are likely to be greater than gains. The process of decision-making is undemocratic.	6/16/2015 3:58 PM
65	Too large ,many more issues and will not be able to cater to the individualistic needs of the particular suburb.	6/16/2015 3:49 PM
66	high rates & loos our local identity.	6/16/2015 3:25 PM
67	Because it is undesirable to be part of a larger group.	6/16/2015 3:15 PM
68	I would not want to choose this option.Your survey request is for 1 then 2	6/16/2015 3:13 PM
69	I have owned properties in both Sutherland and Bankstown councils. Services are vastly inferior and more expensive	6/16/2015 2:51 PM
70	An amalgamated megacouncil would become too distant from ratepayers.	6/16/2015 2:42 PM
71	We don't need other Councils debts	6/16/2015 2:27 PM
72	An amalgamated council cannot satisfy the options desired by those lumped into a large group.	6/16/2015 2:22 PM
73	The previous answer would be impossible.	6/16/2015 2:12 PM
74	Amalgamation will affect future planning for our community, few resources for a bigger area of responsibility	6/16/2015 2:05 PM
75	By becoming a large inner west council people no longer have a strong people presents to stop things that may effect the community the state government may want to enforce or propose like the said housing targets that encourage developers to build monstrous units. also rates will be effected due to Strathfield property sizes and as an example of Office of Fair Trading downsize to one big "Super centre" every body working within the office looks after all the licencing but nobody knows anything as it is all departments put into one.	6/16/2015 2:01 PM
76	All those other councils are no to be compared with strathfield....leave us alone.	6/16/2015 1:57 PM
77	No benefit for strathfield	6/16/2015 1:55 PM
78	We do not want rate payments of Strathfield residents subsidising inefficiencies of other councils.	6/16/2015 1:40 PM
79	Strsthfield would lose its autonomy	6/16/2015 1:17 PM
80	I didn't choose it as it was automatically chosen. If there were choice, I won't even choose this second option.	6/16/2015 1:13 PM
81	Bigger the councils, bigger the bureaucracy and deterioration of servcies.	6/16/2015 1:13 PM
82	It is preferred that we stay on our own as we can see that we are doing just fine.	6/16/2015 1:10 PM
83	the councils in question are in the media for negative reasons	6/16/2015 1:02 PM
84	I'm unsure what the benefits will be to the residents of Strathfield if we merge with other councils.	6/16/2015 12:53 PM
85	N/a	6/16/2015 12:51 PM
86	As above and I don't want Strathfield residents to be charged higher rates because we have larger land sizes in comparison to the other suburbs. We are unique in this regard.	6/16/2015 12:42 PM
87	An amalgamation would remove the voice of the residents of strathfield.	6/16/2015 12:41 PM
88	Increased expenses likely	6/16/2015 12:39 PM
89	Against creating an empire which will lose touch with the local issues that are the responsibility of a local council. Might as well abolish the councils all together and incorporate their functions into State government.	6/16/2015 12:18 PM

