

# CABPRA

The Chairman  
IPART  
P.O. Box K35  
Haymarket Post Shop  
NSW 1240

6th May 2015

Dear Sir,

## **METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF COUNCIL FIT FOR THE FUTURE PROPOSALS**

The Clareville and Bilgola Plateau Residents Association (CABPRA) make the following submission:

1) The terms of reference of IPART and therefore the IPART process itself relies on data supplied by Councils. There is NO requirement on IPART to test or query the veracity of Council data in particular claims of benefits arising from amalgamation, cost reductions, improvements in financial **and** non-financial benchmarks, rationalisation costs, reasonableness of all assumptions etc. NOR is there any requirement to apply risk analysis or variance analysis to the data. Given the scale of the amalgamations being proposed this is a major omission and could lead to huge hidden costs, major timescale blow outs and political turmoil.

2) What matters to ratepayers is effective service delivery over a huge range of services.

- However there is NOT ONE SERVICE oriented benchmark being used to evaluate submissions. E.g. Customer satisfaction surveys, problem responsiveness. The only benchmarks are financial. This makes a REAL MOCKERY of effective service delivery.
- There is NO mention or evaluation of the Council's ability to manage the environment e.g. parks and reserves, coastline, waterways, climate change. – A huge concern to residents
- There is NO mention or evaluation of the Council's ability to manage other key areas of concern to residents such as active transport, planning and development, waste management etc.
- There is little evidence that the social, cultural and historical context of a Council's position will be taken into account e.g. Pittwater was formed only 23 years ago specifically to address and serve the unique, sensitive aspects of the area.

In summary the issues which concern the residents are community, environmental, cultural, independent, local and democratic values. The IPART process, driven by financial outcomes, effectively shuts the residents out of any balanced evaluation process.

3) An underlying premise in the IPART evaluation of scale and strategic capability is that large councils are more effective and efficient than smaller ones. This we refuse to accept. There is much

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evidence here and abroad that mega Councils such as those being proposed by LGRP are less efficient than medium size Councils. Refer to:

<https://cabpra.wordpress.com/pittwater-fit-for-the-future/pittwater-obese-is-not-fit/>  
<http://clovermoore.com.au/future-of-local-government-in-nsw/>

Many smaller and medium size councils, particularly metropolitan ones, are very efficient and highly valued by their resident. Also mega Councils are less responsive, more open to political/developer bias, less in touch with their communities. More factors IPART is not evaluating.

4) There are some words written on community consultation but nothing about a proposal requiring the (majority) support of the community to be accepted. Community support for an option is the most important aspect. More so than scale and capability, financial measures etc. Community support for an option should be **the starting point** in the evaluation process. In particular amalgamation should only be considered if supported by the majority of the community. The IPART process puts community interests **last**. Where is the democracy in that?

Yours faithfully,

David Owen  
President CABPRA

  
<http://cabpra.wordpress.com>

Copy to

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