

Attachment 9.1

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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# INTRODUCTION

Community opinion is a core consideration in Council's decision making process. We have undertaken several community engagement activities to ensure the community is aware of the proposals and that they are provided with the necessary information to make an informed decision on Council's options in relation to the Fit for the Future Reform Program.

This comprehensive dialogue has confirmed that our community remains adamantly opposed to any proposal to merge our Council. The people of the City of Botany Bay have spoken, they want a Council that is local, efficient and financially responsible. In short, our residents and ratepayers have come to the same conclusion as Council itself: the City of Botany Bay is *Fit for the Future*.

# WHAT OUR RESIDENTS SAY

## The City of Botany Bay is committed to maintaining an open dialogue with its residents on all issues including merger options.

Since 2013, Council has conducted three surveys of local residents concerning the issue of amalgamation; the *Independent Local Government Review Panel Report* and the *Fit for the Future* process.



## June 2013

Council conducted a voluntary survey of 17,000 households asking for their views on whether:

- The City of Botany Bay should remain independent or
- The City of Botany Bay should amalgamate with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra.

An overwhelming 96% of residents who responded said they wanted our City to remain independent.

The comments made during the survey process explained why local residents remain opposed to amalgamation. A small sample of these comments is provided here:

*"Botany council should not be amalgamated as we are satisfied with our local team and their results," - Louise*

*"Botany has always done right by residents and we want to keep it that way," - Francis from Botany*

*"Botany Council for Botany, residents and local issues. Amalgamations only cause residents to become just a number with no say in local issues," - Tessie*

*"Don't spoil our good Council," - Shirley from Hillsdale*

*"No complaints with Botany Council ... Don't try to fix what isn't broken," - Mark from Botany*

*"This council provides excellent service - I would not like to see it change," - anonymous*

286 responses indicated support for the plan to merge.

## Community Days

The Mayor and Councillors discussed amalgamation proposals with residents and stakeholders at local Community Days held throughout 2013.

In 2013 Council held six community days:

- Mascot Park (now Lionel Bowen Park), Mascot;
- Garnet Jackson Park, Botany;
- Eastlakes Reserve, Eastlakes;
- Grace Campbell Reserve, Hillsdale;
- L' Estrange Park, Mascot and
- Rowland Park, Daceyville.

At each event residents' expressed their concerns about the proposed amalgamations. Residents indicated they were strongly opposed to Botany Bay joining the proposed "Global Sydney" model.

## July/August 2014

A telephone and online community satisfaction survey was conducted in July/August 2014 to provide Council with a representative and random picture of how residents perceive the City of Botany Bay. A total of 815 residents responded. The majority of respondents said the services we provide are very important and that they were generally satisfied with Council's performance. All services identified in the survey showed a 'high satisfaction, high importance' outcome. Some 63% of respondents identified strongly with our local government area and the local community.

## February 2015 – Hands Off Botany Campaign



Council conducted a second survey seeking residents' support in the form of a petition. The petition was delivered to all households in the City of Botany Bay. The purpose of the petition was to let the Minister for Local Government know our community is opposed to a merger. To date, 1,389 residents have added their names to the petition declaring:

*Dear Minister,*

*I am against the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay with any other local government area.*

*I believe that Botany Bay should remain an independent Council, supported by the State Government to deliver the services and infrastructure the Botany Bay community needs today and into the future.*

### **Community event - Chinese New Year Noodle Markets**

On 21 February 2015, the City of Botany Bay hosted an information stand at the *Chinese New Year Noodle Markets* in Daceyville where residents again expressed their concern about the NSW Government's proposal to amalgamate the City of Botany Bay.

## May 2015

In order to satisfy the NSW Government's requirements in June 2015 Council undertook a random telephone survey of approximately 500 local residents. The survey asked residents to nominate two preferences from the options presented, namely:

- Remain independent;
- Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra;
- Merge with Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra;
- Merge with Sydney only; or
- Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville.

The survey found an impressive 85% of local residents were satisfied with the City of Botany Bay and its services and 77% believed that the City of Botany Bay should remain independent. Residents cited their satisfaction with Council services, Council's strong financial management and local democracy as their reasons for supporting the City of Botany Bay to remain independent.

When required to choose a preferred merger model 36% of respondents nominated a merger with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra as their choice. This model had the largest number of supporters in comparison to other merger options. The second most preferred merger model with 23% of respondents supporting was to merge with the City of Sydney. The NSW Government's preferred "Global Sydney" was by far the least popular model with only 8% respondents preferring this option. The most obvious outcomes from this survey were that no single merger option had community support and the vast majority of local residents strongly support the City of Botany Bay remaining independent.

### **Community Event- Eastlakes Multicultural Fair**

On 13 June 2015, the City of Botany Bay held an information booth at its annual Multicultural Fair in Eastlakes again seeking feedback from residents. More than 1000 residents signed a petition show their support for the City of Botany Bay to remain independent.

# MEDIA

Council utilises a variety of media to communicate with local residents and stakeholders on a number of issues of community interest. The Mayor runs a Facebook page through which he is able to interact with residents, uses the traditional medium of Mayoral Minutes at monthly Council meetings, media releases and columns in the local paper *Southern Courier*.

The City of Botany Bay's website features a dedicated section titled *Hands off Botany Bay* providing information and documentation regarding *Fit for the Future* and council's position.

## FACEBOOK

Since 2013 Mayor Keneally has used a Facebook page as a way of interacting directly with local residents. The Mayor has discussed *Fit for the Future* on a number of occasions including 10 September 2014, 11 September 2014, 16 September 2014, 24 September 2014, 3 February 2015, 5 February 2015, 23 February 2015, 9 March 2015 and 24 March 2015. Samples of Facebook posts by the Mayor and responses received from residents have been included in this appendix.

## MAYORAL COLUMNS

The Mayoral Column is published in the local paper *Southern Courier* every Tuesday. The Mayoral Column provides important information to the local community regarding Council facilities, events and services and other items of community interest. The Mayor has published a number of Mayoral Columns regarding *Fit for the Future* and the City of Botany Bay's response. Mayoral Columns concerning this matter include 6 April 2013, 14 May 2013, 28 May 2013, 4 June 2013, 18 June 2013, 16 July 2013, 21 January 2014, 16 September 2014, 3 February 2015 and 26 May 2015. Copies of these Mayoral Columns have been included in this appendix.

## MAYORAL MINUTES

Mayoral Minutes provide the Mayor with an important forum to propose Council policy, advocate Council's position, stimulate discussion among the councillors and raise issues of community interest. The Mayor has provided information regarding the NSW Government's *Fit for the Future* reform program. Relevant Mayoral Minutes include: Mayoral Minute No. 10 of 2012; Mayoral Minute No. 11 of 2012; Mayoral Minute No. 2 of 2013; Mayoral Minute No. 3 of 2013; Mayoral Minute No. 5 of 2013; Mayoral Minute No. 8 of 2013; Extraordinary Mayoral Minute

(September) 2013; Mayoral Minute No. 1 of 2014; Mayoral Minute No. 7 of 2014; Mayoral Minute No. 9 of 2014; Mayoral Minute No. 1 of 2015 and Mayoral Minute No. 3 of 2015. The full text of all of these Mayoral Minutes has been included in this appendix.

## MEDIA RELEASES

Mayor Keneally has kept the community informed about *Fir for the Future* through state and local media.

Using media releases the Mayor has drawn attention to inconsistencies in the government's policies, discussed specific merger proposals raised by the NSW Government and third parties and criticised the NSW Government's obfuscation and refusal to rule out forcing amalgamations. Copies of each of the relevant media releases have been included in this appendix.

## CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING AMALGAMATIONS PROCESS

Mayor Keneally has written to Minister Toole and Premier Baird on a number of occasions to seek assurances that the NSW Government would not forcibly amalgamate local councils. Copies of this correspondence has been included in this appendix and includes:

- Letter to Minister Paul Toole 11 September 2014
- Letter from the Premier 9 October 2014
- Letter from Minister Toole 1 December 2014
- Letter to Minister Paul Toole 10 December 2014
- Letter to Minister Paul Toole 18 February 2015
- Letter from Steve Orr (on behalf of Minister Toole) 20 March 2015
- Letter to Minister Paul Toole 8 April 2015

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## April – August 2013

The City of Botany Bay holds Community Days throughout our City, the issue of *Fit for the Future* is discussed.

## June – July 2013

First Survey – Residents are asked to choose between City of Botany Bay remaining independent and the “Global Sydney” merger option proposed by the Independent Local Government Review Panel.

## July/August 2014

The City of Botany Bay engages Jetty Research to undertake a community satisfaction survey of local residents as part of the *Vision 2040* Process. Among a number of matters, this poll asks residents to rate their satisfaction with Council and Botany Bay as a place to live. Four focus groups were held to discuss Council’s vision for the City and the *Fit for the Future* process.

## September 2014

Mayor Ben Keneally writes to the Minister for Local Government and the Premier requesting their position whether the NSW Government will force mergers if Local Councils choose not to participate in voluntary mergers.

## December 2014

Response from the Minister for Local Government received. However the Minister refuses to address the issue of whether ‘no forced amalgamations’ remain NSW Government policy.

Mayor writes to the Minister for Local Government and asks, for a second time, that he commit to the NSW Government’s previous position of ‘no forced amalgamations’.

## February 2015

Council launches the webpage for the campaign *Hands off Botany Bay*.

## February 2015

Mayor Ben Keneally writes to the Minister of Local Government for a third time after the Liberal Member for Coogee stated ‘the Baird government maintains the policy

of no forced amalgamations’. The Mayor asks that the Minister confirm this position or state whether the Member for Coogee was incorrect.

## February 2015

At a Council sponsored event *Chinese New Year Noodle Markets* the City of Botany Bay provides information about *Fit for the Future* and the City of Botany Bay *Hands off Botany Bay* campaign.

## February – March 2015

Residents are asked to sign up to the *Hands off Botany Bay* campaign. Flyers from this leaflet are sent to the Minister for Local Government to demonstrate the extent of opposition to merger proposals among our local community.

## April 2015

Mayor writes to the Minister for Local Government a fourth time asking that the Minister confirm whether the Government maintains its prior position of ‘no forced amalgamations’.

## May 2015

Jetty Research undertakes a third survey of local residents on behalf of Council. This provides residents with five options:

- Botany Bay remains independent;
- Botany Bay merges with Randwick only;
- Global Sydney merger of Botany Bay, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra;
- Botany Bay merges with Sydney only; or
- “Airport Council” Botany Bay merges with Rockdale and Marrickville

Residents are asked to choose at least two options.

## June 2015

At the City of Botany Bay Multicultural Fair, Council hosts a stall to advise residents of latest developments in *Fit for the Future* potential mergers and hear the local community’s concerns about Council position.

**Information about the *Fit for the Future* process and Council’s position is also available at [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)**

**In Mayoral Minute Number 3 of 2015 the Councillors of the City of Botany Bay resolved that should the NSW Government move to force amalgamations, Council will conduct a poll of local residents under the Local Government Act 1993.**

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- 28 October 2014 "Council calls for answers"
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# LETTERS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Keith McCraw  
President

Geoffrey Knight  
Chief Executive Officer



2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

Mr Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
City of Botany Bay  
**BOTANY NSW 2019**

Dear Mr Keneally,


The Juniors have a strong and integrated relationship with the City of Botany Bay for many years. Whilst the physical clubhouse of The Juniors is outside of the council's catchment area, many of our club members live within the council zone and, also, our Junior Rugby League Competition is played at many ovals under The City of Botany Bay's supervision.

The Juniors is a not-for-profit business and our charter is to provide and propagate Junior Rugby League in the South Sydney District. Our competition, which is fully funded from the proceeds of the Junior's clubhouse, is considered one of the most well organised competitions in the state. A major part of this are the facilities that our individual clubs use as their home base. The council-run facilities are a very important part of our operation and The City of Botany Bay has always maintained and provided the necessary upgrades to service the needs of the teams that play at these grounds. Our dealings with council have always been open, professional and fair.

The Botany area has to be one of the most diverse council zones in the country. Dealing with a major sea port, airport, industrial hub and of course a booming residential area, The City Of Botany Bay has found a balance where all stakeholder's needs are met and exceeded. Our dealings have never been anything to the contrary and we as a club have no doubt of their abilities to survive as a stand-alone entity in the future.

I have attached a copy of a column that I wrote in our February – April edition of our club magazine (Encore) which outlines our endorsement of our local councils to remain as stand-alone entities. Our belief is that if the council is financially sound, operates in surplus and meets the needs of its residents then it should continue in that manner. The area has evolved dramatically in the last 20+ years and the council from our perspective has met all the challenges it has faced.

Yours faithfully,

  
**KEITH MCCRAW**  
PRESIDENT

[www.thejuniors.com.au](http://www.thejuniors.com.au)

558A Anzac Parade Kingsford P.O. Box 99 Kingsford 2032

Phone: (02) 9349 7555 Fax: (02) 9344 5226 Email: [clubinfo@thejuniors.com.au](mailto:clubinfo@thejuniors.com.au)

ABN: 58 000 213 374

South Sydney Junior Rugby League Club Limited



**Club Trading Hours**

7 DAYS A WEEK  
9am – 6am

MEMBERSHIP  
OFFICE HOURS

Sunday – Thursday  
9am – 10.30pm

Friday – Saturday  
9am – 12am

**Address**

558A Anzac Parade,  
Kingsford N.S.W. 2032

**Contact**

P | (02) 9349 7555  
F | (02) 9344 5226  
www.thejuniors.com.au

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# The President's Report

Keith McGraw



*We are living in exciting times here at The Juniors! I can't recall a period in my term as President that has had so many and varied things going on that affect the club. From club renovations, the impending Light Rail, a potential amalgamation with Malabar RSL, and the sale of our Botany Development site, there is never a dull moment here at the club. I look forward to reporting to you during the year on the progress of all these major issues.*

**Fit For the Future – Council Amalgamation Program**

I would like to bring to the attention of members this very important issue within our local area. The State Government has recently released its "Fit for the Future" program which requires every NSW local council amalgamation options with neighbouring councils regarding the number of metropolitan councils from 41. The Juniors position on this issue would be to support the three local councils (Randwick, Botany and Waverley) remain as stand alone councils. We believe each council does an excellent job supporting their respective employees if the NSW State Government has indicated that stand alone will not be an option moving forward.

There are several options available to council to meet the criteria set by the government including amalgamating with Ul Swayney and Woollahra Councils. Strategically, our preferred option in regards to amalgamating would be that we amalgamate with Randwick, Botany and Waverley (amalgamating) as these three councils house the majority of our 40,000 members and importantly our Junior League clubs including the majority of Sydney Roosters Clubs who we host in our soccer. I understand all councils will be seeking residents information packs and I encourage you to learn as much as you can from these proposed options. While as I mentioned earlier we would like the council to amalgamate with you to give favorable consideration to the amalgamation of Randwick, Botany and Waverley as they meet the criteria set by the government and has a projected saving of \$338M over the next ten years. This money could be spent improving infrastructure throughout our city including our sporting fields, parks, roads, coastal walk etc. The Juniors has a wonderful relationship with all three councils and pledge our support to both of them during what would be the change in their history of operation.

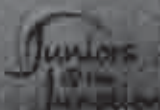
**Junior League Report**

The 2015 season is shaping up as another big year for our Junior League. We hope that the success of the fielded side the local children of the South Sydney Districts are playing rugby league. Personally, we have a good mix and a mix strong but we welcome any new players that may want to play a low cost winter sport. The support of the club responsibility, if you have a child interested in playing, you can contact our League Office on 9374 5224 and we'll be in touch with the club nearest you. Also we are always in need of volunteers for a variety of roles if you enjoy being on club and have some spare time on the weekends we'd love to have from you.

**The Rabbitohs**

What a great time it is to be a Rabbitohs supporter! We are the reigning premiers and have won the grand final 11 times for a total of 16 titles in 2015. It would be great to see the boys on field to win a flag for the first time since the club did it in 1992-93. The scenes of euphoria and pandemonium which the fans witness and experience after the Grand are still fresh in many of our minds. The team has had a couple of seasons but we'll be back on the field in 2015. The Juniors will be attending this match between the Rabbitohs and the Broncos at ANZ Stadium on Thursday March 5th.

Best regards,  
Keith McGraw  
President



558A Anzac Parade  
Kingsford NSW 2032



Phone: (02) 9349 7555  
Fax: (02) 9344 5226  
www.thejuniors.com.au

4 June 2015

Cr Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
City of Botany Bay Council  
PO Box 331  
Mascot NSW 1460

**Via email:** [mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Cr Keneally

**Re: Local government reform process**

Thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2015 concerning the NSW Government's local government reform process.

I am pleased to confirm with you the strong, productive and close working relationship Sydney Airport has historically had, and continues to have with, the City of Botany Bay Council.

Your letter lists a number of matters which will be used by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for assessment purposes. Of those where Sydney Airport has had direct experience with your council, I can advise as follows:

Our ability to employ a wide range of skilled staff

Sydney Airport holds in very high regard the skilled staff of the City of Botany Bay Council. We regularly deal with yourself, general manager Ms Lara Kirchner and other senior officers on a range of matters of mutual interest. These include planning and development, traffic management, landscaping and specific aviation-related issues (such as airspace protection and the like).

Our superior strategic planning and policy development skills

Sydney Airport has appreciated the quality of City of Botany Bay's strategic planning and policy development skills. There is regular and productive liaison between our respective organisations on planning and development proposals in the vicinity of the airport. For example, we have worked closely with council's senior planners concerning implementation of the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF). Given the complex aviation-related and safety issues raised in the NASF, there are significant challenges in implementing it at the local government level. We have found council's planners highly receptive to the need to ensure these issues are properly addressed. We were especially pleased that the City of Botany Bay Council became the first council in NSW to formally recognise the NASF in its development control plan, a significant outcome in itself.

Effective regional collaboration

The City of Botany Bay Council has long exercised a leadership role in the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC). The role of SSROC – which has 16 member councils – is to undertake projects that cross council boundaries achieving results that will contribute to the

sustainability of our member councils and their communities. SSROC regularly makes submissions to Sydney Airport's master plans and major development plans.