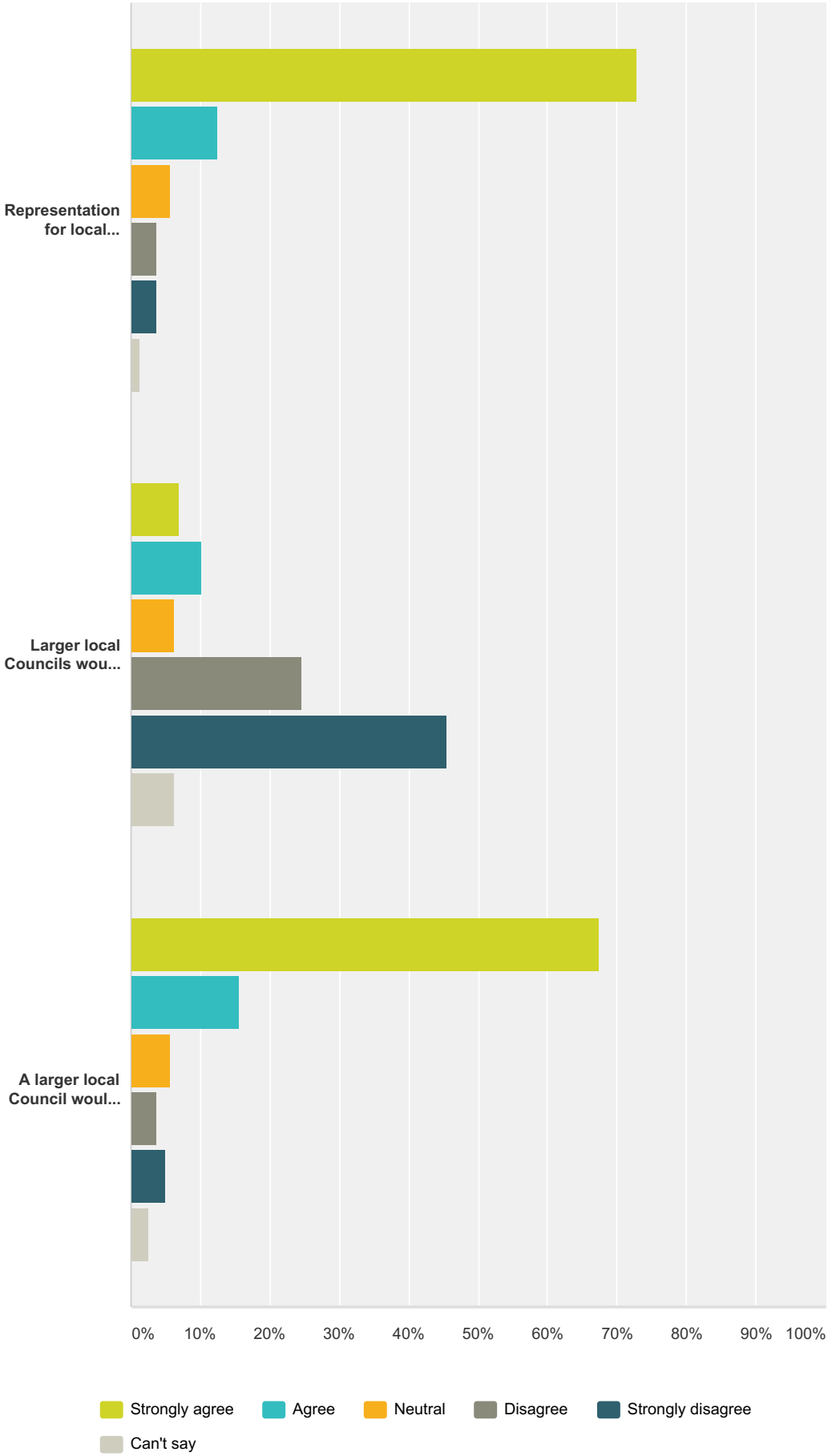
90	If we merge it will be much harder to get things down in the municipality and to get info from councillors. Harder for councils to keep in touch with community.	6/14/2015 1:22 PM
91	My main reason that I would choose my least preferred option is because I do not wish to see the standards of service and presentation currently enjoyed under the present stand alone Council eroded and neglected which is what would occur under an amalgamation with other Council non heritage arera.	6/13/2015 8:14 PM
92	A resident of Strathfield for past 40 years, I feel the loss of the Strathfield identity and the reduction of Council representation in the Mega Council scenario would negatively impact our living standards; in that, Strathfield's assets would be swallowed into operating debts of other inner west councils, resulting in a significant reduction of Strathfield's substantial home prices and valuable local infrastructures.	6/13/2015 3:18 PM
93	the other Councils should fix their own economy. amalgamation should be between equals or near equals	6/13/2015 12:35 PM
94	Why pay more and get no say in your locality. The Ranger comes to my rescue immediately when it comes to parking issues in front of my house. Mergers are not always beneficial.	6/13/2015 10:38 AM
95	Costs will increase for ratepayers	6/12/2015 9:43 PM
96	Council will be too big & it's our local community	6/12/2015 9:42 PM
97	too much debt	6/12/2015 8:04 PM
98	diminished decision making power for community, watering down of planning regulations and loss of distinct community character	6/12/2015 5:00 PM
99	Don't want rates to increase, at least Burwood & Ashfield councils should merge	6/12/2015 11:10 AM
100	Many of the Councils that have been suggested to merge with are in Debt and their rates are much higher than Strathfield .Known as the Oasis of the West this title can only remain if we stay as is.	6/11/2015 11:33 PM
101	I believe councils should work with each other, however without fiull merger the savings will not be generated	6/11/2015 5:56 PM
102	Ne benefit to the community.	6/11/2015 4:09 PM
103	poor service delivery with the merger, financial impacts to payers, redundancies and loss of Strathfield's local identity	6/11/2015 3:53 PM
104	Too big to be effective or represent local issues	6/11/2015 3:31 PM
105	a	6/11/2015 3:29 PM
106	Loss of representation	6/11/2015 9:29 AM
107	Strathfield will have no say in it what happens Lose indentity	6/10/2015 10:19 PM
108	A compelling reason for amalgamation has not been presented to me.	6/10/2015 9:08 PM
109	Increase debt burden, increase of rates, transition costs. It is a nonsense!	6/10/2015 8:44 PM
110	Sick of bull**it dealt out by Strathfield councillors and waste of money in duplicated services.	6/10/2015 5:41 PM
111	Strathfield Council as an organisation could use some streamlining in terms of staffing, more progressive policies, and operations.	6/10/2015 5:09 PM
112	because you lose your id	6/10/2015 4:23 PM
113	better to be able to share/negotiate with other council areas where needed	6/10/2015 3:37 PM
114	Loss of identity	6/10/2015 2:41 PM
115	Loss of identity n increase of debt for Strathfield resident.	6/10/2015 2:34 PM
116	Increased debt burden for Strathfield residents and the loss of Strathfield identity.	6/10/2015 2:22 PM
117	There are some problems as the current status quo	6/10/2015 12:07 PM
118	Rates will increase	6/10/2015 11:13 AM
119	Council will be too big	6/10/2015 1:00 AM
120	Service delivery will not reflect Strathfield priority	6/9/2015 8:30 PM
121	Strathfield council offers very little to its constituents apart from one weekly street cleaning. Amalgamation can't come soon enough.	6/9/2015 7:00 PM
122	Higher debt, less community connection	6/9/2015 5:52 PM

