

From: John Alsop [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 13 July 2015 1:33 PM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: City of Sydney amalgamation question

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Local Government Division Review of Local Council Fit for the Future Proposals

I thank you as a City Of Sydney Resident and small business operator for the opportunity to express my strong opposition top the forced amalgamation of the City of Sydney with any other local council let alone the huge and unwieldy proposed amalgamation of Sydney, Woollahra, Waverley, Randwick and Botany Bay. These areas have distinct demographic, residential and commercial personalities. The other four councils may have problems of their own and they may like the idea of uniting with each other. But I do not believe the solution lies in diluting and potentially degrading the level of service and innovation provided to residents and businesses in the City of Sydney Council Area with other councils.

The City of Sydney is a leader in conservation initiatives, excellently managed and developed parklands, and other infrastructure elements. It is my understanding that the City of Sydney Council is in surplus which indicates to me a decent level of fiscal prudence. Residential rates are affordable with no obvious deficiency of service to residents vis-a-vis other councils.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. As a rate-paying resident, I value the independence and separation of the three tiers of Government. It strikes me as the best hedge against bad government at any particular level. I want my local government to be truly local and I believe that within the current City of Sydney boundary we have that. I don't care who is in government at the State or Federal level. I like the idea that my local government is answerable to the local residents and business operators. I have a strong suspicion that the push for amalgamation comes from all the major parties who figure that over time they will take turns at "owning" the local government arm of an amalgamation of five councils into one. I am not convinced that there are efficiencies to be derived from this fie-ways amalgamation that won't be undermined by effectively reducing the existing councils to wards competing for the same funding of services.

As a ratepayer above all else, I expect my opinion to be heard and acted upon in a genuinely independent way by IPART.

Regards

John Alsop
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