Our credibility for effective advocacy

Sydney Airport's experience is that the City of Botany Bay Council – at both mayoral, general manager and senior officer level – are credible and effective advocates for their LGA. We regularly interact in various forums and meetings at which council's position on the matter at hand is clearly and effectively articulated.

Specifically in the context of airports, council has always taken a leadership role in aviation-related advocacy concerning issues that affect both local government and airports. The formation of the Australian Mayoral Aviation Council (AMAC) is a good example. As you know, AMAC was an initiative of your council and is currently chaired by yourself. In recognition of its important role, AMAC is also directly represented on the federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development's Aviation Industry Consultative Council, with the representative being a senior officer of your council.

Our ability and resources to cope with complex and unexpected change

The abovementioned example showing council's ability to respond to the complex issues raised in the NASF is a good example of council's ability in this regard.

High quality political and managerial leadership

We have historically found the leadership of yourself, your predecessor, your general manager and senior council officials to be effective, proactive and high quality.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

  
**Sally Fielke**  
General Manager Corporate Affairs

cc: Ms Lara Kirchner, General Manager, City of Botany Bay Council  
[gm@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gm@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

9 June 2015

Mayor Ben Keneally  
City of Botany Bay  
c/- mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mayor Keneally

**Re: *Fit for the Future* - your ref: MY-F15/784**

I write in response to your letter of 22 May 2015, regarding the NSW Government reform process, *Fit for the Future*, in support of the City of Botany Bay Council remaining as an independent government entity.

Since 1999, I have functioned under the jurisdiction of the City of Botany Bay, as a commercial property owner, business operator, employer and staffing supplier to the local business community.

It is with this expertise and insight, I believe firmly that for the municipality and community that constitutes the City of Botany Bay to continue to develop and flourish, we are deserving of a council that operates with a singular local focus and presence. Our community is entitled to political influence in relation to local issues - an amalgamation would surely mitigate this, and the attention required in relation to district matters.

With a very broad and unique mix of commercial and residential zones under its remit, including high profile entities such as Sydney Airports and NSW Ports - which contribute significantly to NSW in infrastructure, income and employment - the City of Botany Bay has invested greatly in supporting these operations and accordingly has accumulated a wealth of specialised knowledge and expertise, which is key to ensuring viability and future-proofing.

Additionally, it is critical to note that the financial costs involved in the proposed amalgamation would be prohibitive.

The City of Botany Bay is well regarded in the business and residential community as a dynamic, efficient and responsive service and I sincerely trust it will be permitted to continue under the current independent operating model.

I am available to further offer my support to the City of Botany Bay Council to remain independent and may be contacted during business hours on [REDACTED] or at any time on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Tania Kapell  
Managing Director

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Welfare: F. Symons

*Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance*

The Mayor,  
City of Botany Bay Council

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

Dear Sir,

On Behalf of our Sub Branch, we would like to thank Council and all the staff for the wonderful support they have given veterans of this city over the years.

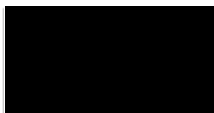
We would strongly oppose any attempts to amalgamate our council with any other. Being bigger is not necessary being better.

We have been able on a daily basis to contact our Councilors and the staff to assist us with our concerns...

The majority of our members are also Senior Citizens and through the wonderful facilities you provide for the Senior Citizen's we enjoy a much better lifestyle

Over many years Council, Veterans, Senior Citizens and those with disabilities have created a wonderful community i.e. the support we all give to "The Windgap Foundation" we feel this would be lost if we amalgamate

Kind regards



Paul Graham J.P.  
President  
Mascot RSL Sub Branch



# VRTLAWYERS

VIZZONE RUGGERO TWIGG

Our Ref: JV:KR  
Reply to: Mascot Office

22 June 2015

#### City Office

Level 10, 162-166 Goulburn Street  
Sydney NSW 2010  
PO Box 605 Darlinghurst NSW 1300  
DX 242 Sydney

Telephone: +61 2 9264 7244  
Facsimile: +61 2 9317 5715  
Email: law@vrtlawyers.com.au

#### Mascot Office

1129 Botany Road  
Mascot NSW 2020  
PO Box 97 Mascot 1460  
DX 242 Sydney

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Facsimile: +61 2 9317 5715  
Email: law@vrtlawyers.com.au

The Chairperson  
IPART  
SYDNEY

Dear Sir,

**RE: Botany Bay City Council**

---

I am a former resident of the City of Botany Bay and I have conducted a Law Practice at Mascot since 1986. I have been a landowner and ratepayer in the City of Botany Bay since 1989.

I give my wholehearted support to the Council of the City of Botany Bay to remain a stand alone council despite the current baseless and hysterical push to force Councils in New South Wales into amalgamation for the sake of amalgamation per se.

Botany Bay Council (BBCC) is probably the only council in New South Wales which is actually liked by its constituents. The Labour Party councillors in the area romp in elections, sometimes having polled over 80% of the vote. That tells you that the Council has the overall confidence of its constituents.

BBCC is one of the few councils which not only enhances the quality of life for its constituents but it also has caused property values to increase at a spectacular rate since approximately 1995 onwards. Particularly in the Botany area, large tracts of industrial lands have been turned into residential which has seen a plethora of exciting new residential dwellings replace old factories. At the same time BBCC has spent a fortune (yet remained debt free) on landscaping and streetscape works throughout its Council area which makes the area look good and feel good.

With its superior strategic planning and policy development large parts of the council area have been transformed into state of the art residential areas with a broad cross-section of contemporary design. Every new industrial site in the area also looks good having regard to the Council's setback and landscaping policies.

BBCC is well placed to undertake new functions and major projects. It has demonstrated its ability to employ a wide range of skilled and developed staff which, in the main, strives to help their constituents wherever they can. That is the culture installed in them by BBCC. I am afraid the personal "let us help you attitude" which BBCC's staff now provide will be lost in a monolithic Council following any merger.



There has been massive change in the Botany Bay Council Area in the last 20 years largely driven by our local Council. Its stable governance has delivered a high quality service, care and attendance which will be lost if Botany Bay is forced into an amalgamation. BBCC is well equipped to not only manage the affairs of our local community in a professional and positive manner; its experience, foresight and judgement make it more than capable to cope with any complex or unexpected change and to deal with Regional and State bodies on a regular basis.

At the moment we have a Council that has been politically stable and exceptionally popular for approximately 30 years. Throughout that time the people of this area have received superb service from our Council and our Council has improved the life of its constituents. I cannot imagine how the people of Botany Bay would benefit from an amalgamation with other councils.

As they say "if it aint broke, why fix it?"

Yours faithfully

**VIZZONE RUGGERO TWIGG LAWYERS**

  
**Joe Vizzone**  
Partner

Mr Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
City of Botany Bay Council  
mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Keneally,

Re: Fit for the Future Criteria

I am responding to your letter dated 5 June 2015.

This letter is in support of the City of Botany Bay. Orica is a major landholder within the City of Botany Bay, and as such has many interactions with Council. These range from property dealings, environmental matters, community issues and traffic.

Over the years we have developed strong relationships with many of the Council officers and Councillors who have been effective, co-operative and helpful.

Council has collaborated with Orica and State and Federal agencies for the planning and approvals required to enable Orica to effectively and safely progress a range of complex, long-term remediation projects at Botany.

Council has also demonstrated a commitment toward collaboration, advocacy and leadership in its contribution toward the implementation of the NSW Environment Protection Authority's independent mercury review.

The Council shows a strong interest in community affairs, with a Councillor and officer regularly attending the community meetings which Orica holds bi-monthly regarding its remediation activities at the Botany Industrial Park.

The landscape and demographic of the Botany area has changed significantly over recent decades and Botany Council is required to service a wide diversity of industry and residential needs. Orica believes that Council is a trusted and credible advocate for the local community.

Orica looks forward to maintaining an ongoing effective dialogue with Council and all stakeholders as we continue to deliver on our commitment to safely remediate legacy contamination.

Kind regards,



Colin Wiley  
Orica Site Manager

**RECEIVED**

29 JUN 2015

**MAYOR'S OFFICE**



25 June 2015

Mayor Ben Keneally  
City of Botany Bay  
PO Box 331  
Mascot NSW 1460

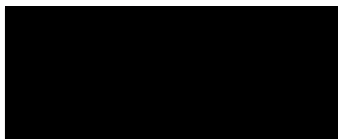
**Letter of Support**

Dear Mayor Keneally,

As you know, Qenos has had a long and productive relationship with the City of Botany Bay, having operated its world class polyethylene manufacturing facility as part of the Botany Industrial Park (BIP) for nearly 60 years. Today Qenos directly employs a workforce of 300 employees at our Botany site, and supports other locally based businesses and contractors through the procurement of materials and services.

As a member of the BIP, Qenos values its relationship with the City of Botany Bay and its ongoing support of our business. As Qenos continues to face the challenges of operating a local manufacturing facility in a global marketplace, we are confident that the City of Botany Bay has the capability to effectively engage and work with us to deliver outcomes that benefit both our business and the local community.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Clancy  
CEO and Executive Chairman  
Qenos Pty Ltd

# SURVEYS

**DO YOU WANT THE CITY OF BOTANY BAY TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT?**



Tick one of the boxes below to have your say.

The City of Botany Bay should remain independent

The City of Botany Bay should amalgamate with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete promptly and drop it into your nearest post box. No stamp is needed. Or drop it to the Mayor's Office, Shop 176A Westfield Eastgardens. For further information contact the Mayor's Office on 93663600.

No stamp required if posted in Australia



  
The Council of the City of Botany Bay  
Reply Paid 86824  
MASCOT NSW 1460

No stamp required  
if posted in Australia



Delivery Address:  
MASCOT NSW 1460

City of Botany Bay  
Say No To Amalgamation Campaign  
Reply Paid 87687  
MASCOT NSW 1460



**HANDS OFF  
BOTANY BAY**



Recently the NSW Government announced a deadline for councils to propose voluntary amalgamations. The Government has not ruled out imposing forced amalgamations if local communities are unwilling to merge voluntarily.

In response, Botany Bay City Council held an Extraordinary Meeting and remains committed to its long term policy of remaining independent. Our City is financially viable, highly efficient, well run and yet also small enough to care about and really understand local concerns. There is nothing for our residents to be gained from amalgamation. The financial incentives being offered are simply insufficient to make a case for change. There is no benefit in having decisions about Botany Bay made in Randwick or in the City.

This will not be an easy campaign. Sections of industry and the media have an ideological fixation with amalgamation that defies rational argument. But we can stop this. As a City we will work with other local government areas across Sydney to stop this madness. This will be a big issue at the next State election in March 2015. The Liberal Government are heading for a big surprise if they think this will be a popular policy.

But we need your help. In coming weeks we will be printing banners and signs that you can display. But right now it is important that we show the Minister that the community supports continued independence for Botany Bay. Please fill in and sign the attached letter so we can make sure our voice is heard.

Sign up. Join the campaign. Keep Botany Bay independent.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor  
City of Botany Bay

# SIGN UP. JOIN THE CAMPAIGN. KEEP BOTANY BAY INDEPENDENT.

**The State Government wants your Council to amalgamate with others in the Sydney region. A survey taken last year showed that almost 97% of Botany Bay residents want the City of Botany Bay to remain independent.**

Amalgamation is a bad idea that doesn't work. Queensland forced amalgamations in 2008 and since then has had to de-amalgamate five councils when the residents voted to go back to what they had before.

Amalgamation is not just another policy the government is fighting over. It's a real change that the State Government is about to make a decision on. You can do something about it. Sign up to join our campaign to keep Botany Bay independent. Please ask your friends and family to sign up with you.

Say **NO** to the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay by signing the petition on the right hand panel of this brochure. There is no need to put a stamp on it, as it is replied paid.

Dear Minister,

**I am against the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay with any other local government area.**

**I believe that Botany Bay should remain an independent Council, supported by the State Government to deliver the services and infrastructure the Botany Bay community needs today and into the future.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please keep me up to date on amalgamation news

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIVACY NOTE:** Council will collect and hold the personal information contained in this petition for the purpose of forwarding your position on the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay to the Premier of NSW and to contact you if further amalgamation related matters arise. The intended recipients of the personal information are officers within Council and the Office of the Premier of NSW. The supply of personal information by you is voluntary, however if you cannot provide, or do not wish to provide the information sought, Council may be unable to include your position on the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay in the petition to the Premier of NSW. You may make an application for access or amendments to your personal information held by Council under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPPI Act) or the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act). You may also make a request that Council suppress your personal information from a public register. Council will consider any such application in accordance with the PPPI Act.



## A random telephone survey of residents in the City of Botany Bay to understand community views on Council reform options



A random telephone survey of 500 City of Botany Bay adult residents,  
conducted by Jetty Research on behalf of **the City of Botany Bay**

**Final report dated June 26<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**p:** 02 6650 9175   **f:** 02 6650 9275   **e:** [info@jettyresearch.com.au](mailto:info@jettyresearch.com.au)   **w:** [www.jettyresearch.com.au](http://www.jettyresearch.com.au)  
**a:** Level 1, 30 Industrial Drive Coffs Harbour NSW   **m:** PO Box 1555 Coffs Harbour NSW 2450  
Jetty Research Pty Ltd   ACN 121 037 429



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## Disclaimer

**While all care and diligence has been exercised in the preparation of this report, Jetty Research Pty. Ltd. does not warrant the accuracy of the information contained within and accepts no liability for any loss or damage that may be suffered as a result of reliance on this information, whether or not there has been any error, omission or negligence on the part of Jetty Research Pty. Ltd. or its employees.**





## Executive summary

The City of Botany Bay commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of its adult residents, to understand community views regarding the NSW State Government's "Fit for the Future" (FFF) local government reform process. More specifically, Council was keen to test resident opinion on: whether or not COBB should attempt to remain an independent council; and, should a merger be forced, preferred partners.

In order to ensure that respondents were able to provide an informed opinion on the topic, within a tight project timeframe, the following three-stage surveying model was agreed:

1. Jetty Research contacted 1,133 adult COBB residents who had been randomly recruited by telephone in July-2014 for a separate and unrelated survey, to see if they (a) still lived in the COBB; and (b) were willing to participate in another Council survey. Note that no subject matter was disclosed at this stage. Of this original sampling frame, 1,089 residents made themselves available to be surveyed – or at least declined to opt-out.
2. These 1,089 were then emailed or mailed an 8-page information booklet prepared by the COBB on the subject of local government reform – see Appendix 1.
3. Jetty Research partner, Taverner Research, then phoned residents, using a survey instrument prepared by Jetty Research and COBB (see Appendix 2). Once they had confirmed having read the document, residents were entitled to commence the survey. Due to time limitations, the number of respondents was capped at 500.

Surveying was conducted between June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 11<sup>th</sup>. In all, 500 telephone interviews were conducted. Random sampling error for this survey was 4.4 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

### Among the survey's major conclusions:

1. 85 per cent of respondents said they were satisfied with Council and its services, against 14 per cent dissatisfied.
2. 81 per cent claimed prior awareness of the FFF program. Of these, 83 per cent said they were "very" or "quite" interested in the subject of Council reform.
3. 77 per cent of respondents believed that the City of Botany Bay should remain independent, against 19 per cent believing it should merge with one or more of its neighbours.
4. Main reasons for supporting the status quo were satisfaction with current council (34 per cent), a perception that COBB was sustainable and/or had no debt (32 per cent), that there was no need for change (28 per cent) and that the current model provided more autonomy or control (22 per cent). Among those favouring a merger, reasons included perceived economies of scale (6 per cent), improved governance (6 per cent) and reduced duplication (5 per cent).
5. If forced to choose a merger partner, 36 per cent chose the Randwick/Waverley/Woollahra option. A merger with the City of Sydney alone was chosen by 23 per cent of those surveyed, while 17 per cent preferred the Rockdale/Marrickville option. Just 8 per cent nominated the so-called "Global City" model.



6. Conversely, 32 per cent proposed Rockdale/Marrickville as their least preferred merger partner. The two models incorporating the City of Sydney were selected by 23 per cent each, while only 11 per cent rejected the Randwick/Waverley/Woollahra model.
7. When asked specifically how supportive they were of the COBB joining with the City of Sydney, Waverley, Woollahra and Randwick to form the so-called “Global City” council, only 19 per cent were supportive while 79 per cent were opposed.



James Parker, B. Ec, Grad Cert Applied Science (Statistics), AMSRS  
Managing Director  
June 26<sup>th</sup> 2015



## Introduction

## Background

In May 2015, the City of Botany Bay (COBB) commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of its adult residents to understand community opinion relating to the NSW State government-proposed local government boundary changes – the so called “Fit for the Future” reforms. Specific survey objectives were as follows:

1. Measure awareness of, and interest in Council reform;
2. Measure support for Council’s preferred (stand-alone) model;
3. Measure support for other merger options;
4. Understand reasons behind different merger preferences;
5. Maintain simple and neutral language to ensure credibility with external stakeholders.

## Methodology

In order to ensure that respondents were able to provide an informed opinion on the topics, and within a tight project timeframe, the following three-stage surveying model was agreed:

1. In late May, Jetty Research contacted 1,133 adult COBB residents who had been randomly recruited by telephone in July-2014 for a separate and unrelated survey, to see if they (a) still lived in the COBB; and (b) were willing to participate in another Council survey. Note that no subject matter was disclosed at this stage. Of this original sampling frame, 1,089 residents made themselves available to be surveyed – or at least declined to opt-out.
2. These 1,089 were then emailed or mailed<sup>1</sup> an 8-page information booklet prepared by the COBB on the subject of local government reform – see Appendix 1.
3. Jetty Research partner, Taverner Research, then phoned residents using a survey instrument prepared by Jetty Research and COBB (see Appendix 2). Once they had confirmed having read the document, residents were entitled to commence the survey. Due to time limitations, the number of respondents was capped at 500.

Surveying was conducted between June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 11<sup>th</sup> 2015. Respondents were called by Taverner research from 3.30-8pm each weekday afternoon (excluding Friday), and on Saturday afternoon from midday to 5pm. Residents were called up to five times at different times of the afternoon or evening.