123	Means we have to take on the other councils debts and our rates will increased and don't want to become part of Bankstown Council	6/9/2015 5:23 PM
124	It's simply best for business to amalgamate	6/9/2015 4:58 PM
125	more costly and likely ineffective	6/9/2015 3:32 PM
126	Working with Marrickville council would be difficult.	6/8/2015 11:24 PM
127	Small councils are unsustainable and waste of rate payers money funding huge overhead costs	6/8/2015 8:32 PM
128	My biggest fear is seeing developments in burwood occurring in Strathfield.	6/8/2015 4:52 PM
129	It won't work - it will be forgotten about quickly and things will go back to the way they are today.	6/8/2015 2:34 PM
130	I don't like the idea of amalgamating with other councils. The increase to council rates would have financial impacts on most people as cost of living across the board with every item e.g strata rates, grocery, transport, car, insurance, health fund, chemist, electricity, water, tradesman, child care, school fee's is never the same as pay rise from your employer. say e.g cost of living increase 80 % every year, payrise if lucky 2 % per person.	6/8/2015 11:59 AM
131	Rates change Loss of identity Debt burden	6/7/2015 5:54 PM
132	Same as above	6/7/2015 9:04 AM
133	How is government 'local' when it is half million people? If this is Mike Baird's idea of local representation, why is his own electorate so small? Maybe we don't need so many state politicians, would this be more efficient? This is a bad joke. Local government is not a government department, it is a democratically elected tier of government and performs a range of functions that state or federal government can't or won't do. This is an insult to the people of NSW.	6/7/2015 8:33 AM
134	Amalgamation would incur large one off costs with minimal ongoing cost savings.	6/6/2015 10:39 PM
135	Current council set up is ridiculously top heavy with councillors for what is a relatively small are to govern. The inefficiency with so many councils is wasteful. There are too many councillors who have little in the way of qualifications to make decisions that effect so many and cost so much.	6/6/2015 8:47 PM
136	Currently we have closer representation from our councillors , there's less residents per councillor than if the merger were to take place. If would cost alot to consolidate so many councils and the peoples voice of strathfield may get lost	6/6/2015 8:40 PM
137	higher council rates	6/6/2015 3:43 PM
138	Lack of service	6/6/2015 12:13 PM
139	More expensive rates	6/6/2015 12:02 AM
140	The lack of representation regarding smaller number of Councillors, the fact that it looks like Strathfield might be better able to meet the targets in 2016/17 then an Inner West council. I don't think rates should go up. I also have enough trouble contacting the council as it is, they will care less if they have a larger area as it is.	6/5/2015 9:28 PM
141	Aesthetics. Amalgamation will mean apartment buildings with clothes drying on balconies as in Ashfield near the station and garish brown iron work in the main road rather than black or dark green. It will mean more high rise buildings like the one in Burwood which is in a prominent position but which has not architecture to match. As a matter of interest how am I to interpret say and 7/10ths of persons.	6/5/2015 6:20 PM
142	FWEFE	6/5/2015 4:47 PM
143	I don't want the Council to be amalgamated.	6/5/2015 4:46 PM
144	Small Councillor representation. Councillors from larger councils getting more immediate service of their wants and needs. Possible less efficiency within larger group. Possible loss of Strathfield Identity. Changes in the way present services are delivered to our detriment. Less say about what we want in our Municipality and less power to get delivered the services we want/require.	6/5/2015 3:59 PM
145	To amalgamate the local community would result in Strathfields identity being lost. To go down this path you may as well eliminate Local Government all together.	6/5/2015 12:07 PM
146	refer to the above. possible higher rates due to the carry on debt from other councils after the merge, losing identity, I like the positive connotations Sydney folks have about Strath as a suburb, it's not necessarily comparable to the other councils.	6/5/2015 10:37 AM
147	loss of identity. larger organisations tend to respond to change slower with more levels of bureaucracy.	6/5/2015 12:19 AM
148	It will cause many issues with Strathfield district	6/4/2015 9:24 PM
149	no benefit in joining another council. loss od representation and higher rates	6/4/2015 4:27 PM

