



## **Babana Aboriginal Men's Group Incorporated**

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PO Box 3292 Redfern NSW 2016  
ABN 27 157 748 337

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
Local Government Division  
Review of Local Council Fit for the Future Proposals  
PO Box K35  
Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240

Re: City of Sydney Council

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in my capacity of Deputy Chairman of the Babana Aboriginal Men's Group in response to the City of Sydney Council's response to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

The board of directors at Babana recently met and discussed the NSW Governments proposals of amalgamation and our important relationship with Lord Mayor Clover Moore and the staff within the council and we believe that it is important for the tribunal to understand our views on these proposed changes from an Indigenous viewpoint.

Babana Aboriginal Men's Group is one of the leading Aboriginal organisations within the council area and has been in operation since 2006. Our organisation provides a level of service to our community that not only has real meaningful outcomes for positive change, but also works with our Non Indigenous partners to ensure that Aboriginal Culture remains strong in the community.

Babana values the potential that working with a council such as the City of Sydney can offer, and with the dedicated staff members that are engaged in the Indigenous setting this can only get better. Our board believes that by remaining in its current status will allow both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to gather, learn and share together as they create their own journey. The work that the council has been providing has a key role in providing opportunities for non-Indigenous people to learn about and learn from Australian Indigenous culture, knowledge and practice.

As first nations people we have seen a council that offers "real and ongoing" change and that genuine support and commitment is high on the agenda from the City of Sydney. We have dealt with other area (our membership stretches from Newcastle to Wollongong) and only the City of Sydney has been there to support us on an ongoing basis.



From our perspective it is important that the council remains in its current status as this will allow it to continue to grow and provide even higher support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sections of our community.

We are worried that if the NSW Government was to force the City of Sydney to amalgamate with surrounding councils this may have a detrimental impact on our members and the community.

To our organisation the City of Sydney is the leading council in working with our people and it is important from our viewpoint that they continue to focus on Indigenous issues and have clear priorities. Strong leadership who are available to discuss our concerns and are able to work with us is important and Lord Mayor Moore, Deputy Lord Mayor Kemmis and General Manager Monica Barone have shown that they

are committed to ensuring that the Indigenous focus remains, we are unsure that we would receive this under a change in council.

We hope that you are interested in hearing from the Indigenous section of the community and take our views into consideration when you report back to the NSW Government.

If you need any further information please contact either myself  or our Chairman Mark Spinks 

Kind Regards,



Jeremy Heathcote  
Deputy Chairman  
Babana Aboriginal Men's Group Inc.