In all, 500 interviews were conducted. Average survey length was 8.5 minutes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Depending on their preference from the 2014 survey, which was online- or paper-based.



Data has been post-weighted to reflect the demographics of the City of Botany Bay by age and gender, based on 2011 ABS Census data.

Where differences in this report are classed as significant, this implies they are statistically significant based on independent sample t-scores or other analysis of variation (or ANOVA) calculations. In statistical terms, significant differences are unlikely to have been caused by chance alone.

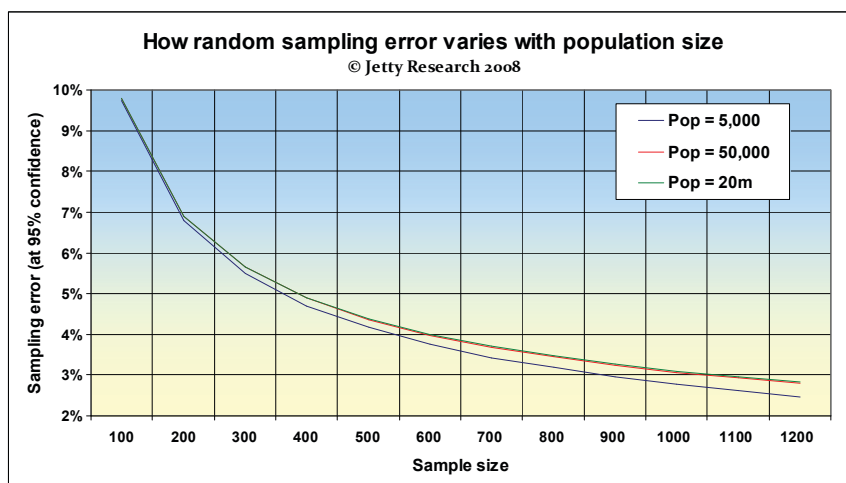
## Sampling error

Given that respondents to this survey were randomly recruited by telephone (albeit for a different research project), we believe that the randomness condition has been met.

According to the 2011 ABS Census (Usual Resident profile) the total population of the City of Botany Bay was 39,354, of which 30,967 (79%) were aged 18 and over. Based on this latter survey population, a random sample of 500 adult residents implies a margin for error of +/- 4.4 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level. (This means in effect that if we conducted a similar poll twenty times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population to within a +/- 4.4 per cent margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

As Graph i shows, margin for error falls as sample size rises. Hence cross-tabulations or sub-groups within the overall sample will typically create much higher margins for error than the overall sample. For example using the above population sizes, a sample size of 100 exhibits a margin for error of +/- 9.8 per cent (again at the 95 per cent confidence level).

**Graph i: How sampling error varies with sample and population size**

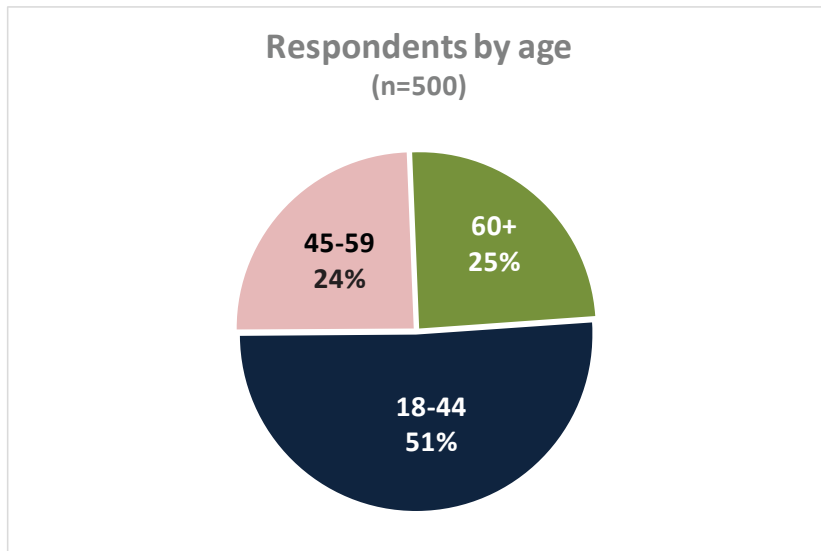


In addition to the random sampling error, above, there may also be some forms of non-random sampling error which may have affected results. These include respondents without fixed line phones, non-response bias within the original survey recruitment; and/or imperfections in the original survey database.

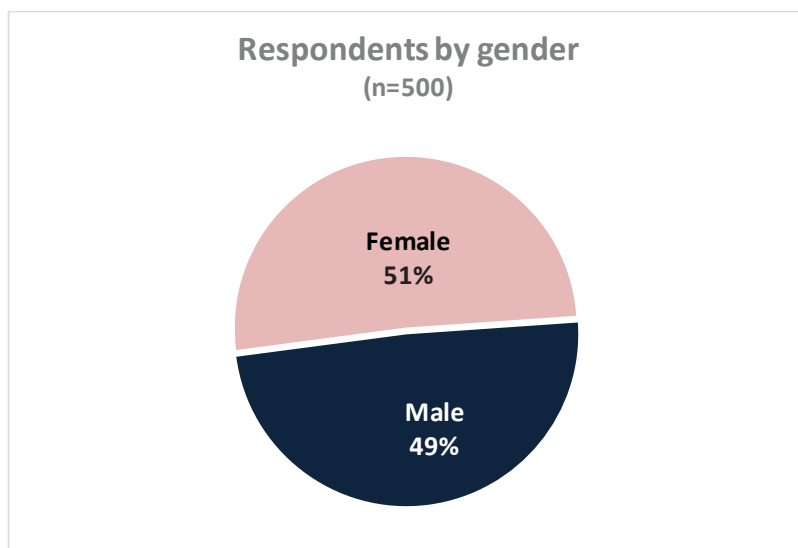


## Respondent characteristics

Graph ii: Respondent breakdown by age (weighted)

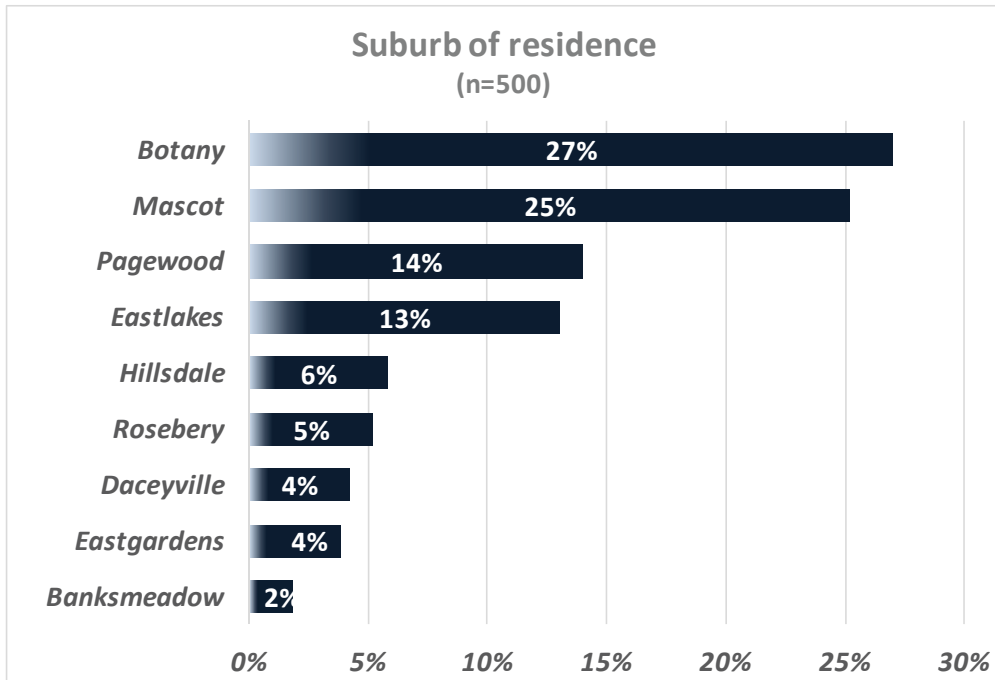


Graph iii: Respondent breakdown by gender (weighted)





Graph iv: Respondent breakdown by suburb of residence (unweighted)

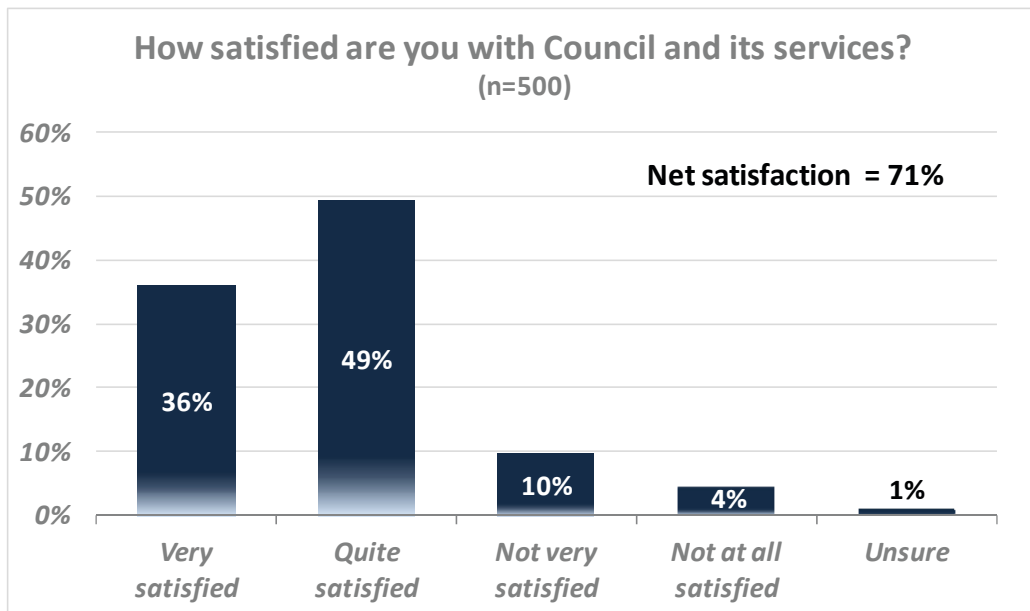




## Part 1: Satisfaction with Council

The survey commenced with a question asking respondents how satisfied they were with their Council and its services, “not just on one or two issues, but across all areas of its responsibilities.”

**Graph 1.1: How satisfied are you with the performance of your Council and its services?**



Council scored extremely highly on this measure, with 85 per cent of respondents satisfied and just 14 per cent dissatisfied – for net satisfaction of 71 per cent.

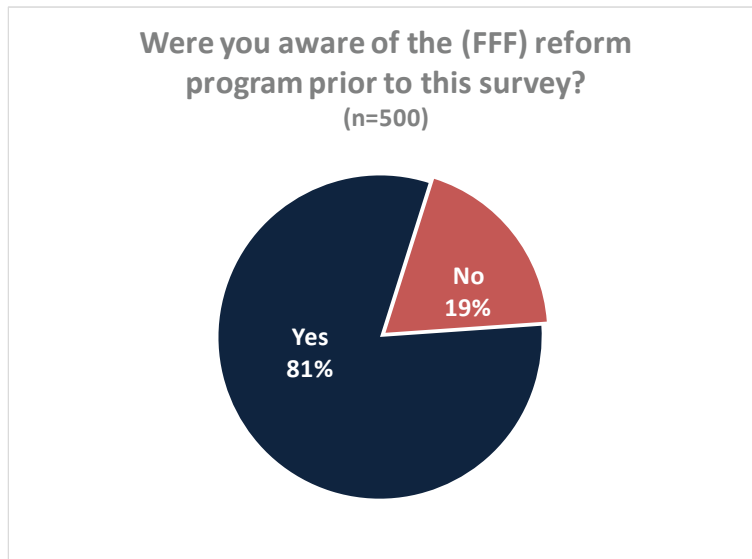
Older residents were particularly happy, with some 58 per cent of those aged 60-plus declaring themselves “very satisfied”. Females were also more likely to declare themselves satisfied than males, at 92 and 79 per cent respectively.



## Part 2: Awareness of, and interest in Council reform

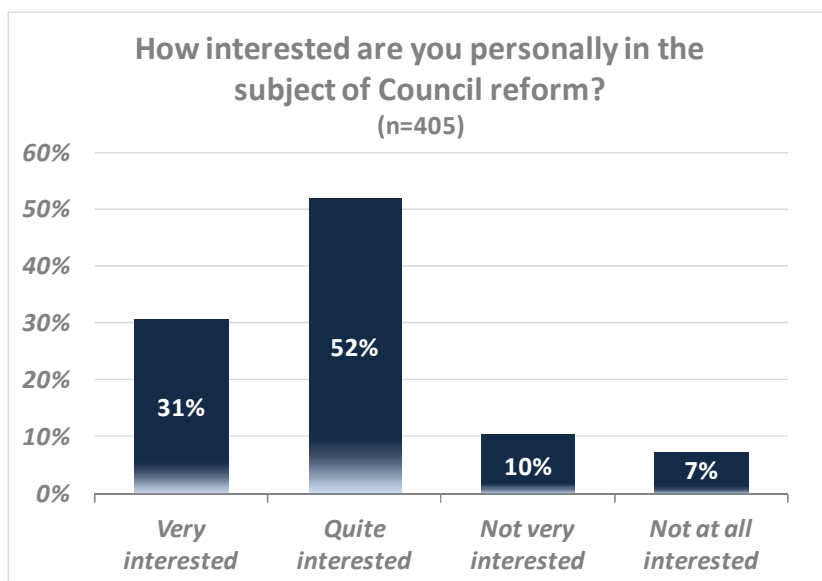
Respondents were next asked whether they had been aware of the local government reform program prior to the survey, and how interested they were in the subject of council reform.

**Graph 2.1: Prior to this survey, were you aware of the (Fit for the Future) reform program?**



Eight in ten respondents (81 per cent) claimed to have been aware of the Fit for the Future discussion prior to being surveyed on the subject. This included 85 per cent of those aged over 60, and 83 per cent of males.

**Graph 2.2: (If yes) How interested are you personally in the subject of Council reform?**







Thirty one per cent of those respondents previously aware of the FFF reform program claimed to be very interested in the subject of council reform, with a further 52 per cent saying they were “quite interested”.

Interest was relatively consistent by age and gender. Although 34 per cent of respondents 60-plus declared themselves “very interested”, against 26 per cent of those aged 18-44, this difference is not considered statistically significant.



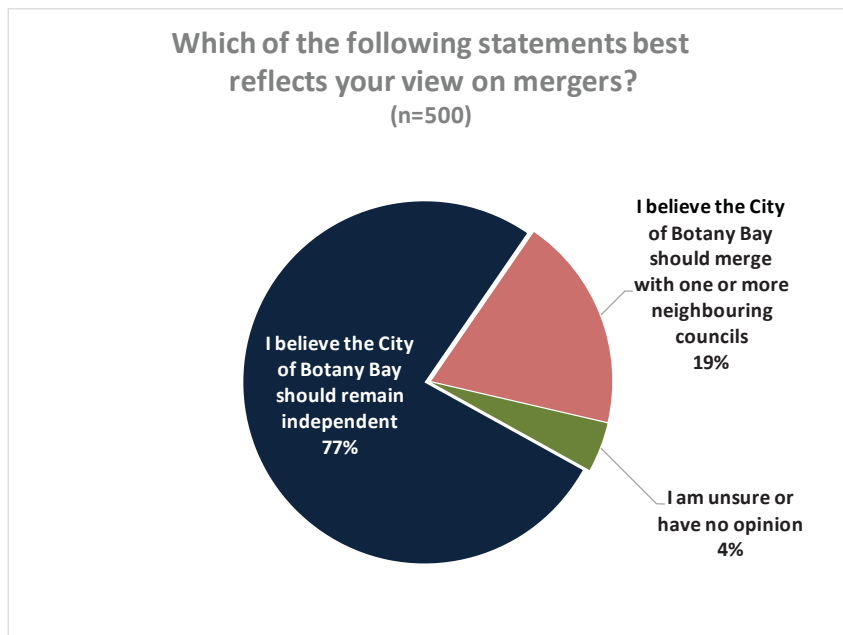
### Part 3: Support for different options

Respondents were next informed that:

“In the case of the City of Botany Bay, the state government has published a report recommending that the city merge with four other councils. Under the Fit for the Future process, council must consider this option, and may consider other options. These include: remaining independent; merging with Randwick, Waverly and Woollahra Councils; merging with the City of Sydney only; merging with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra councils; or merging with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils.”

They were then asked. “Thinking generally about mergers, which of the following statements best reflects your views on this subject?” and read three statements (with the “independent” and “merger” options rotated):

**Graph 3.1: Thinking generally about mergers, which of the following statements best reflects your views on this subject?**



More than three-quarters of respondents (77 per cent) felt that the City of Botany Bay should remain independent.<sup>2</sup>

Among females and those aged 60-plus, support for Botany remaining independent was even higher (at 84 and 86 per cent respectively). However younger residents were also supportive of the stand-alone option, with 72 per cent of those aged 18-44 supporting this model.