150	Bigger is not better	6/4/2015 4:14 PM
151	loss of local identity loss of prompt and easy access to council services and personnel Strathfield will not be financially healthy as at present	6/4/2015 1:02 PM
152	Big councils ignore local residents, you don't have a say	6/3/2015 8:17 PM
153	Strathfield should be ashamed how it has handled ACU university and paring issues in area. No consistency at all.	6/3/2015 2:45 PM
154	Council would be too large and residents would have no say	6/3/2015 7:47 AM
155	Because we have nothing in common with councils/areas such as Marrickville, especially politically, but most definitely culturally. You can't cater to everyone on that list - some citizens will fall by the wayside.	6/2/2015 6:16 PM
156	Inner west council is too big, why do Councils have to be so large?	6/2/2015 5:57 PM
157	I would never want Strathfield Council to be stand-alone. It's level of Councillor debate is too partisan. It's Councillors unanimous vote to spend $100K - without a mandate on 'fighting' amalgamation was akin to King Canute paying a PR firm to help him stop the waves.	6/2/2015 3:20 PM
158	z	6/2/2015 12:30 PM
159	not efficient	6/2/2015 12:46 AM
160	Big Councils are expensive, bureaucratic, impersonal and don't care about residents - people are just a number like they are to state and federal government	6/1/2015 11:22 PM
161	don't like big councils, not responsive to community	6/1/2015 4:25 PM

Q4 Please indicate to what extent do you agree with the following statements:

