

Wednesday 18 February 2015

COUNCIL ADOPTS CITY OF RYDE'S RESPONSE TO THE FIT FOR FUTURE INITIATIVE

The City of Ryde at an Extraordinary Council meeting held on Tuesday 17 February 2015, endorsed the implementation of a range of actions to proactively respond to the Minister for Local Government's "Fit for the Future" initiative. Under the recommendations detailed in the Independent Panel's final report "Revitalising Local Government" the City of Ryde is proposed to be split and amalgamated with Councils to the west (Parramatta, Holroyd and Auburn) and to the East (Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney and Willoughby).

The City of Ryde is vigorously opposed to forced amalgamations and is also opposing the recommendations made in the Independent Panel's report.

Following the announcement by the Hon Paul Toole, the Minister for Local Government, "Fit for the Future" initiative in October 2014, the City of Ryde hosted and facilitated a Northern Sydney Council's Forum with neighbouring Councils. As a result of these discussions, a "Fit for the Future Symposium" was held at Willoughby Council on 5 February 2015 with most of the northern Sydney Councils attending to discuss the issues and the position each Council would be taking on this very important issue, for their individual Council and the region.

The City of Ryde has endorsed investigating the formation of a modified joint organisation (regional body) with other interested Councils across northern Sydney. The joint organisation (regional body) would be responsible for the strategic planning of the northern Sydney subregion that would include subregional land use and infrastructure planning; subregional community and cultural planning; subregional economic development and tourism and other joint service initiatives.

Council is also seeking other neighbouring Councils to support a shared community engagement strategy with those Councils that confirm their support in exploring the formation of a joint organisation (regional body). This will ensure a consistent approach is taken in discussions and consultations with our local communities.

Council's Mayor, Bill Pickering, stated, "if we are to survive into the future, we have to demonstrate that we are showing leadership in working to achieve the best outcomes for the City of Ryde community and the region and this is the reason why Council has taken this proactive action in bringing our neighbouring Councils in the northern Sydney region together. It is pleasing to note that the approach being taken by the City of Ryde has support from some of our adjoining Councils and we look forward to working with those Councils who support these initiatives."