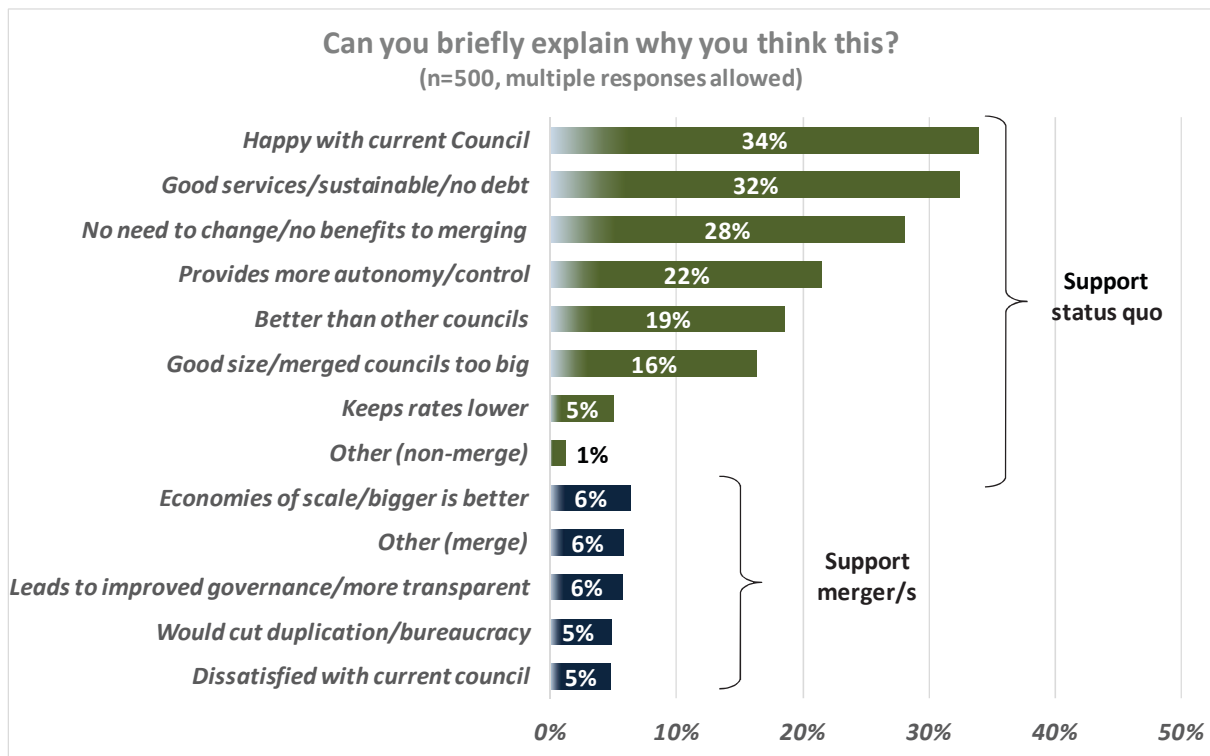
<sup>2</sup> In case it's of interest, the unweighted (i.e. raw) figure was 82 per cent.



Slightly less than one in five respondents (19 per cent) supported the merger option, with 4 per cent unsure.

Respondents were then asked, in an unprompted question, why they supported their preferred option. Their answers have been coded (i.e. themed) and are shown in Graph 3.2, below:

**Graph 3.2: Can you briefly explain why you think this? (unprompted)**



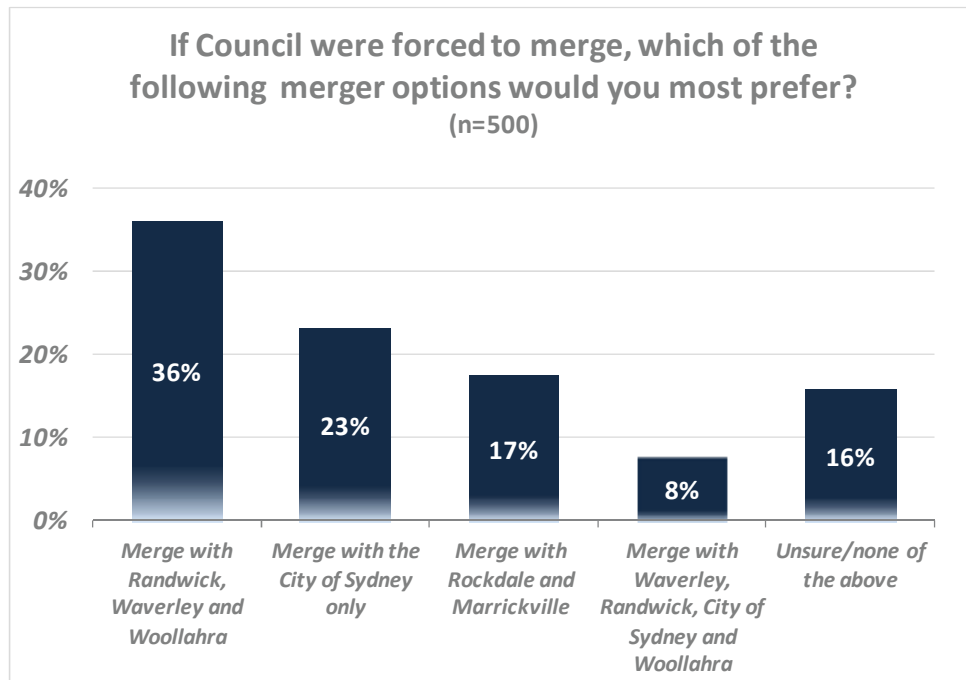
Among those seeking the COBB to remain independent, the main reasons given were that they were happy with the current council (34 per cent of all respondents), that the current council provided good services, were financially sustainable and/or had no debt (32 per cent), and/or that they could see no rationale for change (28 per cent). Twenty two per cent felt that the current council provided residents with greater autonomy than a merged model, and 19 per cent believed that Botany offered superior services to other (generally neighbouring) councils. Meanwhile 16 per cent felt Botany was a good size, and/or that a merged council would be too large.

Of those supporting a merger, main reasons were perceptions that a larger council would: provide economies of scale (6 per cent); lead to improved governance (also 6 per cent) and/or cut duplication (5 per cent). A further 5 per cent based on their reason on being dissatisfied with the current Council.



Respondents were next asked, “If the NSW government forced Council to merge with one or more of its neighbouring councils, which of the following merger options would you prefer?” Again the four offered options were rotated to avoid order bias.

**Graph 3.3: If the NSW government forced Council to merge, which of the following merger options would you prefer?**



Forced to choose, slightly over one in three respondents (36 per cent) preferred the Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra model. Twenty three per cent felt a merger with the City of Sydney (alone) would be the best option, while 17 per cent preferred to go with Rockdale and Marrickville. Just 8 per cent supported the so-called “Global City” option, while 16 per cent were unsure or supported none of the models offered.

Results were relatively consistent by age and gender.

However as shown in Table 3.1 (next page), there were some statistically significant differences in response depending on whether the respondent had earlier preferred the independent or merger option:

*(Continued next page)*



**Table 3.1: Preferred merger option, by whether respondent had earlier preferred independent or merger model**

	Independent vs. merger		
	Should remain independent	Should merge with one or more Councils	Unsure/ no opinion
Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils	122 31.9%	49 51.0%	9 40.9%
Merge with the City of Sydney only	98 25.6%	16 16.7%	2 9.1%
Merge with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra Councils	21 5.5%	17 17.7%	0 .0%
Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils	74 19.3%	12 12.5%	2 9.1%
Unsure/none of the above	68 17.8%	2 2.1%	9 40.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>96</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>22</b> <b>100.0%</b>

This indicates that those preferring the merger model initially were significantly more supportive of the Randwick/Waverley/Woollahra model than those seeking continued independence for COBB (at 51 and 32 per cent respectively). However it remained the preferred model for both groups.

Respondents were next asked why they preferred their particular choice. A selection of representative comments is shown below:

**Prefer Randwick/Waverley/Woollahra (36%):**

“I prefer this option because we are also part of the eastern suburbs and I am familiar with those councils. Also I don’t like Clover Moore.”

“Randwick is very close and so is Woollahra and they both have good reputations for services and debt.”

“I believe it would cover sufficient populations to effect economies of scale. It would leave the CBD to look after its own specific issues.”

“More like minded and similar socio- economic bracket and similar demographics.”

**Prefer City of Sydney-only (23%):**

“The City of Sydney perform better than most of the others. They have good libraries and parks.”

“Because it is the only one without debts.”

“Good size and manageable, and the others could be too big.”

“I don't like a whole lot of individual councils merging together. Clover Moore isn't doing a bad job.”

“As we are only 5km from the city we are virtually neighbours. It would benefit in terms of public transport.”



**Prefer Waverley/Randwick/City of Sydney/Woollahra (8%):**

“I think that there will be fewer councillors and mayors and we will be saving money on this.”

“If it is going to be big it might as well have all of them included and be very big and give us more resources.”

“The bigger the better - by merging with more there will be less councils involved and this could save money.”

“It is time for a change. It will save ratepayers money and unify regulations. Building code, waste disposal and general maintenance.”

**Prefer Rockdale and Marrickville (17%):**

“They are a smaller grouping of councils.”

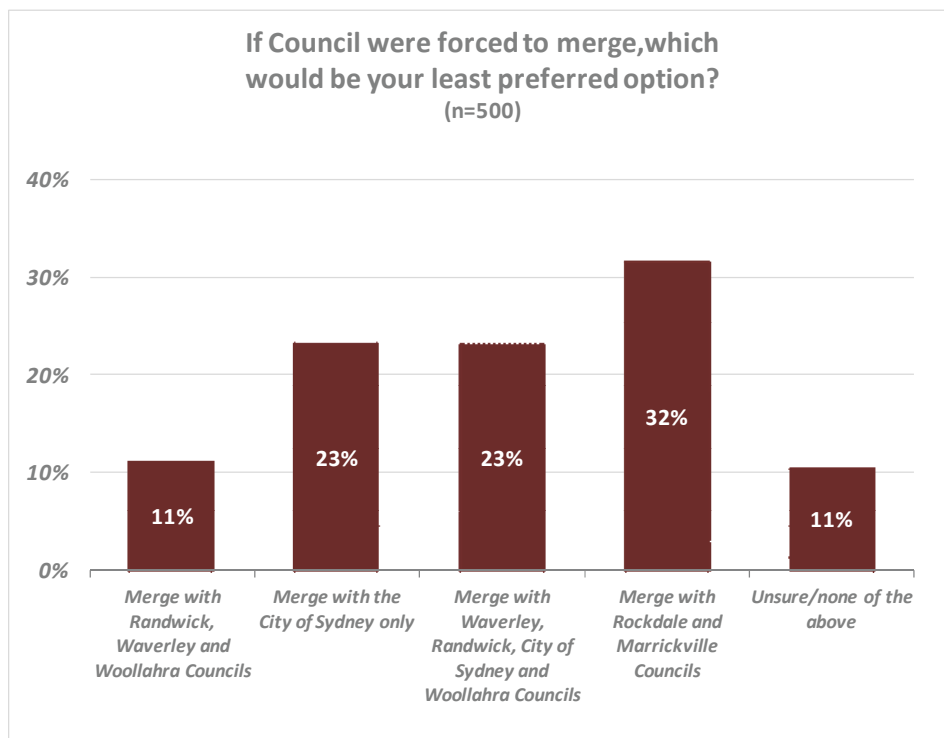
“They have similar issues dealing having to deal with planes and ports”

“I think the socio economic and expectations are changing and they seem familiar and comparable demographics with the same social expectations.”

“Similar people and issues and Waverley could be too uppity”

Residents were next asked which of the possible merger options they would *least* prefer:

**Graph 3.4: Which of the merger options would you least prefer?**





Almost one-third of those surveyed said that the Rockdale/Marrickville merger option was their least preferred choice. Opposition to the City of Sydney (alone) and the so-called “Global City” option were similar at 23 per cent apiece, while only 11 per cent cited the Randwick/Waverley/ Woollahra model as their least preferred (of the four choices offered).

**Table 3.2: Least preferred merger option, by whether respondent had earlier preferred independent or merger model**

	Independent vs. merger		
	Should remain independent	Should merge with one or more Councils	Unsure/ no opinion
Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils	39 10.2%	16 16.8%	2 9.1%
Merge with the City of Sydney only	87 22.7%	24 25.3%	5 22.7%
Merge with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra Councils	106 27.6%	9 9.5%	1 4.5%
Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils	109 28.4%	43 45.3%	6 27.3%
Unsure/none of the above	43 11.2%	3 3.2%	8 36.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>95</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>22</b> <b>100.0%</b>

In this instance, those originally supporting the merger option were significantly more likely to reject the Rockdale/Marrickville option, while those preferring COBB to remain independent were split almost equally between the City of Sydney (alone), Global City and Rockdale/Marrickville options as their least preferred choices.

Again, respondents were asked to explain their choice. A representative sample of comments for each least preferred option is shown below:

**Least prefer Randwick/Waverley/Woollahra (11%):**

“Randwick council is a basket case often. It is often under administrators and then six months later they are in trouble again.”

“Our council is much better in looking after us. Also there are much wealthier people in those council areas and their rates reflect their earnings.”

“No Woollahra and Waverley. They are affluent and we are more middle class. There class means money - we just want the basics done.”



**Least prefer City of Sydney-only (23%):**

“Rates would be too expensive, and City of Sydney covers too large an area and may have too many high rises.”

“I don't like what they are doing to the city, like cycle lanes and blockages.”

“I don't like Clover Moore's ideas. They are not within our area and Botany has a totally different atmosphere to City of Sydney.”

“I just think it is too big a council and we will be swamped by it.”

**Least prefer Waverley/Randwick/City of Sydney/Woollahra (23%):**

“I think we would be gobbled up and it takes in a large income area and there are a lot of differences in these areas financially - to compare Mascot area with Vaucluse etc. is ridiculous.”

“This council would be too big/monstrous and unwieldy”

“I don't like this option because it's too big and not personal enough, you can't find who is accountable and communication would not be easy.”

“Because it has Randwick in it.”

**Least prefer Rockdale and Marrickville (32%):**

“It is a different demographic with older suburbs and different needs.”

“I feel the needs are too different between these councils and Botany. I believe we need to remain with the eastern suburbs area.”

“Mainly from the financial side I would not like to merge with debt ridden councils, they would drag the Botany council down financially. At first I liked the idea but when I looked at their financial situation I changed my mind.”

“We have no knowledge of their councils”

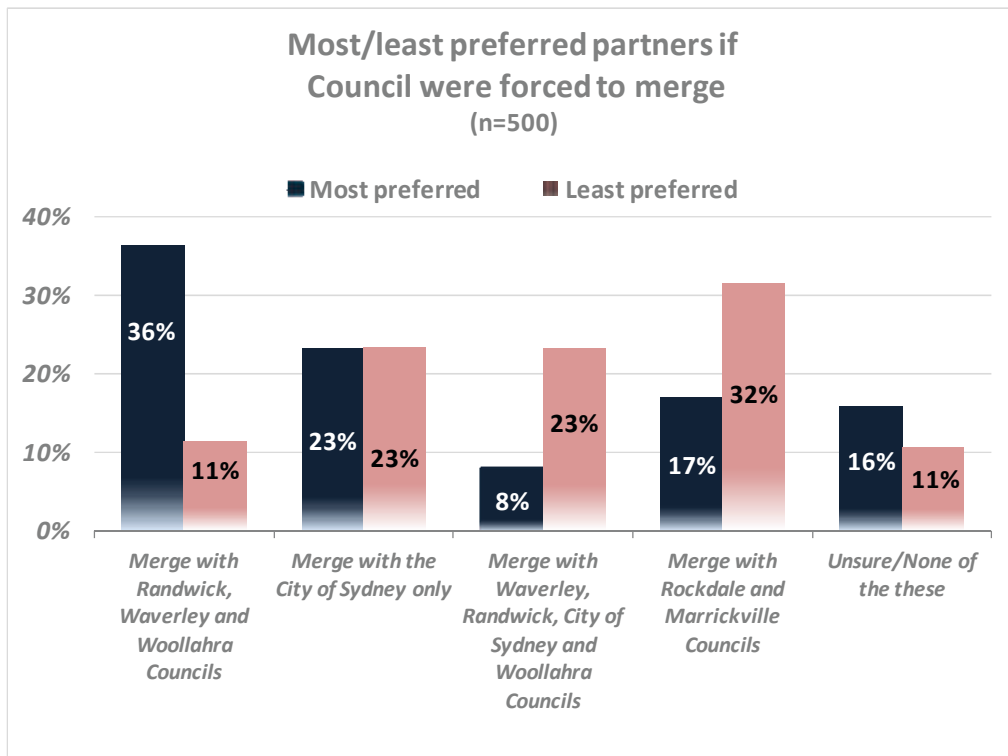
“These councils have had problems with corruption”.

*(Continued next page)*





Graph 3.4: Comparison of most/least preferred option for forced merger partners



Putting the most/least preferred options side by side highlights three things:

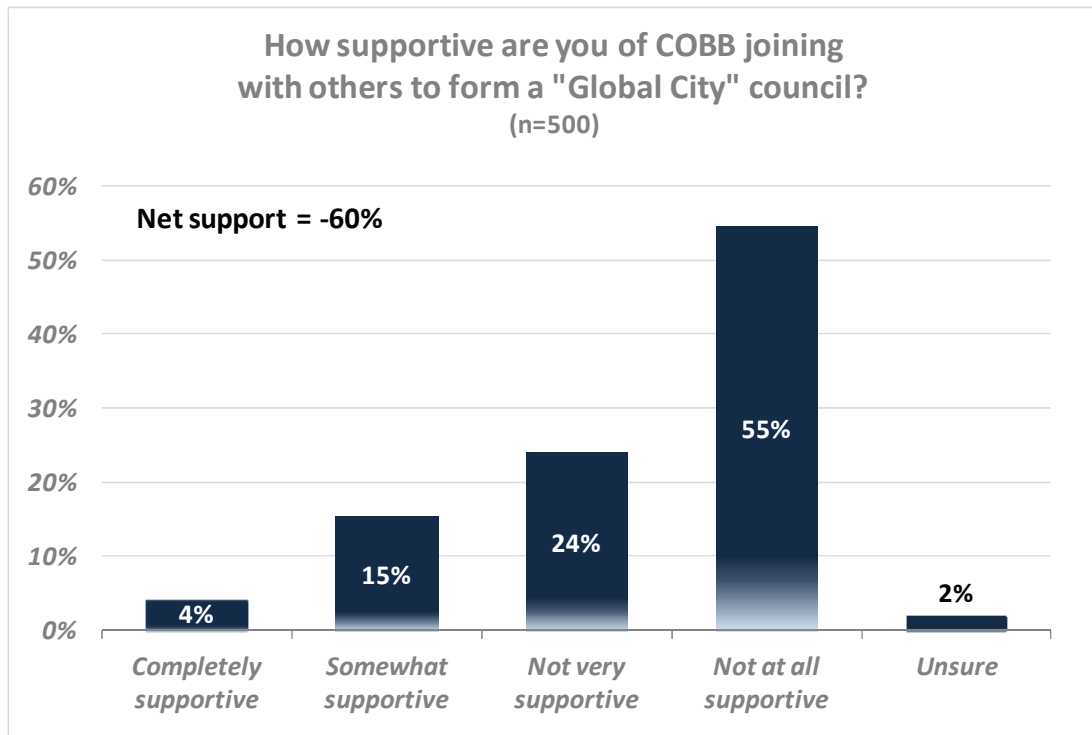
- The Randwick/Woollahra/Waverley model has the highest level of support, and lowest level of strong opposition;
- The Rockdale/Marrickville and Global City models have the lowest levels of support, and highest levels of opposition;
- There are relatively even levels of support for, and opposition to the City of Sydney-only model.