Answered: 160 Skipped: 42

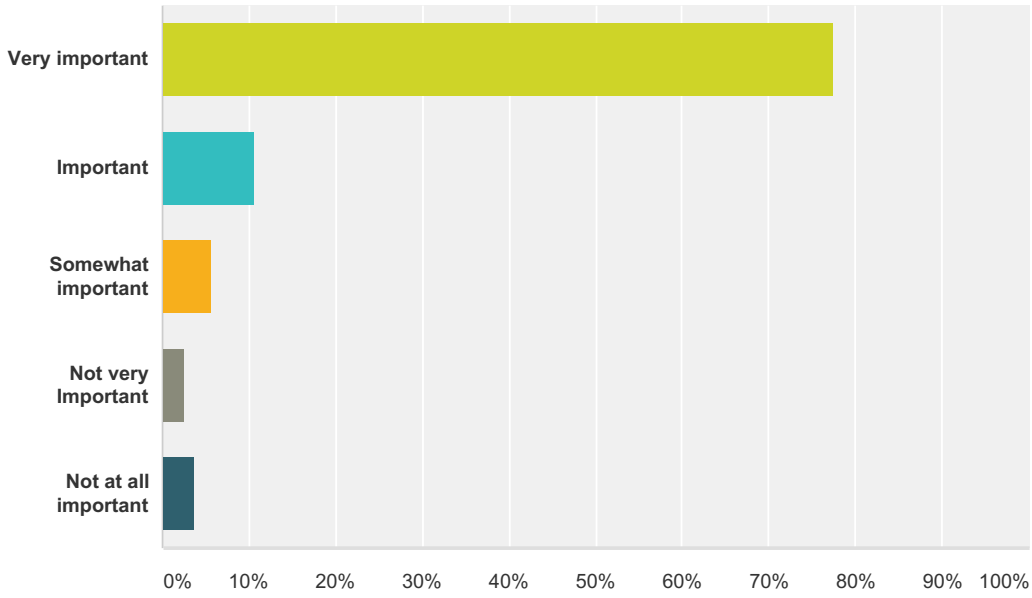


	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't say	Total

Representation for local residents in an amalgamated Council will be reduced.	**72.96%** 116	**12.58%** 20	**5.66%** 9	**3.77%** 6	**3.77%** 6	**1.26%** 2	159
Larger local Councils would deliver more cost effective and better services for residents and communities.	**6.96%** 11	**10.13%** 16	**6.33%** 10	**24.68%** 39	**45.57%** 72	**6.33%** 10	158
A larger local Council would be less responsive to local communities and rates would increase	**67.50%** 108	**15.63%** 25	**5.63%** 9	**3.75%** 6	**5.00%** 8	**2.50%** 4	160

Q5 How important to you is Strathfield's local identity?

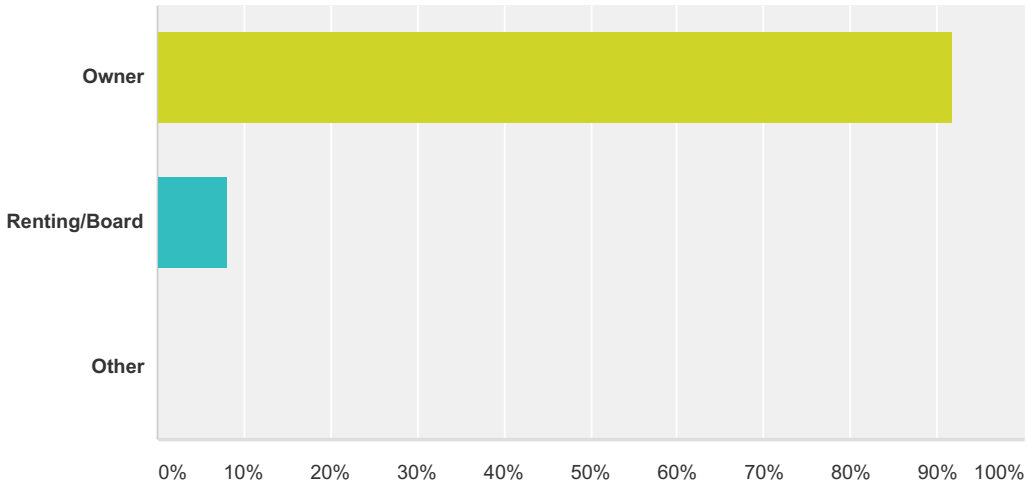
Answered: 160 Skipped: 42



Answer Choices	Responses	
Very important	**77.50%**	124
Important	**10.63%**	17
Somewhat important	**5.63%**	9
Not very Important	**2.50%**	4
Not at all important	**3.75%**	6
Total		**160**

Q6 What is your status in relation to your home?

