



22 May 2015

Dr Peter Boxall
Chairman
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box K35
HAYMARKET POST SHOP NSW 1240

Dear Dr Boxall

Methodology for Assessment of Council Fit for the Future Proposals Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on IPART's April 2015 Consultation Paper titled Methodology for Assessment of Council Fit for the Future Proposals.

As you are no doubt aware, Council has been a willing and leading participant in the local government reform process since 2011. It has provided submissions in respect of the Destination 2036 proposals and the work of the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP), as well as undertaking its own research and involving itself in discussions with neighbouring councils about possible merger opportunities in line with the State Government's Fit for the Future package.

Although Council now finds itself in the position of only being able to complete Template 2 – "Council Improvement Proposal" because none of its neighbours are willing to cooperatively proceed down the path of commissioning an independent merger business case to explore the possibility of a merger with Hornsby, and whilst Council understands that it will be deemed as "not fit" for the future by IPART because it will not meet the scale and capacity requirements proposed by the Government, it is supportive of IPART's methodology for assessing proposals from councils.

In respect of scale and capacity, Council has been supportive of the ILGRP and State Government's view that there should be a reduced number of councils in the Sydney metropolitan area. Also, through its attempts to seek Ku-ring-gai Council's concurrence to at least undertake a merger business case, Council has flagged that the population of a northern Sydney council should be in the 250,000 to 300,000 range incorporating an area which has a sustainable balance between residential and non-residential rates.

If you have any questions or require further information, please let me know.

Yours faithfully