## Part 4: Support for the 'Global City' concept

The survey concluded with a specific question asking residents how supportive they were of “the City of Botany Bay joining with the City of Sydney, Waverley, Randwick and Woollahra to form a so-called ‘Global City’ council”. Respondents were offered one of four prompted options.

**Graph 4.1: How supportive are you of the City of Botany Bay joining the City of Sydney, Waverley, Randwick and Woollahra to form a so-called “Global City” council?**



There was very little backing for this model, with 19 per cent supportive against 79 per cent opposed.

Opposition was consistent by age, while men were more likely to be supportive than women (at 25 and 15 per cent respectively).

Among those initially preferring COBB to remain independent, only 9 per cent supported the Global City model. This compares with 58 per cent of those initially favouring a merger.



## **Appendix 1: Information booklet supplied by Council to potential respondents**



# FIT FOR THE FUTURE

CITY OF BOTANY BAY



# MAYOR'S MESSAGE



**Thank you for your contribution to Council's 2040 Vision telephone survey. Your input was greatly appreciated.**

Council will soon release for community feedback a Directions Paper which is the first step in the process towards finalising our Vision 2040 project later this year.

I am now contacting you to invite you to participate in a survey relating to the NSW State Government's local government reform initiative called *Fit for the Future*. This reform process will directly impact our Council.

*Fit for the Future* requires NSW local councils to make a submission on how they can maintain efficient service delivery, financial stability and deliver better infrastructure into the future. As part of this reform program, the NSW Government is compelling councils to actively consider amalgamating with neighbouring councils.

This is where I would appreciate your views. I want to know whether you think the City of Botany Bay should remain independent or volunteer to amalgamate.

The proposed amalgamation options are:

1. Remain independent
2. Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra (*eastern suburbs model*)
3. Merge with the City of Sydney only
4. Merge with Randwick, City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra (*global city model*)
5. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville (*airport council model*)

Our submission is due on 30 June 2015.

We have appointed Jetty Research, in partnership with Taverer Research, to conduct a brief telephone survey on this important issue. The survey will only take 5 minutes, and your answers will be confidential. Although your participation is completely voluntary, we would very much appreciate your honest feedback. Your view on *Fit for the Future* is vital in ensuring we make informed decisions for our City's future.

Thank you for the contributions you make to our community and I look forward to gaining greater insight into your vision for the City of Botany Bay's future.

Please contact Jetty Research on (02) 6660 9175 if you have further questions.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor



# FIT FOR THE FUTURE

## BACKGROUND

In September 2014, the State Government released its local government reform program named **"Fit for the Future"**. This program will impact the way all NSW councils operate. The program is based on the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel which considered governance models, structural arrangements and boundary changes for NSW local government.

Councils must address the following issues:

- Suitable scale and capacity
- Financial sustainability
- Efficiency
- Infrastructure, services and capability

Each council is being asked to review its situation and prepare a 'Fit of the Future' submission by 30 June 2015.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITY OF BOTANY BAY?

The recommendation is for our City to merge with Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra councils to create a 'Global City' with a projected population of 505,903.

The options we have considered include:

1. Botany Bay to 'stand alone' and remain independent.
2. An 'Eastern Suburbs' council – merge Botany Bay, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra councils.
3. A 'Global City' council – merge Botany Bay, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra councils.
4. A merger of Botany Bay and Sydney City councils.
5. An 'Airport Council' – merge Botany Bay, Marrickville and Rockdale councils.

The following tables provide a comparison of what these options look like on key indicators:

	Botany Bay 'stand alone'	'Eastern Suburbs' - Botany Bay, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra	'Global Sydney' - Botany Bay, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra	Botany Bay and Sydney	'Airport Council' - Botany Bay, Marrickville and Rockdale
Area km <sup>2</sup>	21.7	79.5	105.2	78.4	65.4
Population	43,292	313,985	505,903	235,210	282,527
2031 population	56,050	379,750	653,250	329,650	292,700
Staff	329	1821	3,594	2,070	1,192
Councillors <small>(based on the current maximum number of councillors allowed under legislation)</small>	7	15	15	15	15
Population per councillor	6,622	20,952	33,727	15,924	15,282
Budget	\$66M	\$675M	\$1,236M	\$827M	\$223.3M
Debt	\$0	\$9M	\$9M	\$0	\$287M

## INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL CHARACTERISTICS

This table shows data available on each council as they currently operate:

	Botany Bay	Randwick	Sydney	Waverley	Woollahra	Marrickville	Rockdale
Population	43,292	142,310	191,918	70,706	57,677	82,525	106,712
2031 Projected population	56,050	174,500	275,300	82,150	62,250	102,300	154,350
Land size (km <sup>2</sup> )	21.7	86.8	26.7	9.2	12.8	16.5	28.2
TCorp assessment – Current financial sustainability	Moderate	Sound	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
TCorp assessment – Financial sustainability outlook	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Neutral	Neutral
Average Residential rate	\$689	\$1,075	\$654	\$1,058	\$1,116	\$875	\$811
Domestic Waste Charge	\$458	\$51	\$380	\$469	\$452	\$48760	\$582.00
Budget	\$66M	\$158M	\$761M	\$144M	\$107M	\$975M	\$79.7M
Debt	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3M	\$8M	\$18.85M	\$72M
Councillors	7	15	10	12	15	12	15
Population per councillor	6,185	9,487	19,192	5,892	3,845	6,877	7,015
Staff	322	522	1,773	601	376	523	540
\$ spent on services per resident	\$1309	\$879	\$2609	\$1999	\$1560	\$1145	\$788

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

<p><b>'Stand Alone' option</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status quo remains</li> <li>• Keeps local identity and proud 127 year history</li> <li>• Maintains existing services and service levels</li> <li>• Maintains high councillor representation per resident</li> <li>• Residents are already 'highly satisfied' with Council's performance</li> <li>• Retain local input into decision making</li> <li>• No debt/borrowing</li> <li>• Financially sustainable (TCR assessment)</li> <li>• Planned capital works programs will continue</li> <li>• Income from the Airport and Port remains with us</li> <li>• Avoids a disruptive and expensive merger process</li> <li>• Meets all the Fit for the Future criteria in the proposed timeframe</li> <li>• May not meet the State Government's 'scale and capacity' criteria</li> <li>• Could be forced to amalgamate</li> <li>• May not have access to the State Government's incentive package</li> </ul>
<p><b>'Merger' option</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to meet State Government's 'scale and capacity' criteria</li> <li>• May have access to the State Government's incentive package</li> <li>• Loss of local identity</li> <li>• Lower level of councillor representation</li> <li>• Loss of local input into decision making</li> <li>• Initial and short term disruptions</li> <li>• May improve capacity to manage major projects</li> <li>• Average residential rates are likely to increase</li> <li>• Single entity for government agencies to liaise with</li> <li>• Potential loss of existing services and service levels</li> <li>• Cost to amalgamate</li> </ul>

## SCALE & CAPACITY

The following factors have been identified as essential for councils to have sufficient scale and capacity:

- More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending
- Scope to undertake new functions and major projects
- Ability to employ a wider range of skilled staff
- Knowledge, creativity and innovation
- Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development
- Effective regional collaboration
- Credibility for more effective advocacy
- Capable partner for State and Federal agencies
- Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change
- High quality political and managerial leadership

We believe we meet the capacity criteria. In relation to scale, this will depend on whether the NSW Government determines a required resident population figure for NSW councils.





## FINANCIAL ISSUES

The Fit for the Future program identifies seven (7) key financial indicators to assess a council's financial sustainability. The following table shows Council's current performance and where we will be in 5 years.

Financial Benchmarks City of Botany Bay	2014/2015	2019/2020
<b>These three measures assess if a council can generate sufficient funds over the long term to provide the agreed level and scope of services and infrastructure for their community.</b>		
Operating Performance*	Yes	Yes
Own Source Revenue*	Yes	Yes
Asset Renewal**	No <small>Note: This table indicates funds spent on asset infrastructure in significant proportion of our asset renewal spend.</small>	Yes
<b>These three performance measures assess whether a council can maintain its assets (eg roads, paths, parks), meet its debts and access finance through loans.</b>		
Infrastructure Backlog**	No	Yes
Asset Maintenance**	Yes	Yes
Debt Service <small>Note: Council has no debt and can meet this measure by taking a loan.</small>	Yes	Yes
<b>This performance measure assesses if a council has efficient service and infrastructure delivery, achieving value for money for current and future ratepayers.</b>		
Real Operating Expenditure ***	Yes	Yes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
<small>*Must meet within 3 years **Meet or improve within 3 years            *** Must demonstrate operational savings over 3 years</small>		

TCorp have indicated that *local government will be financially sustainable over the long term when it is able to generate sufficient funds to provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with its community*. The City of Botany Bay has been assessed as having a financial sustainability ratio (FSR) of 'moderate' with a 'neutral' outlook. This means that we have adequate capacity to meet our financial commitments in the short to medium term and acceptable capacity in the long term and there are no foreseeable events that are expected to have a direct impact on this position.

Mergers also have 'up front costs' which need to be recovered in the long term. Modelling in 2015 by the NSW Parliamentary Budget Office estimated the total cost of mergers in NSW to be \$445M, if all councils participated voluntarily. To offset these costs, the NSW Government has offered an assistance package of \$280M, with any balance to be funded by individual councils.



## WHAT HAS OUR COMMUNITY SAID SO FAR?

Community opinion will be an important consideration in our submission and Council has engaged widely with our community.

### JUNE 2013

We conducted a voluntary survey of 12,000 households asking for your views on whether:

- The City of Botany Bay should remain independent
- The City of Botany Bay should amalgamate with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra

An overwhelming 96% of residents indicated that they supported our City remaining independent. 6,968 survey forms were returned to us, with only 286 responses indicating support for the plan to merge. We were pleased to see a response rate of 27%, indicating that our community strongly about this issue.



### JULY/AUGUST 2014

A telephone and online/paper survey was conducted in July/August 2014 to provide Council with a representative and random picture of how residents perceive the City of Botany Bay. 815 residents responded. In summary the majority of respondents consider that the services we provide are very important and they are generally satisfied with our performance. All services identified in the survey showed a 'high satisfaction, high importance' outcome. 63% of respondents identified strongly with our local government area and the local community.

### FEBRUARY 2015

A second survey seeking community support in the form of a petition was sent to residents. The purpose of the petition was to let the Minister for Local Government know our community's views on any merger proposal. To date, 1,389 residents have added their names to the petition declaring:

*Dear Minister,*

*I am against the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay with any other local government area.*

*I believe that Botany Bay should remain an independent Council, supported by the State Government to deliver the services and infrastructure the Botany Bay community needs today and into the future.*

### MAY 2015

Council is also undertaking a random telephone survey of our residents. The survey will ask residents to nominate two preferences from the options explored, namely:

1. Remain Independent
2. Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra
3. Merge with Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra
4. Merge with Sydney only
5. Merge with Rockdale and Murrumbidgee

We will also consider conducting a poll of residents under the Local Government Act 1993 if forced amalgamations were to occur.





## WHAT'S NEXT

Once we have received your feedback, Council will finalise our submission.

Submissions are due by 30 June 2015 and will be assessed by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

IPART will provide the Minister for Local Government and the Premier with a final report by 16 October 2015 identifying whether or not individual councils are 'fit' or 'unfit' and the reasons for this assessment. The report will be publicly released following Cabinet approval.

## WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

[www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)

[www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

[www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)



## Appendix 2: Survey questionnaire

*Confirm you are speaking to person named in letter, email.*

Good afternoon/evening, my name is (name) and I'm calling from Jetty Research (or Taverner Research) on behalf of the City of Botany Bay. We contacted you recently about a short survey we are conducting for Council. Have you received the letter from Council yet explaining the purpose of the survey?

1. Yes
2. No (Ask if they would like it re-sent, and check mailing/email address)

(If yes) And have you had a chance to read the letter yet?

(If yes) Are you happy to take part in a short survey now? It takes less than 5 minutes, and all your responses would be confidential.

(If no) Ask them to read letter, and arrange a convenient callback time

*Once you have confirmed they have read letter, record first name:*

Thanks, let's get started then (name).

**Q1 Firstly (name), how satisfied are you with the performance of your Council and its services, not just on one or two issues but across all areas of its responsibilities? (prompted except unsure)**

1. Very satisfied
2. Quite satisfied
3. Not very satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Unsure

**Q2. As you may know, the NSW State Government has established a process to look at the financial sustainability of Councils and to encourage Councils to consider mergers. This process is called Fit for the Future. Prior to this call, were you aware of this local government reform program?**

1. Yes
2. No



**(If yes) Q3 And how interested are you personally in the subject of Council reform? (Prompted)**

1. Very interested
2. Quite interested
3. Not very interested
4. Not at all interested

**Q4. In the case of the City of Botany Bay, the state government has published a report recommending that the city merge with four other councils. Under the Fit for the Future process, council must consider this option, and may consider other options. These include: remaining independent; merging with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils; merging with the City of Sydney only; merging with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra councils; or merging with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils.**

**Q5. Thinking generally about mergers, which of the following statements best reflects your views on this subject? (Read out three options - repeat if necessary. First two options to rotate.)**

1. I believe the City of Botany Bay should remain independent
2. I believe the City of Botany Bay should merge with one or more neighbouring Councils
3. I am unsure or have no opinion

**Q6. (Unless unsure) Can you briefly explain why you think this? (open answer)**

**Q7. If the NSW government forced Council to merge with one or more of its neighbouring councils, which of the following merger options would you prefer? (rotate order – repeat if necessary)**

1. Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils
2. Merge with the City of Sydney only
3. Merge with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra Councils (the so-called “Global City” option)
4. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils
5. Unsure/none of the above

**Q8. (Except “unsure/NOTA”) Can you briefly explain why you prefer this option? (open answer)**



**Q9. And which of the following merger options would you least prefer? (rotate order – repeat if necessary)**

1. Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils
2. Merge with the City of Sydney
3. Merge with Waverley, Randwick, City of Sydney and Woollahra Councils;
4. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville Councils
5. Unsure/none of the above

**Q10. (Except “unsure/NOTA”) Can you briefly explain why you don’t want this option? (open answer)**

**Q11. And finally, how supportive are you of the City of Botany Bay joining with the City of Sydney, Waverley, Randwick, and Woollahra to form a so-called “Global City” council? (prompted except unsure)**

1. Completely supportive
2. Somewhat supportive
3. Not very supportive
4. Not at all supportive
5. Unsure

*(Confirm age range and suburb)*

**Q12. Thank you, that is the end of the survey. Did you have any questions? (Thank again and conclude)**

# OPTIONS PAPER



# FIT FOR THE FUTURE

CITY OF BOTANY BAY



# MAYOR'S MESSAGE



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3. Merge with the City of Sydney only
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5. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville (*'airport council' model*)

Our submission is due on 30 June 2015.

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Thank you for the contributions you make to our community and I look forward to gaining greater insight into your vision for the City of Botany Bay's future.

Please contact Jetty Research on (02) 6650 9175 if you have further questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Keneally". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor





# FIT FOR THE FUTURE

## BACKGROUND

In September 2014, the State Government released its local government reform program named **“Fit for the Future”**. This program will impact the way all NSW councils operate. The program is based on the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel which considered governance models, structural arrangements and boundary changes for NSW local government.

Councils must address the following issues:

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- Infrastructure, services and capability

Each council is being asked to review its situation and prepare a ‘Fit of the Future’ submission by 30 June 2015.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITY OF BOTANY BAY?

The recommendation is for our City to merge with Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra councils to create a ‘Global City’ with a projected population of 505,903.

The options we have considered include:

1. Botany Bay to ‘stand alone’ and remain independent.
2. An ‘Eastern Suburbs’ council - merge Botany Bay, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra councils.
3. A ‘Global City’ council – merge Botany Bay, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra councils.
4. A merger of Botany Bay and Sydney City councils.
5. An ‘Airport Council’ – merge Botany Bay, Marrickville and Rockdale councils.

The following tables provide a comparison of what these options look like on key indicators.

	Botany Bay 'stand alone'	'Eastern Suburbs' - Botany Bay, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra	'Global Sydney' - Botany Bay, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra	Botany Bay and Sydney	'Airport Council' - Botany Bay, Marrickville and Rockdale
<b>Area km<sup>2</sup></b>	21.7	79.5	106.2	48.4	66.4
<b>Population</b>	43,292	313,985	505,903	235,210	232,527
<b>2031 population</b>	56,050	379,750	653,250	329,550	292,700
<b>Staff</b>	329	1821	3,594	2,070	1,192
<b>Councillors</b> <small>*based on the current maximum number of councillors allowed under legislation</small>	7	15 *	15*	15*	15*
<b>Population per councillor</b>	5,622	20,932	33,727	13,924	15,282
<b>Budget</b>	\$66M	\$475M	\$1,236M	\$827M	\$223.3M
<b>Debt</b>	\$0	\$9M	\$9M	\$0	\$28.1M

## INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL CHARACTERISTICS

This table shows data available on each council as they currently operate.

