

Sent: Monday, 6 July 2015 5:07 PM
To: IPART Mailbox
Subject: Fit for the Future

Hi,

I am a ratepayer resident of the Northern Beaches of Sydney, NSW, in the Warringah Shire council area. I have previously been a resident and ratepayer in the Manly Council area for many years. I have observed the process of all three Northern Beaches councils as they have put their cases in the "Fit for the Future" programme.

My view is that none of the councils have given residents an unbiased and fair opportunity to express their opinion. In Warringah, residents were asked to voluntarily submit their opinions – most of the people I know simply never bothered. So to say that the residential responses in that area accurately reflect residential opinion is incorrect.

In Manly, the council was very intentional in how it wanted residents to respond, and thereby created a survey sent to all households with only the options that the council wanted residents to express opinion on. Again, there was no open and transparent opportunity to express opinion – people were given the chance to select carefully scripted options, which didn't include all possibilities.

In Pittwater, there has been a direct and blunt campaign by the council to persuade residents that there was only one appropriate option – to remain independent.

As a Northern Beaches resident it's my opinion that the submissions provided to IPART for the purpose of assessing the Fit for the Future project do not accurately reflect residential/ratepayer opinion, no matter what each council claims. Residents were NOT given open opportunity to comment, nor were the majority of residents involved in commenting. Councillors simply pushed their own agendas, and most continue to push to retain their individual fiefdoms.

For a truly accurate, informative and independent outcome that garners residential opinions a local questionnaire is needed – something that is more compulsory than optional so that the majority of stakeholders are involved. And until that happens the results that you are given by local councils are merely smoke and mirrors; they do not accurately reflect what the populous really thinks. And to base your programme on such inaccurate responses is to waste a whole lot of time and money.

Sincerely,

Linda Blackman