Answered: 158 Skipped: 44

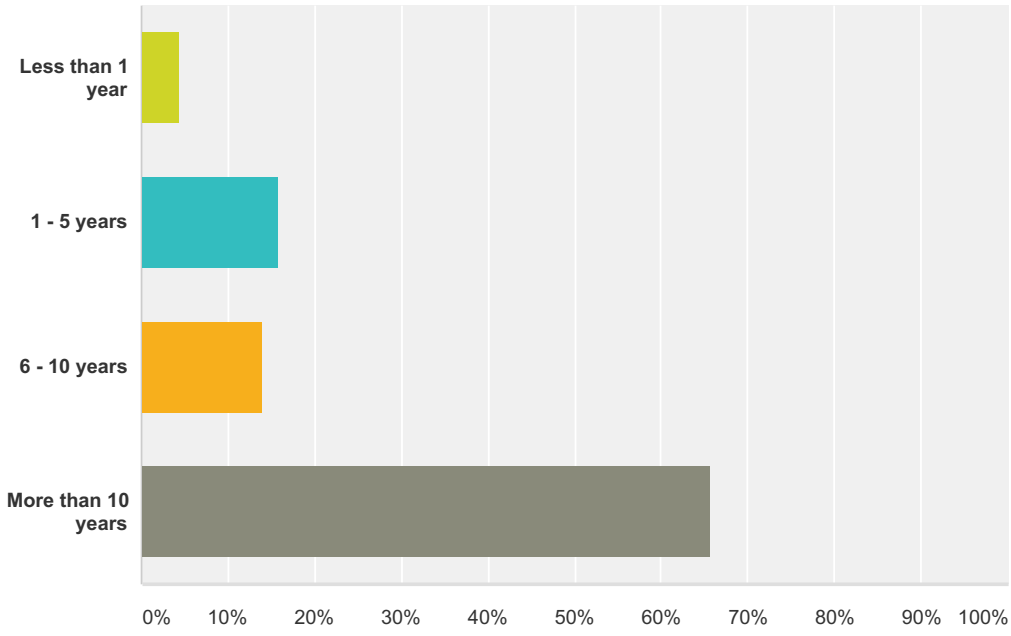


Answer Choices	Responses	
Owner	**91.77%**	145
Renting/Board	**8.23%**	13
Other	**0.00%**	0
Total		**158**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Religious sister living in a Trustee owned unit	6/16/2015 4:00 PM

Q7 How long have you lived in the Strathfield Council area?

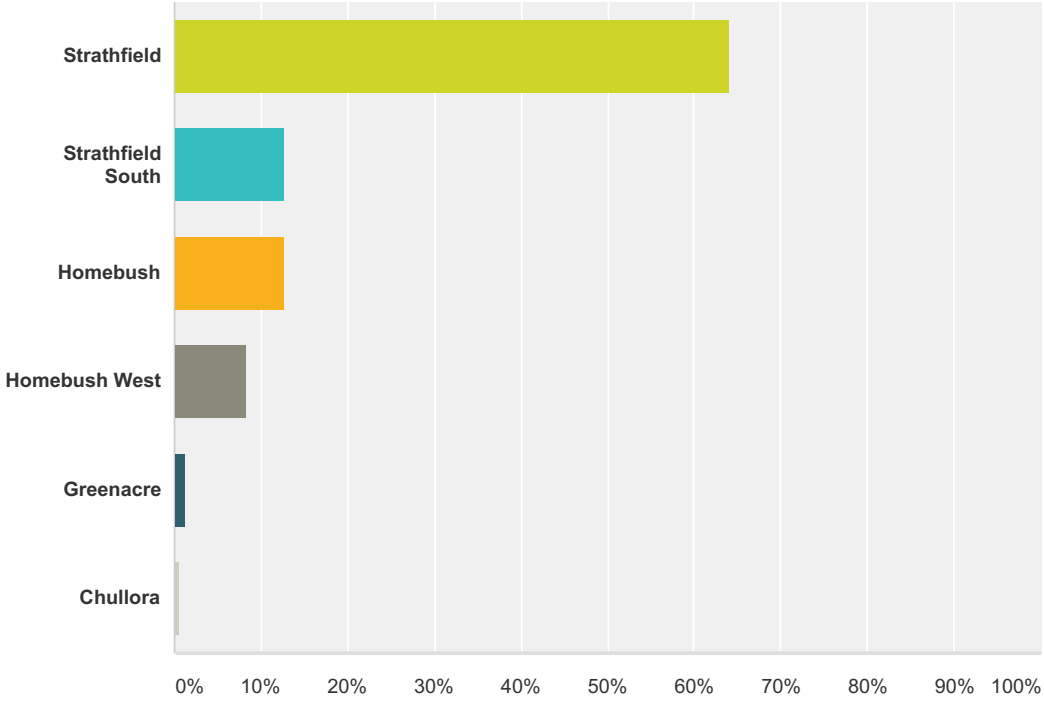
Answered: 158 Skipped: 44



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 year	**4.43%**	7
1 - 5 years	**15.82%**	25
6 - 10 years	**13.92%**	22
More than 10 years	**65.82%**	104
Total		**158**

Q8 Which suburb do you live in?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 46