	Botany Bay	Randwick	Sydney	Waverley	Woollahra	Marrickville	Rockdale
<b>Population</b>	43,292	142,310	191,918	70,706	57,677	82,523	106,712
<b>2031 Projected population</b>	56,050	174,300	273,500	82,150	67,250	102,300	134,350
<b>Land size (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	21.7	36.3	26.7	9.2	12.3	16.5	28.2
<b>TCorp assessment – Current financial sustainability</b>	Moderate	Sound	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<b>TCorp assessment – Financial sustainability outlook</b>	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Average Residential rate</b>	\$689	\$1,075	\$654	\$1,058	\$1,118	\$875	\$811
<b>Domestic Waste Charge</b>	\$458	\$511	\$380	\$469	\$452	\$487.60	\$382.00
<b>Budget</b>	\$66M	\$158M	\$761M	\$144M	\$107M	\$97.5M	\$79.7M
<b>Debt</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3M	\$6M	\$18.85M	\$7.2M
<b>Councillors</b>	7	15	10	12	15	12	15
<b>Population per councillor</b>	6,185	9,487	19,192	5,892	3,845	6,877	7,015
<b>Staff</b>	322	522	1,773	601	376	523	340
<b>\$ spent on services per resident</b>	\$1309	\$879	\$2609	\$1599	\$1360	\$1145	\$788

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

<p><b>'Stand Alone' option</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status quo remains</li> <li>• Keeps local identity and proud 127 year history</li> <li>• Maintains existing services and service levels</li> <li>• Maintains high councillor representation per resident</li> <li>• Residents are already 'highly satisfied' with Council's performance</li> <li>• Retain local input into decision making</li> <li>• No debt/borrowing</li> <li>• Financially sustainable (TCorp assessment)</li> <li>• Planned capital works programs will continue</li> <li>• Income from the Airport and Port remains with us</li> <li>• Avoids a disruptive and expensive merger process</li> <li>• Meets all the Fit for the Future criteria in the proposed timeframe</li> <li>• May not meet the State Government's 'scale and capacity' criteria</li> <li>• Could be forced to amalgamate</li> <li>• May not have access to the State Government's incentive package</li> </ul>
<p><b>'Merger' option</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to meet State Government's 'scale and capacity' criteria</li> <li>• May have access to the State Government's incentive package</li> <li>• Loss of local identity</li> <li>• Lower level of councillor representation</li> <li>• Loss of local input into decision making</li> <li>• Initial and short term disruptions</li> <li>• May improve capacity to manage major projects</li> <li>• Average residential rates are likely to increase</li> <li>• Single entity for government agencies to liaise with</li> <li>• Potential loss of existing services and service levels</li> <li>• Cost to amalgamate</li> </ul>

## SCALE & CAPACITY

The following factors have been identified as essential for councils to have sufficient scale and capacity:

- More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending
- Scope to undertake new functions and major projects
- Ability to employ a wider range of skilled staff
- Knowledge creativity and innovation
- Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development
- Effective regional collaboration
- Credibility for more effective advocacy
- Capable partner for State and Federal agencies
- Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change
- High quality political and managerial leadership

We believe we meet the capacity criteria. In relation to scale, this will depend on whether the NSW Government determines a required resident population figure for NSW councils.



## FINANCIAL ISSUES

The Fit for the Future program identifies seven (7) key financial indicators to assess a council's financial sustainability. The following table shows Council's current performance and where we will be in 5 years.

Financial Benchmarks City of Botany Bay	2014/2015	2019/2020
<b>These three measures assess if a council can generate sufficient funds over the long term to provide the agreed level and scope of services and infrastructure for their community</b>		
<b>Operating Performance*</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Own Source Revenue*</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Asset Renewal**</b>	No Note: This ratio excludes funds spent on parks infrastructure - a significant proportion of our asset renewal spend.	Yes
<b>These three performance measures assess whether a council can maintain its assets (eg roads, paths, parks) meet its debts and access finance through loans.</b>		
<b>Infrastructure Backlog**</b>	No	Yes
<b>Asset Maintenance**</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Debt Service</b> Note: Council has no debt and can meet this measure by taking a \$1 loan.	Yes	Yes
<b>This performance measure assesses if a council has efficient service and infrastructure delivery, achieving value for money for current and future ratepayers.</b>		
<b>Real Operating Expenditure ***</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
*Must meet within 5 years **Meet or improve within 5 years *** Must demonstrate operational savings over 5 years		

TCorp have indicated that 'a local government will be financially sustainable over the long term when it is able to generate sufficient funds to provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with its community'. The City of Botany Bay has been assessed as having a financial sustainability ratio (FSR) of 'moderate' with a 'neutral' outlook. This means that we have adequate capacity to meet our financial commitments in the short to medium term and acceptable capacity in the long term and there are no foreseeable events that are expected to have a direct impact on this position.

Mergers also have 'up front costs' which need to be recovered in the long term. Modelling in 2015 by the NSW Parliamentary Budget Office estimated the total cost of mergers in NSW to be \$445M, if all councils participated voluntarily. To offset these costs, the NSW Government has offered an assistance package of \$280M, with any balance to be funded by individual councils.



## WHAT HAS OUR COMMUNITY SAID SO FAR?

Community opinion will be an important consideration in our submission and Council has engaged widely with our community..

### JUNE 2013

We conducted a voluntary survey of 17,000 households asking for your views on whether:

- The City of Botany Bay should remain independent
- The City of Botany Bay should amalgamate with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra.

An overwhelming 96% of residents indicated that they supported our City remaining independent. 6,968 survey forms were returned to us, with only 286 responses indicating support for the plan to merge. We were pleased to see a response rate of 27%, indicating that our community strongly about this issue.



### JULY/AUGUST 2014

A telephone and online/paper survey was conducted in July/August 2014 to provide Council with a representative and random picture of how residents perceive the City of Botany Bay. 815 residents responded. In summary, the majority of respondents consider that the services we provide are very important and they are generally satisfied with our performance. All services identified in the survey showed a 'high satisfaction, high importance' outcome. 63% of respondents identified strongly with our local government area and the local community.

### FEBRUARY 2015

A second survey seeking community support in the form of a petition was sent to residents. The purpose of the petition was to let the Minister for Local Government know our community's views on any merger proposal. To date, 1,389 residents have added their names to the petition declaring:

*Dear Minister,*

*I am against the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay with any other local government area.*

*I believe that Botany Bay should remain an independent Council, supported by the State Government to deliver the services and infrastructure the Botany Bay community needs today and into the future.*

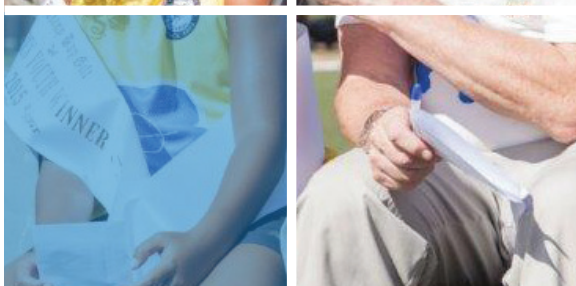
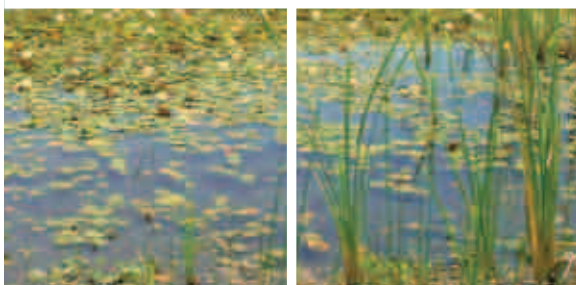
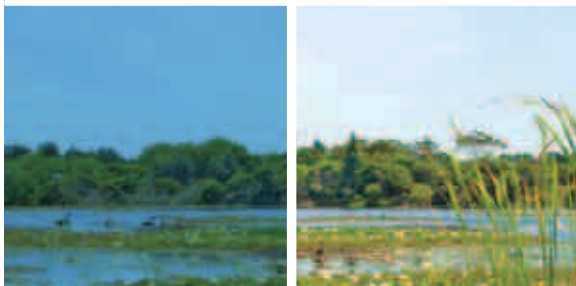
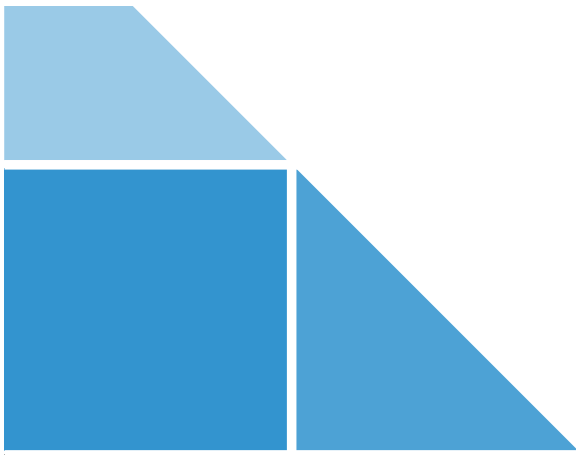
### MAY 2015

Council is also undertaking a random telephone survey of our residents. The survey will ask residents to nominate two preferences from the options explored, namely:

1. Remain independent
2. Merge with Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra
3. Merge with Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra
4. Merge with Sydney only
5. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville.

We will also consider conducting a poll of residents under the Local Government Act 1993 if forced amalgamations were to occur.





## WHAT'S NEXT

Once we have received your feedback, Council will finalise our submission.

Submissions are due by 30 June 2015 and will be assessed by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

IPART will provide the Minister for Local Government and the Premier with a final report by 16 October 2015 identifying whether or not individual councils are 'fit' or 'unfit' and the reasons for this assessment. The report will be publicly released following Cabinet approval.

## WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

[www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)

[www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

[www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

# MAYORAL COLUMNS

6 April 2013



## Anzac Day Tribute

Last week saw our community join with our local RSL sub branches, Botany and Mascot, to commemorate Anzac Day – an important day in our country's history. Both sub branches held well attended ceremonies and it was an honour and privilege to be able to represent our city and lay a wreath and pay our respect to those who paid the ultimate price to secure the freedom we enjoy today.

## Time to be heard

The Independent Local Government Review Panel released its interim report on Council amalgamations last week. The report recommends the City of Botany Bay merge with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra to form a super Council that could also include Leichhardt and Marrickville.

This council's position remains unchanged. We do not believe amalgamation will deliver benefits to our local community. Our Council is efficient and effective and truly cares for its residents.

The good news is that the Panel has not recommended forced amalgamations. But as the Government considers the report it is critical that we ensure our community's voice is heard. In the coming weeks, Council will be writing to every resident and ratepayer enclosing a postage paid survey form so you can tell us whether you would prefer the City of Botany Bay to stay independent or merge into a super Council.

It's your Council and it's your choice. Do you want your Council based locally or making decisions from George St?

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

[facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally](https://www.facebook.com/Mayor-Ben-Keneally) [twitter.com/ben\\_keneally](https://twitter.com/ben_keneally)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### RABBIT CONTROL PROGRAM

Please note that the Cumberland Livestock Health and Pest Authority will be conducting a rabbit baiting program on behalf of Botany Bay City Council using pin-done carrots at:

#### Botany Golf Course, Botany Road, Banksmeadow

A free feeding program will be undertaken before baiting commences. Baiting (using poison carrots) will commence on Wednesday 1 May 2013 and continue until Friday 31 May 2013 (weather permitting).

Botany Bay City Council is legally obliged to undertake rabbit control as required by Section 156 of the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998.

Under Section 179 of the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998 it is an offence to interfere with a pest control program. The removal of, or tampering with signage and carrot constitutes an offence. It is strongly recommended that pets are restrained during the baiting period and are not permitted to roam.

Any general enquiries should be directed to Council's Planning & Development Department on telephone 9366 3666. Technical enquiries should be directed to Cumberland Livestock Health and Pest Authority on telephone 4655 9165.

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

## DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 101 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, notification is hereby given of Council's approval of the following Development Applications in the schedule below.

### LIST OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2013

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS			
DA No.	Location	Application Details	Approved on
12/0182	13-15 Luland St, Botany	Change of use of the existing building to warehousing and distribution centre and light industry with ancillary offices including signage.	5/03/2013
11/238	99 King St, Mascot	Consent for commercial change of use on the ground floor to a florist shop and a rear first-floor addition to the residential section of the existing semi-detached dwelling/shop.	6/03/2013
12/069	3 Horner Ave, Mascot	Consent for demolition of the existing house and removal of one street tree and the construction of a new two-storey dwelling, in-ground swimming pool, external air-conditioning unit and 1.15m-high front fence.	6/03/2013
12/107	38A Brighton St, Botany	Consent for construction of a detached secondary dwelling (granny flat) at the rear of the property under SEPP (Affordable Housing) 2009.	6/03/2013
12/160	37 Rolfe St, Rosebery	Consent for alterations and additions to an existing dwelling house, including a rear first-floor addition.	6/03/2013
12/249	208-210 Coward St, Mascot	Consent for strata subdivision of 148 residential units, 2 commercial units and 16 utility units of DA11/067 (6 to 13 Storey mixed residential and commercial development comprising 148 residential apartments, 2 ground floor commercial suites, 296 car parking spaces over 3 basement levels and associated landscaping works).	6/03/2013
12/188	163 O'Riordan St, Mascot	Consent for replacement of two (2) existing illuminated building identification signs to provide two (2) new structures to display the name from "Corporate Express" to "Staples" to the southern and eastern elevations of the commercial building.	6/03/2013
12/011	208-210 Coward St & 1 John St, Mascot	Civil and landscape works in the public domain areas including road widening along John Street, associated with development at 208-210 Coward St (DA 11/067) and 214-220 Coward St (DA 10/314).	11/03/2013
12/109	21 Cowper Ave, Pagewood	Alteration and addition to existing single dwelling.	11/03/2013
12/155	16-20 Beachamp Rd, Banksmeadow	Replacement of 162 existing timber windows to the Orica Botany Heritage Administration Building.	11/03/2013
12/196	1 General Bridges Cres, Daceyville	Change of use of the existing two-storey shop-top housing to drop-in respite centre for elderly on ground floor and associated offices on first floor and internal fit-out.	12/03/2013
12/120	15 O'Connor St, Eastlakes	Undertake alteration and addition works including the following: Demolish the existing detached single garage located at the north-western corner of the subject site; Construct a new detached double garage at similar location but larger footprint; Widen part of the existing driveway located behind the existing dwelling; and Remove two existing palm trees on site.	13/03/2013
12/161	Shop 2, 264 Bunnerong Rd, Hillsdale	Additional café use to existing pizza shop including minor alterations and additions to shop layout, signage and provision of outside dining.	14/03/2013
12/217	4 Westcott St, Eastlakes	Demolition of the existing garage and the construction of a single-storey rear addition to the existing dwelling, including a new uncovered patio and carport.	21/03/2013
12/134	15 Bourke Rd, Mascot	Change of use of existing café to create an extension to the existing child care facility including outdoor play area enlargement and the creation of one additional car park.	25/03/2013

### SECTION 96 APPLICATIONS

DA No.	Location	Application Details	Approved on
10/173/02	15 Linden St, Mascot	Section 96 Modification	25/03/2013
11/200/02	1421 Botany Rd, Mascot	Section 96 Modification	27/03/2013

Copies of the Development consents referred to above are available for public inspection, without charge, at Council's Administration Centre, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holidays).

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





# OUR CITY

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

**Do You Want Botany Bay to Remain Independent?**

Next week you will receive a letter and a survey seeking your views on the issue of Council amalgamations. By now most of you will have read about the State Government's Independent Review that recommends our City merge with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra, and possibly Leichhardt and Marrickville, to create a Super Council. When you receive my letter please fill in the survey as quickly as possible. Simply fill it in, pop it into the post box or to my office at Eastgardens. No stamp is required. The more responses I receive the more forcefully I can represent your views to the Government.

**Appointed President of AMAC**

Last week I attended the annual general meeting of the Australian Mayoral Aviation Council (AMAC). AMAC is the national organisation of mayors and councillors whose local government area include an airport. It's now twice that I have stepped into Ron Hoening's shoes because the conference elected me to the office of President. Ron, our former mayor and now Member for Heffron, was a founding member of the organisation and had been President for most of AMAC's 32 year lifespan. Airports come under Federal Government jurisdiction. While one council may not influence a federal government, the voice of many councils from around Australia does. Over the years AMAC has been effective in many areas and on a wide range of issues because it is a strong national body that brings together people of all political persuasions. I look forward to the challenges ahead and continuing to be a strong voice for our community on this very important issue.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally twitter.com/ben\_keneally

**WHAT'S ON**

**SOUTH SYDNEY BIRD SHOW**

**Saturday May 18**  
The South Sydney Avicultural Society will hold its annual bird show in the Coronation Hall, Cnr Coward Street and Botany Road, Mascot on Saturday May 18. This is the 55th bird show and it is open to the public from 1pm. Admission is free. More than 800 birds will be on show and include canaries, finches, parrots and budgerigars. The breeders love to show and talk about their birds, so come along and support a local community event.

**NATIONAL SIMULTANEOUS STORY-TIME**

**Wednesday May 22**  
The Central Library at Eastgardens is participating in the National Simultaneous Story-time on Wednesday, May 22 commencing at 11am. Children aged three to five, all around Australia, will gather to listen to *The Wrong Book* by Nick Bland. Our library staff are looking forward to sharing this wonderful Australian tale about friendship with the youngsters in our community. It is free, however, bookings are essential. Give Candy a call on 93663888.

**SAVING LIVES – ORGAN DONATION**

**Thursday May 23**  
The Prince of Wales Hospital and the Botany Bay Rotary Club are holding a talk on Saving Lives through organ donation and transplants on Thursday, May 23 at 5.30pm in the Edmund Blackett Building at the Prince of Wales Hospital. If you would like to know more on this topic you are welcome to attend, the entry fee is a gold coin donation. The evening will be hosted by ABC journalist Mark Colvin and Dr Ross Francis from the Prince of Wales Hospital.

**WALK SAFELY TO SCHOOL DAY**

**Friday May 24**  
The annual National Walk Safely to School Day will be held on Friday, May 24. The Walk Safely to School Day is aimed at encouraging children to be active, but at the same time learning about how to use roads and public transport safely. Parents, Carers and children walking to school on this day are encouraged to show their support by wearing the stickers which have been distributed to all local schools. It's a great initiative so join with your neighbours, friends and family and walk to school on May 24.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF ALCOHOL PROHIBITED AREA L'ESTRANGE PARK – MASCOT**

Notice is given that it is the intention of the Council to declare the public reserve of L'Estrange Park as Alcohol Prohibited Area.  
The prohibition will in the first instance be limited to a period of one (1) year and operate so as to restrict the consumption of and the bringing upon the reserve alcohol and alcoholic products between sunset one day and sunrise the day following.

