



KEEP COUNCILS LOCAL

Thursday 19 November 2015

JOINT REGIONAL AUTHORITY PARTNERS WILL NOT SUCCUMB TO PREMIER'S 'BULLY-BOY' TACTICS

The deadline for the farcical and shameful '50 word' submissions to the State Government which will be used to determine the future of our Councils were due yesterday.

The State Government recently determined that our Councils are unfit and subsequently decided to reduce Councils ability to respond comprehensively to the recommendations from the IPART report.

In stark comparison, the report from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government in NSW, General Purpose Standing Committee Number 6, strongly supported City of Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove Councils proposed Joint Regional Authority (JRA).

Recommendation 17 of the report stated: *"That the NSW Government work with local government on a statutory model for Joint Organisations based on the Hunters Hill, Ryde and Lane Cove Council model as a cooperative and consensus model for local council reform in Metropolitan Sydney".*

This outcome absolutely vindicates the strong position we have held from its inception, that the City of Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Councils' proposal of a Joint Regional Authority (JRA) is a bold, visionary and a superior alternative to the NSW Government's Fit for the Future proposals.

The JRA partners of City of Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Councils have all responded to the State Government along the following lines:

(City of Ryde/ Hunter's Hill Council / Lane Cove Council) is financially fit and sustainable, and has capacity and size for effective local government.

It supports the JRA model for regional cooperation, as endorsed by the NSW Legislative Council. Council has the strong support of its local community and rejects the need to merge with any council.

Ryde Mayor Cllr Jerome Laxale said: *"The City of Ryde is standing firm against the 'Bully-Boy' tactics of the NSW Premier Mike Baird on this issue, we will not succumb to the demands that are being forced upon us against the will of our community."*

Hunter's Hill Mayor Cllr Richard Quinn said: *"The Hunters Hill community has soundly rejected amalgamation and, with strong community support, has committed to pursuing the JRA regional partnership with Ryde and Lane Cove to achieve strategic capacity and efficiencies of scale. It's now time for the Premier and the Minister to listen to the people and accept the JRA reform model."*



Lane Cove Mayor Cllr Deborah Hutchens said: *"Our job is to represent the interests of our local community, not the interests of the State government. We all know it won't be communities that will benefit most from the mergers. I urge the State government to open their ears and their eyes to what forced mergers will do to our local communities, not just in Lane Cove but across the State".*

The JRA is a sophisticated and contemporary model which breaks the traditional mould of amalgamations. The amalgamation option lacks innovation and the flexibility to move with the changing demands of our communities.

The JRA is a strong and unique model that we are convinced would meet our communities' needs and allow them to have a say in their future together in working with the State Government in the strategic planning of Greater Sydney.

Our residents have clearly shown their preference for us to work together which was demonstrated by their 92% level of support of our JRA as their first or second preference, which is a very clear mandate from our communities on this issue.

Our residents clearly have pride in their history and unique identity, have confidence in our Council's financial and governance performance and have a strong desire to be in control of their future and under no circumstances want to see the destruction of their communities and we will continue to fight for their survival.

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