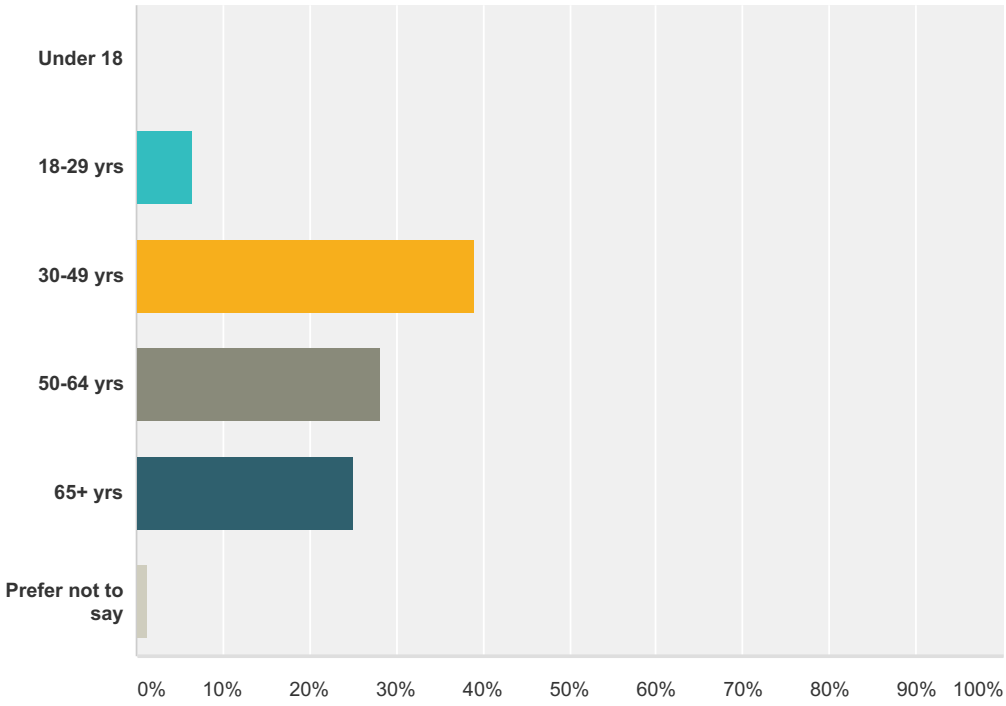


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strathfield	**64.10%**	100
Strathfield South	**12.82%**	20
Homebush	**12.82%**	20
Homebush West	**8.33%**	13
Greenacre	**1.28%**	2
Chullora	**0.64%**	1
Total		**156**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Belfield	6/20/2015 10:49 AM
2	Its embarrising being represented by such rubbish	6/17/2015 8:45 PM
3	Belfield	6/16/2015 11:32 PM
4	Belfield	6/16/2015 2:02 PM
5	Belfield	6/10/2015 8:45 PM
6	North Strathfield	6/9/2015 8:32 PM
7	Belfield	6/6/2015 3:45 PM

Q9 Which age group do you belong to?

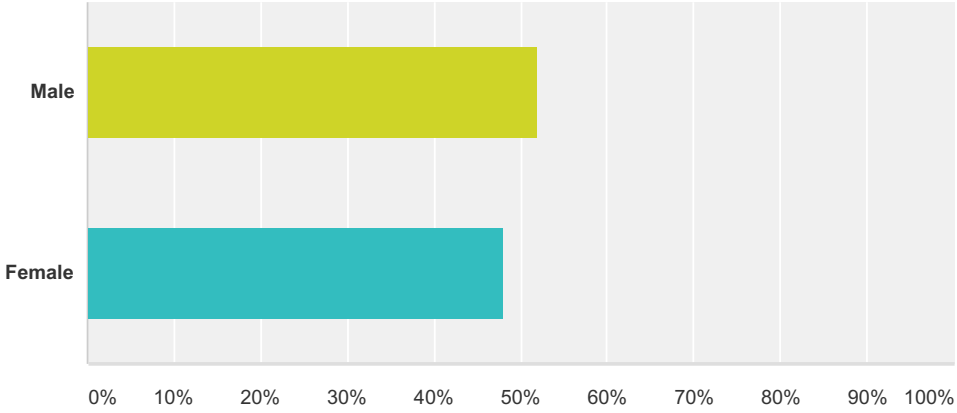
Answered: 156 Skipped: 46



Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	**0.00%**	0
18-29 yrs	**6.41%**	10
30-49 yrs	**39.10%**	61
50-64 yrs	**28.21%**	44
65+ yrs	**25.00%**	39
Prefer not to say	**1.28%**	2
Total		**156**

Q10 What is your gender?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 46



Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	**51.92%**	81
Female	**48.08%**	75
Total		**156**