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, the Council invites submissions from persons and or groups as to why it (the Council) should not proceed and declare L'Estrange Park as Alcohol Prohibited Area.

Submissions must be in writing and addressed to reach the undersigned by the **18 June 2013**.

The General Manager, City of Botany Bay, PO Box 331, MASCOT NSW 1460.

**ALCOHOL – FREE ZONE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW ALCOHOL – FREE ZONE MASCOT AREA (No 6)**

Notice is given under the provisions of Section 644A of the Local Government Act 1993 of the intention of the Council to re-establish an Alcohol-Free Zone.

**Location of the Alcohol-Free Zone**  
The proposed area includes the following public places, which are in the vicinity of L'Estrange Park, as follows:-

- The public road of King Street, Mascot (southern side) between Hicks Avenue and Sutherland Street;
- The public road of Sutherland Street (eastern side) between King Street and Brussels Street

**Period of the Alcohol-Free Zone – One year**  
The proposal to establish a new Alcohol-Free Zone No. 6 at Mascot may be inspected at Council's Administrative Building, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday from the date of publication of this notice through until **Friday, 14 June 2013**.

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, the Council invites representations and objections from persons or groups within the area of the proposed area of the Alcohol-Free Zone. The representations and/or objections must be in writing and addressed to the undersigned by the close of business on **18 June 2013**.

The General Manager, City of Botany Bay, PO Box 331, MASCOT NSW 1460.

Inquiries should be directed to: Director – Planning & Development on (02) 9366 3552

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

**SENIORS GARDEN PARTY A SUCCESS**

More than 700 seniors attended the Council's annual Seniors Garden Party held in Sir Joseph Banks Park last Sunday. It was a great day with good weather and lots of laughter. Mayor Ben Keneally welcomed everybody to the event and then took the opportunity to meet and chat with our local seniors. Also sharing in the festivities was the Member for Maroubra, the Hon Michael Daley and the Member for Heffron and former mayor, Ron Hoening. As the pictures show it was a wonderful day and a fitting tribute to the senior members of our community.



Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)







# OUR CITY

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

### Council's 2013/14 budget

Last week Council approved the release of our draft budget for 2013/14 and our long term strategic plans for community consultation. Council's management team has again presented a budget that is well balanced, sustainable and keeps us debt free.

Our Council is financially sound and this budget continues to provide efficient and effective services, maintain our assets including roads and footpaths as well as funding special projects and programs. Some of the highlights are featured on this page.

The Draft Budget for 2013/2014 clearly demonstrates that our Council remains very sustainable.

### Anti Amalgamation campaign on track

Last week I wrote to over 24,000 residents old enough to vote and enclosed a survey card seeking their feedback on the proposal that our City amalgamate with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra.

The response has been overwhelming. Within 48 hours we had received over 1000 responses, with more than 98% saying No to Amalgamations. If you have responded, I thank you for speaking up. If you have yet to respond, please take a minute to do so. Your support is critical.

I had the opportunity to meet with the Mayors of each of those councils to discuss amalgamations and to get their thoughts on the subject. We were unanimous in rejecting the proposed "super council" for Sydney. We were united in our commitment to our local communities and are all of the view that no-one, especially residents and ratepayers, would benefit from the proposed merger. As leaders in our local community we understand the benefits of sharing resources, and in fact we do this through the Regional Councils such as the Southern Sydney Region of Councils to which our City belongs. Our communities will continue to work together while remaining independent.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

[facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally](https://www.facebook.com/Mayor-Ben-Keneally) [twitter.com/ben\\_keneally](https://twitter.com/ben_keneally)

## NEWS

### DRAFT BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS ENHANCE OUR CITY

The 2013/2014 Draft Budget when adopted in June will ensure traffic lights are installed at the Bay Street and Botany Road intersection. This is an important community issue and Council is prepared to fund this project rather than wait years for the State Government to provide the money.

There is funding for major drainage works to reduce localised flooding.

For our local youngsters and the sporty there are plans to construct two new cricket nets, and money has been allocated to develop a design and concept for a full size basketball court and skate park.

Our website will be updated to include online services and apps; and the central library at Eastgardens will get a face lift and council will be asking you, the community, for your ideas.

These are just a few of the projects for the next 12 months. To find out more you can view the full Draft Budget on our website, at Council's Administration Office or the Mayor's Office in Eastgardens.

### HAVE YOUR SAY

The City of Botany Bay's draft budget is now on exhibition together with Council's Community Strategic Plan (10 year plan) and Council's Delivery Program (4 year plan).

All documentation can be viewed online at [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or at Council's Administration Centre, 141 Coward Street, Mascot or the Mayor's Office, Shop 176A Westfield Eastgardens.

Your submissions should be made in writing to the General Manager before noon on June 19, 2013. You can post your submissions to PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460 or email to [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) clearly marked Draft Budget 2013/14.

### CHANGES TO RECYCLING COMING SOON!

Plans to revamp the City's recycling and clean-up programs are major pluses in the 2013/2014 budget.

Council will replace the current weekly two crate service with a fortnightly 240 litre bin co-mingled system. Improved technology means it is no longer necessary to separate recyclable products kerbside and the bin on wheels will make it easier for many residents to manage.

The budget will also provide funding for the National Garage Sale Trail to be held in October to encourage residents to recycle unwanted household items such as kitchenware, furniture and clothes.



## WHAT'S ON

### GARDENERS ROAD FRESH FOOD MARKET – Every Saturday

Gardeners Road Fresh Food Market is held every Saturday, rain or shine, in the grounds of Gardeners Road Public School, Rosebery, from 8am to 2pm. The market showcases fresh produce including meat, French bread, cakes, fruit and vegetables, seafood and also includes a variety of arts, crafts and food stalls. There is also lots of entertainment for the children.

### MORNINGS @ THE MUSEUM – Tuesday May 28

Council's next Mornings @ the Museum will be held on Tuesday May 28 at 10am in the George Hanna Memorial Museum, located in Mascot Library, Hatfield Street, Mascot. The discussion topic will be "Do you remember the beaches of Botany?" If you have any stories about Botany Bay before the construction of the port our curator would love to hear from you. Call Samantha on 9366 3802 or email: [museum@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:museum@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

### PARENTING WORKSHOP – Saturday June 1

Council together with the Deli Community Centre will hold a Parenting Workshop on Saturday June 1 in the Central Library at Eastgardens from 9.30am to 4pm. The topic is "Teenager Behaviour." The workshop will help parents identify normal, or acceptable behaviour as well as discussing how to manage challenging teenagers and family life. The cost is \$20 and includes a workbook, morning and afternoon tea and lunch. To book please contact Patrick or Yasmin on 9366 3889 or email [Secimy@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Secimy@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)



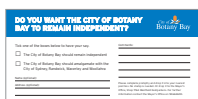
### EASTLAKES COMMUNITY DAY

#### Saturday June 15

Council's next Community Day will be held in Eastlakes Reserve, Cnr Evans Avenue and Longworth Avenue, Eastlakes from 11am to 1pm. Come along and join the fun, meet the Mayor and Councillors and enjoy a free sausage sizzle.

## NEWS

### AMALGAMATION SURVEY UNDERWAY



If you have not received a survey card please call Council on 9366 3666 or the Mayor's Office on 9366 3600 and one will be mailed to you, alternatively you can pick one up and fill it in at Council's Administration Centre at 141 Coward Street Mascot or the Mayor's Office at Shop 176A Westfield Eastgardens.

Please take a moment to complete the survey. This is an extremely important issue and every resident should have their say. The more support the Council gets from the community the more impact I have when I speak out against the proposals being put forward by the State Government.

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





**Clean up changes on the way**

Further improvements to our City's waste collection services are on the way. From July 1 2013 all residents will be able to pre-book two free clean-up services a year. *This means you, the resident, will determine when you need, or wish, to use the clean-up service.*

It will be simple, you will ring council on 9366 3666, ask to book in a clean-up and we will give you the first available date. Then the night before your pre-booked date you will leave your rubbish out on the nature strip as normal and Council will collect it.

The pre-booked service will benefit both residents and council. I am confident it will help keep our streets much cleaner and deter illegal dumping. Residents will continue to have four clean ups each year, two Council scheduled clean-ups and two pre-booked clean-ups of your choosing.

You will shortly be receiving full details of the service in your letterbox. Keep a look out for the postcard flyer with the council emblem.

**Amalgamation surveys coming in**

I know thousands of our residents have already responded to my amalgamation letter, but if you haven't I urge you to keep those survey cards coming in. I have sent out more than 24,000 and I love to see all of you have your say. If you haven't received one, or have misplaced it give my office a call and I will pop one in the post to you, or you can call into the office and fill one in.

**Our thoughts are with Reggie**

My prayers and thoughts, and those of our community, are with my Deputy Mayor George Glinatsis and his wife Maria following the sudden passing of Maria's sister, Sophia last week. Our community will know Sophia as the wife of Charlie Galico aka Reggie Rabbit, the wonderful Rabbithos mascot. Sophia, a dedicated fan, will be sadly missed.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally    twitter.com/ben\_keneally

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**ILLEGAL DUMPING**

The City of Botany Bay has devised a strategy to respond to the growing problem of illegal dumping in the city, particularly in the Hillsdale and Eastlakes areas.

Council would like to meet with interested persons, particularly members of the Body Corporate, Strata Managers or Managing Agents of flats, town houses or rented properties.

If you are interested in attending a meeting to discuss council's strategy and learn how you can help please register your name and contact details with Council by phoning 93663552 or emailing: [postillb@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:postillb@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

**INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/56**

Premises  
13A Church Avenue Mascot  
Applicant  
S & A S Mohebbat  
Proposal

The proposal seeks consent for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a twelve (12) storey residential flat building containing eighty (80) apartments and the construction of a multi-level basement car park containing 135 car parking spaces

**NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/61**

Premises  
90-92 Bay Street, Botany  
Applicant  
Tony Owen Partners  
Proposal

The proposal seeks consent for the demolition of existing structures and construction of a six (6) storey residential flat building containing thirty-eight (38) units plus seven (7) townhouses and 97 basement car parking spaces

The developments are defined as Integrated Development under the provisions of Section 91A of EPAA. Accordingly, the developments require controlled activity approvals of the NSW Office of Water (within the Department of Primary Industry) under the Water Management Act 2000 as the works on the subject sites are proposed to enter the groundwater.

Information and plans relating to the proposals will be on public exhibition for a minimum period of (30) days from **05/06/2013 to 05/07/2013** at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council Offices, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Persons wishing to make a submission on the proposals should do so in writing to: Director – Planning and Development, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020. If a submission is made by way of objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Any submissions should be made in writing before 4.30 p.m. on **05/07/2013**. Please quote Reference **DA No. 2013/56** or **DA No. 2013/61** in all written correspondence.

Queries in relation to the application may be directed to Council's Development Assessment Department on 9366 3666.

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979 "DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL" NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 2004/569/06**

Premises  
17 Esplanade, Botany  
Applicant  
SSRB Developments  
Proposal

Section 96 (1A) Application to modify Development Consent No. 04/569 as follows:

- Change to layout in Building 3 on first, second and third floor levels
- Addition of 3 more units to Building 3
- Addition of 2 x high-level windows to each typical upper floor at the northern end of Building 3
- Addition of one visitor's parking space
- Rotate the Lift to Building 3 by 90° to enable the above planning amendments
- Change the fire stair to Building 3 into an external stair to enable the above planning amendments and for BCA compliance
- Amend the approved landscaping drawings
- Increase the setback of Building 2 from 2.78m to 3m at the rear western side boundary
- Provide concrete upturn balustrades in lieu of glass to eastern elevation to Building 1
- Incorporate additional design changes to meet BCA / Australian Standard requirements as highlighted within the Summary of Section 96 Amendments
- Raise the Basement level 200mm (top of lift over-run to 20.32m AHD to Building 3).

The City of Botany Bay is in receipt of a Development Application for the proposal described above at **17 Esplanade, Botany**. The City of Botany Bay Council is the consent authority.

Information and plans relating to the proposal will be on public exhibition for a minimum period of (14) days from **05/06/2013 to 19/06/2013** at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council Offices, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Persons wishing to make a submission on the proposal should do so in writing to: Director – Planning and Development, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020. If a submission is made by way of objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Any submissions should be made in writing before 4.30 p.m. on **19/06/2013**.

Queries in relation to the application may be directed to Council's Development Assessment Department on 9366 3666. Please quote Reference **DA No. 2004/569/06** in all written correspondence.

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**SHOP AWNING SAFETY**

In the coming weeks those persons who own buildings that support shop awnings will be formally asked in writing to have those awnings inspected for reasons of public safety.

The safety of shop awnings will be an on going matter and arose from reported fatalities following the collapse of shop awnings that extended over the public footpath.

It will be therefore necessary for building owners following notice from Council to engage a Professional Engineer and have that person assess the awnings structural soundness.

**NOTICE TO OWNERS OF SWIMMING POOLS**

Please be advised that as part of a State wide campaign to raise awareness to the safety of swimming pools and in particular backyard swimming pools, it is a requirement that all swimming pools be inspected to ensure they are "child safe".

The first step in this process is that all owners of land that contain a swimming pool must register the existence of the pool on-line at: [www.swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au](http://www.swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au)

On-line registration is available until the 29th October this year. Residents without access to on-line registration may as an alternative do so at Council's Administration Building during normal office hours.

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





**It's all the small jobs that make a difference**

Even with the threat of amalgamations looming, my focus as Mayor is on delivering the services and public works that make the difference to our city.

Some of the services are routine and the projects are small, but they make a difference to our quality of life: making sure our garbage is collected; our footpaths are fixed; our nature strips mowed; the trees trimmed and broken bin lids are replaced.

There are also bigger one-off projects that can make a real difference. Over the next few weeks letters will be going to residents in Hastings Street, Botany and Birdwood Avenue, Pagewood, Hurlingham Street, Frogmore Street and Robey Street, Mascot getting their feedback on traffic calming solutions for their streets. Consulting our residents and getting it right is important. Together we will work on solutions to introduce safety measures to slow down traffic or reduce traffic volumes in these streets to make life that much better in our city.

Local Government works effectively when you can pick up the phone and talk to your councillor or council about issues both big and small, and get a response. A massive amalgamated Council will not be able to do that. That's why my fellow councillors and I are so pleased that over 5000 residents so far have responded to our survey to tell us they don't want to merge. I will continue to speak out against "super councils". Please keep those survey cards coming in. I am hoping to get all 24,000 sent to residents back!

**Queen's Birthday Honours**

Three residents from our city were recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list last week. Brother and sister Christopher and Heather Brown, founding Directors of the Windgap Foundation received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of their service to disability services in NSW. Hillsdale resident, Philip O'Sullivan, also received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to local sport in the Eastern Suburbs, in particular to cricket. Congratulations to these fine ambassadors for our City.

**Well done to our Little A's**

Congratulations to the Randwick Botany Little Athletics Club who train at Hemley Field. For the 41st consecutive year they have brought home the Inner City Zone Point Score Shield.

After two days of very tough competition at the Blacktown Athletic Field the Randwick Little Athletics Centre amassed a total of 3880 points, some 1440 more points than the second placed team Ealman. Well done to the team and their coaches!

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

Facebook.com/MayorBenKeneally | twitter.com/ben\_keneally

**NEWS**

**MUD'S CALL FOR ACTION ON ILLEGAL DUMPING**

Are you a member of a Body Corporate, a Managing Agent or a proprietor of a unit, or unit block, in our city?

If so, please contact Council and register your contact details so we can keep you informed on the steps Council is taking to crack down on illegal dumping. In the coming weeks council will be holding a meeting to address this important issue.

If you are concerned, or wish to lend a hand with this issue please register your name and details with the Council by contacting Botany on 9366 3532 or email post@botanybay.nsw.gov.au



**VACATION CARE ENROLMENTS START THIS WEEK**

Enrolments open this Thursday, June 20th for Council's Vacation Care program for the July school holidays.

The first registration evening will be held at the Central Library Eastgardens between 4pm to 6:30pm. There will be another on Wednesday June 20th at the Botany, Botany and After School Care Centre, Botany Public School, 1076 Botany Road, Botany from 4-7pm.

Council's Vacation Care offers quality care and a recreational program for children aged from five to 12 years. The venue is Botany Public School and the centre is open from 7am to 6pm each day. The service is available from Monday July 1st to Monday July 15th inclusive of the public free day (Saturday) and Sunday excluded.



For more information please contact Lukia on 9366 3876 or Grace on 9366 8128 between 9pm and 6pm Monday to Friday. You can view the program and download relevant forms from Council's website: [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au). You will find the information under Vacation Care in the Community Services section.

**WHAT'S ON**

**GARDENERS ROAD FRESH FOOD MARKET - EVERY SATURDAY**

Held every Saturday, rain or shine, in the grounds of Gardeners Road Public School, Rosebery, from 8am to 2pm. The market showcases fresh produce including meat, French bread, cakes, fruit and vegetables, seafood and also includes a variety of arts, crafts and food stalls. There is also lots of entertainment for the kids.

**YOUTH HOLIDAY PROGRAM - JULY 1ST TO JULY 12TH**

Are you aged 12 to 18 years and looking for things to do during the next school break? If so give our Youth Workers a call and find out about the great activities they have organised. The program runs from Monday July 1 to Friday July 5 and Monday July 8 and Friday July 12. Activities include ice skating, rock climbing, a visit to Galaxy World, Zumba classes, movies and much more. Call Patrick or Heleen on 9366 3888.

**HILLSDALE COMMUNITY DAY - SATURDAY JULY 13TH**

Council's next Community Day will be held in Grace Campbell Reserve, Hillsdale, from 11am to 1pm on Saturday, July 13th. Put it in the diary and come along and enjoy a free sausage sizzle and entertainment for the kids.

