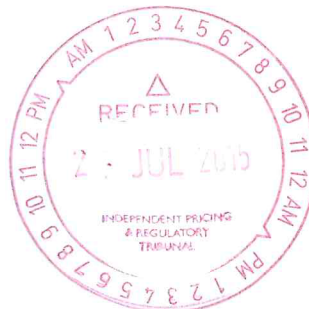


[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

24 July 2015

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box K35
Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240



Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PROPOSED COUNCIL AMALGAMATION BETWEEN CANADA BAY COUNCIL, AUBURN COUNCIL AND BURWOOD COUNCIL

I write to voice my opposition to the proposed merger by Canada Bay Council with Auburn and Burwood Councils.

Firstly, there has been no consultation with rate payers. As rate payers pay the councillors wages they have a duty of care to rate payers first and foremost. We are supposed to be living in a democracy and I'm disappointed that the decision to merge councils has more or less by passed the residents and rate payers of Canada Bay Council area. This proposed merger should be put to a formal vote.

According to Canada Bay Council's website, the Council policy for community engagement is based on "the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process and that in many instances inclusive decision making achieves a better outcome than might otherwise be reached" and "when a decision has the potential to impact the local community significantly, Council will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or with an interest in a decision".

There is no bigger decision for the community than determining its local system of government, yet that right has been extinguished by the Mayor and four councillors at Canada Bay.

It should be noted that the Local Government Act requires Councils to hold a constitutional referendum of voters to establish or abolish wards and to adopt elections of popularly elected Mayor process. Yet it appears that Canada Bay's Councillors and Mayors have the power to abolish the Council and merge with other councils with no consultation or polling of its community.

According to the local papers, the decision to adopt the merger proposal was not notified to the public but tabled by a motion of urgency and when one of the councillors opposing the merger proposal was not present at the meeting. This is a failure of the democratic process and a failure in the duty of care by the councillors who tabled this motion.

The proposed merger does not provide any benefits for Canada Bay residents and no case has been put forward that identifies the impacts of the proposal, so that informed decisions can be made. Auburn Council is not located in the Inner West. Auburn is the most socio-economic disadvantaged area in Sydney with low property values while Canada Bay is a high socio-economic area.

It is likely that rate payers in Canada Bay will bear the burden of increased rates to pay for this proposal as land values are significantly higher than Auburn.

I am concerned that the proposed council will be too large to be managed effectively and services to residents will decline.

The community will acquire large debts and asset backlogs from the merger partners, which our community will pay for.

Councillor representation will decline and Canada Bay representatives will be outvoted by areas with no interest in the local area.

Our local community voice will disappear for good and there will be a loss of local community assets like parks, buildings etc to pay for the merger.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]