The Honourable
Anthony Roberts MP
Member for Lane Cove

Dr Peter J Boxall AO
Chairman
The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)
PO Box K35
Haymarket Post Shop
NSW 1240

25 May 2015

Dear Dr Boxall

Submission to IPART/Draft Assessment Methodology

As the local member for Lane Cove (which incorporates the Local Government areas of Lane Cove, Hunter's Hill and City of Ryde), I am taking the opportunity to submit two fundamental points of principle that should be included in IPART's final Assessment Methodology.

The two points that IPART should include in any Fit For the Future Methodology are:-

1. <u>No splitting of Local Government Areas or major retail/commercial centre/CBD areas.</u>

   I note that in the recommendations made by the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP), detailed in the Fit for the Future (FFTF) documentation and reinforced in IPART's Assessment Methodology, is the requirement for Councils to first consider the ILGRP's preferred option. Your Assessment Methodology requires each Council to first demonstrate it has scale and capacity and to determine whether the Council's preferred option is broadly consistent with the ILGRP's option. Your document states that when a merger was proposed, as a preferred option, and the Council did not propose one, the Council will be assessed as 'Not Fit' unless it presents a proposal that is superior.

   I want to state my position that I oppose any splitting or dividing of a Local Government area, including dividing or splitting any major retail/commercial centres, CBD areas or strategic centres. This is the ILGRP recommendation for the City of Ryde and this position is contrary to the State Government's strategic planning principles for major and specialised centres.

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2. No Community/Customer Satisfaction Indicator

I also note that in determining whether a Local Government authority is 'Fit for the Future', it is assessed on a range of assessment criteria - however none of these are qualitative.

In particular, the measure of a community's satisfaction with its local Council should be a prime consideration for IPART and should form part of any final assessment methodology.

The recent failed attempts at amalgamation in Western Australia and the de-mergers in Queensland, demonstrate the importance of community engagement and consultation prior to any significant reform by the State Government.

Having regard to the abovementioned discussion points, I request IPART include the following additional criteria in its final Assessment Methodology;

I. No splitting of Local Government Areas or major retail/commercial centre/CBD areas/specialised centres.
II. Inclusion of a Community/Customer Satisfaction Indicator to measure satisfaction with local Council services, etc.

The above submission is referred for your attention.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Anthony Roberts MP
Member for Lane Cove
Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy
Leader of the House