**FACES AND PLACES EXHIBITION @ THE MUSEUM - UNTIL JULY 10TH**

Have you ever wondered who, or what, your street was named after? Our latest exhibition at the George Harris Memorial Museum, located inside Mascot Library, Halford Street, Mascot could have the answer. Faces and Places looks at the stories behind our City's street names. It is a great exhibition with lots of interesting facts about our city.

The next exhibition will be "Do you remember the coaches of Botany?" If you have any stories about Botany Bay before the construction of the port our curator would love to hear from you. Call Samantha on 9366 3802 or email: [museum@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:museum@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020, Telephone: 9366 3566. Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





# OUR CITY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

### Community Day at Grace Campbell Reserve another success

Our Community Day which took place in Grace Campbell Reserve on Saturday was a great success. Before proceeding with the event Council conducted independent tests on soil samples from the playground. Consistent with other tests by the EPA, these showed no evidence of contaminants above the Health Investigation Level. These results are available to view at the Mayoral Office. Special thanks to the EPA for coming down on Saturday to provide information about their work in our city. Thanks also to the SES volunteers, our local Police Officers from Mascot Station and all of our local residents who came down to spend the day at Hillsdale. Our next Community Day will be on Saturday 3 August at L'Estrange Park, Mascot. I hope to see you there.

### Amalgamation Survey – the results are in

The survey of residents on the proposal to amalgamate the City of Botany Bay has now closed. An impressive 6,867 survey cards were returned with 6,588 declaring that we should remain independent. Only 279 voters supported the amalgamation proposal. Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey. The high response rate and overwhelming support for continued independence means that I - and my fellow councillors - are definitely on the right track as we speak out on your behalf. With your support, I will continue to oppose amalgamations and the creation of "super councils."

### Increase in commuters at Mascot Station raises pedestrian safety issues

The number of commuters using Mascot Station has increased dramatically from 3,000 a day in 2011 to over 12,000. This is great news and Council welcomes and encourages residents and workers to use public transport as much as possible. However, the increase in pedestrian traffic has raised a number of safety issues and Council is now exploring a number of options to improve pedestrian safety. The first step will be to install a pedestrian crossing across John Street near the Bourke Street intersection.

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally twitter.com/ben\_keneally

## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

### "INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT SECTION 96(1A) APPLICATION" DA 11/160/03

**PREMISES:** 15 Bourke St, Mascot

**PROPOSAL:** Section 96(1A) Application to modify Development Consent no. 11/160 to:

- amend the layout of the bus bay and shelter area
- increase the amount of landscaping along Bourke Road and
- change a select number of DA consent conditions.

**APPLICANT:** Capital Corporation Pty Ltd

Council has received a Section 96(1A) Application to modify Development Consent no. 11/160 as described above.

The original development was defined as integrated development under the provisions of Section 91 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. Accordingly, the modification requires the approval of NSW Roads and Maritime Services as the proposal involves an amendment to a bus lay-by on Bourke Street.

Information and plans relating to the proposal will be on public exhibition for a minimum period of (30) days from **17/07/2013 to 16/08/2013**, at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council Offices, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Persons wishing to make a submission should do so in writing to: Director – Planning and Development, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020 before 4.30pm on **16/08/2013**. If a submission is an objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Please quote Reference **DA No. 2011/160/03** in all written correspondence. For further information, contact Council's Development Assessment Department on 9366 3666.

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE BOTANY BAY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2013

The Council has recently prepared new planning controls for the City of Botany Bay, known as the draft Botany Bay Development Control Plan (BBDCP) 2013. The new comprehensive Development Control Plan will create one DCP for the City of Botany Bay, consistent with the requirements of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979. The draft BBDCP 2013 will supplement the statutory planning and development controls of the Botany Bay Local Environmental Plan 2013 and State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (Port Botany and Port Kembla) 2013. The draft Botany Bay Development Control Plan 2013 applies to all land within the City of Botany Bay, except for the following sites:

- BATA Site – Lot 1 DP 776089, 128 Bunnerong Road, Pagewood;
- 26 Tupia Street, Botany; and
- 2, 4, 10, 12, 16 and 18 Macintosh Street and 862, 864, 866 and 868 Botany Road, Mascot.

Council resolved on 22 May 2013 to publicly exhibit the draft BBDCP 2013 in accordance with Section 18 of *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*.

**The draft BBDCP 2013 and any relevant local environmental plan or deemed environmental planning instrument, will be on public exhibition from Tuesday 2 July 2013 to Friday 23 August 2013 at Council's Administration Centre, Ground Floor, 141 Coward Street Mascot, from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday.**

For the purpose of informing the public generally, the Council will also have exhibition materials on display on Council's website (<http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au>), at Mascot Library (Hatfield Street, Mascot) and the Central Library (Westfield Shoppingtown, Banks Avenue, Eastgardens). Library hours are available on Council's website. However, the exhibition material at these locations and on the website is not the full statutory exhibition.

### Making a submission

Any person can make a submission/s in writing in regards to the provisions of the draft BBDCP 2013. Submissions must be lodged with Council **no later than 4.30pm on Friday 23 August** and should be addressed to the General Manager, City of Botany Bay and posted to PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460; or Faxed to 9366 3777 or emailed to: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

### ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979 "DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL" NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION No. 2011/177/02

**PREMISES:** 283 King Street Mascot

**APPLICANT:** oOh!media c/- Urban Concepts

**PROPOSAL:** Section 96(2) Application to modify Development Consent No. 2011/177 to alter the cosmetic treatment and upgrading of the facade of the existing advertising structure

### NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION No. 2013/110/02/1

**PREMISES:** 41 Boussole Road, Daceyville

**APPLICANT:** Ms J Bell

**PROPOSAL:** Construct an outbuilding at the rear of the dwelling to accommodate a study, shed and storage area.

The City of Botany Bay is in receipt of Development Applications for the proposals described above at **283 King Street Mascot** and **41 Boussole Road, Daceyville**. Council is the consent authority.

Information and plans relating to the proposals will be on public exhibition for a minimum period of (14) days from 17/07/2013 to 31/07/2013 at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council Offices, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Persons wishing to make a submission should do so in writing to: Director – Planning and Development, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020 before 4.30 p.m. on **31/07/2013**. If a submission is an objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Please quote Reference **DA No. 2011/177/02** or **DA No. 2013/110/01** in all written correspondence. For further information, contact Council's Development Assessment Department on 9366 3666.

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

## SIX A SIDE SOCCER

### Hensley Athletic Field

September - December 2013

Men, women, mixed, girls and boys divisions.

Play on the amazing cushioned, synthetic surface –

**never rained out!** Referees, insurance, registration, and an end of season BBQ all for under \$10 a match.

To reserve a place in the competition visit: [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





**Local Government Review Panel Releases Final Report**  
Residents have been contacting my office concerned about the release of the final paper by the Local Government Review Panel. Community members remain concerned about talk of amalgamations with the City of Sydney and surrounding councils. I am in the process of carefully reviewing the contents of the report and its recommendations, however based on my initial reading there is nothing new. Last year our residents made their views clear by responding to my survey with a resounding 96.2 percent stating we should remain independent. With your support I, and my Councillors, remain opposed to any amalgamation.

**Sign the M20 petition**  
Together with our local State Member Michael Daley, we are campaigning to have the State Government to extend the M20 bus service. The service currently stops at Botany but would benefit the Community better if the route is extended to Banksmeadow. There is a petition in my office so please call in and sign it. If you would like a copy mailed to you call my office on 9366 3600 and I will post one out to you. When completed simply drop it in the post. No stamp required.

**Footpath Maintenance**  
Did you know that Council is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of more than 265 kilometres of footpaths throughout the city? This is equal to driving to Lake Macquarie and back. Our footpath teams work nonstop throughout the year repairing and replacing our footpaths. If residents see a footpath that needs attention please do not hesitate to contact my office and let me know. 265 kilometres is a lot to keep track of and the more help we have the better our streets will be.

**Botany Shops Upgrade on Exhibition**  
Council is looking at ways to improve the amenity and parking provisions of the Botany shopping precinct. The plans are on exhibition both at Council's Administration Centre in Coward Street and my office in Eastgardens. Getting feedback and input from our residents is important so if you can spare some time drop by and let me know what you think. The plans can also be viewed on our website [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

**Ben Keneally**  
Mayor

[facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally](https://www.facebook.com/MayorBenKeneally) [twitter.com/MayorKeneally](https://twitter.com/MayorKeneally)

**ON EXHIBITION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/272**  
**PREMISES:** 46 Coward Street, Mascot  
**APPLICANT:** Beraldo Design  
**PROPOSAL:** Partial demolition of existing structures and construction of a two-storey plus attic multi-dwelling development consisting of a refurbishment to the ground floor retail shop and construction of one (1) one-bedroom unit above the shop and two (2) two-bedroom attached townhouses to the rear fronting Gordon Street

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/272**  
**PREMISES:** 49 Stephen Road, Botany  
**APPLICANT:** Nuplex Industries (Aust) Ltd  
**PROPOSAL:** Installation of a 48-tonne liquid nitrogen tank

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/274**  
**PREMISES:** 1 General Bridges Crescent, Daceyville  
**APPLICANT:** Sydney Multicultural Community Services  
**PROPOSAL:** Change of use and fit-out for a café including signage. (The proposed development is located within the Daceyville Heritage Conservation Area.)

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 13/277**  
**PREMISES:** 16 / 19A Baker Street, Banksmeadow  
**APPLICANT:** Tori Holdings Pty Ltd  
**PROPOSAL:** Construction and Strata subdivision of four (4) two-storey (12m height) industrial units, erection of signage and use of industrial units for the processing and packaging of soy products

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. 14/001**  
**PREMISES:** 48-50 Beauchamp Road, Hillsdale  
**APPLICANT:** Beauchamp Developments Pty Ltd  
**PROPOSAL:** Demolition of existing structures and construction of nine (9) two-storey townhouses and basement car parking

The City of Botany Bay is in receipt of Development Applications seeking consent for the proposals described above. The City of Botany Bay is the consent authority. Information and plans relating to the proposals will be on public exhibition for a minimum period of **fourteen (14) days from 22/01/2014 to 05/02/2014** at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council Offices, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays). Persons wishing to make a submission on any proposal should do so in writing to: Director – Planning and Development, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020 before 4.30pm on **05/02/2014**. If a submission is an objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Please quote Reference **DA No. 2013/267** or **DA No. 2013/272** or **DA No. 2013/274** or **DA No. 2013/277** or **DA No. 2014/001** in all written correspondence. For further information, contact Council's Development Assessment Department on 9366 3666

**Lara Kirchner**  
General Manager

**WHAT'S ON**

**Citizenship Ceremony**  
On Sunday 26 January Council will welcome 104 new Australian citizens at a special ceremony held in the function area at Botany Pool. Following the official ceremony the new citizens will be treated to lots of Australian music and an Aussie BBQ.

**Exhibition at Museum**  
"Botany and the Bay" is still on exhibition at the George Hanna Museum, located within the Mascot Library, 2 Hatfield Street, Mascot. This exhibition explores the City's changing relationship with the Botany Bay and there are some really great photos from the early 1930s and some great stories from residents.

**Girls Night Out – Every Friday**  
Every Friday from 4pm to 7pm is "Girls Night" at the Eastlakes Youth Centre held in the Alf Kay Eastlakes Community Centre, Florence Avenue, Eastlakes. Young ladies between 12 and 18 years can come along make new friends, hang out or join in the various workshops and classes on offer such as Nail Art and Make-up or public speaking tips and leadership skills.

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





# OUR CITY

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

### Amalgamations back in the news

The State Government released its response to the Independent Review Panel's Report into Local Government reform last week and as we anticipated the Government is actively supporting amalgamations.

Residents will recall the Review Panel recommended that the City of Botany Bay merge with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra councils.

The Government's response has stopped short of recommending forced amalgamations, but has not ruled it out. The Government is offering a range of financial inducements or incentives for councils that voluntarily agree to merge.

Whilst the State Government may argue that this is a voluntary scheme, it has made it very clear that councils should take the financial inducements and amalgamate without consulting or listening to their residents, the people they serve. Our council has always maintained that the local community must have a say in any changes. In a survey taken last year almost 97 percent of respondents said our City should remain independent.

I called an Extraordinary Meeting of Council last Wednesday to discuss the report and our City's position. Your council again voted unanimously that the City of Botany Bay remain independent. The meeting resolved that I write to both the Premier and the Minister for Local Government seeking clarification on their position on forced amalgamations both for this term and the next term of government.

Council also resolved to prepare a response to the Minister and Government's Fit for the Future paper and further resolved that if the State Government remains intent on forcing the City of Botany Bay to amalgamate with any other council an immediate community campaign be launched.

### Sydney Airport back as Major Sponsor

Our Photography Competition received a welcomed boost this week with Sydney Airport coming on board again as its major sponsor. This year Sydney Airport has increased their generous prize money contribution to include a special category for Sydney Airport or Aviation themed photographs. This category will be open to residents who live or work within the City of Botany Bay. Other key sponsors include Mascot Steel and the Manhattan Superbow.

Last year Council added over 100 new photographs to its library and we are hoping to build on that this year. All photographs submitted will be on display at council after the judging. Nominations must be submitted on or before Friday 24 October. You can enter online, or download an entry form from Council's website at [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

### E-Waste and Mattress Drop off

Just a reminder that Monday 22 September is our monthly E-Waste and mattress drop off day at the Botany Depot, corner of Fernberton and Clevedon Streets Botany between 7am and 11am. If Mondays don't suit you our next Saturday drop off day will be 1 November 2014 in the Tugas Street carpark, Botany.

**Ben Kenally**  
Mayor

[facebook.com/Mayor-Ben-Kenally](https://www.facebook.com/Mayor-Ben-Kenally) [twitter.com/MayorKenally](https://twitter.com/MayorKenally)

## WHAT'S ON DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

### Halloween Fun at the Library

The Central Library at Eastgardens will celebrate Halloween in style with a mask making workshop on Friday 26 September from 10.30am to 12.15pm and Halloween Witch Puppet Workshop on Wednesday 1 October from 10.30am to 12 noon. The workshops are for children aged between eight to 12 years and there is a small cost of \$10 for the mask workshop and \$5 for the Puppet workshop. For information call Candy on 9385 3888 or pop into the library to book your spot.

### Vacation Care Program

Council will run its Vacation Care Program for the coming school holidays from Monday 22nd September to Friday 3rd October 2014 (total of 10 days) for school aged children at the Botany Public School (Outside School Hours Room). Vacation Care operates from 7am to 6pm each day and will provide a variety of activities for the children to participate in during the day. For more information please call Laura on 9366 3876 or 9316 5628, between 3pm and 6pm. You can view our program and download all relevant forms from the Botany Council website [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au) you will find these forms under "Our Community" - Children.

## Learn to swim

BOTANY AQUATIC CENTRE  
MYRTLE STREET, BOTANY

### LEARN TO SWIM CLASSES FOR 3 YEARS AND OLDER

The classes cater for all standards of swimming and swimmers are assessed to determine class and level. Lessons available Tuesday to Thursday 3pm to 6pm, and Saturday 8am to 11am.

Term 1 commences Tuesday, October 7th and runs for 10 weeks. Assessments will be held from Sept 29th to October 3rd.

Cost is \$160 per child per term. Family discounts available. Private lessons available on request. Intensive School Holiday programs will also be available. All instructors are Austswim qualified. For bookings or further information contact the Botany Aquatic Centre Learn to Swim School on 9316 6218 or [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

## PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2014



Taken some great photos of within the City of Botany Bay lately? Why not enter them in this year's Photography Competition for the chance to win some great prizes.

There are five categories:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Primary School Age Group -<br/>Must live or attend a school within City of Botany Bay LGA</p> <p><b>2</b> High School Age Group -<br/>Must live or attend a school within City of Botany Bay LGA</p> | <p><b>3</b> Adults over 18 -<br/>Must live in City of Botany Bay LGA</p> <p><b>4</b> Open - Anyone can enter</p> <p><b>5</b> Sydney Airport/Aviation theme - Must live or work in City of Botany Bay LGA</p> |
|--|--|

ALL PHOTOS MUST BE TAKEN WITHIN, OR BE OF SITES WITHIN, THE CITY OF BOTANY BAY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY.

**Closing date:** Entries must be received by **Friday 24 October**.

Each entry must include a signed copy of the completed nomination form confirming the Conditions of Entry have been read and understood.

Entry forms can be downloaded from [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au) and entries can be submitted via [photography@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:photography@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

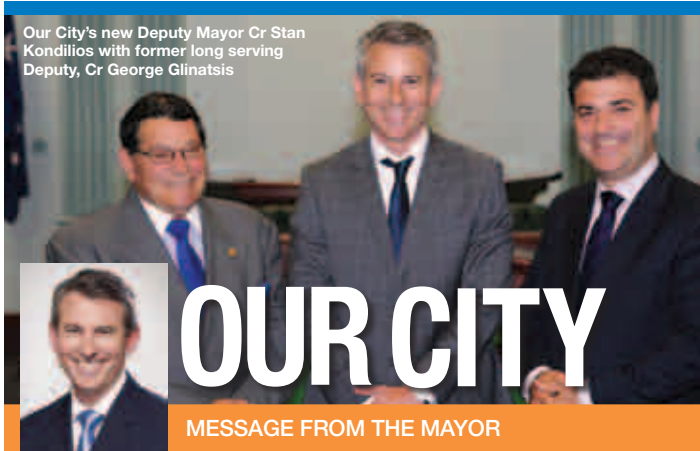
MAJOR SPONSOR



Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666. Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





Our City's new Deputy Mayor Cr Stan Kondilios with former long serving Deputy, Cr George Glinatsis

**Deputy Mayor Steps Down**  
 After 20 years Deputy Mayor George Glinatsis has stepped down from the role. Councillor Glinatsis informed Council last Wednesday that he felt it was time to relinquish the title, however, he was still committed to serving Council and working tirelessly for his constituents in Ward 1 and the residents of our great City. I thank Cr Glinatsis for the outstanding job he has done as Deputy Mayor over the last 20 years. It is not an easy role to fill, but it is a role Cr Glinatsis carried out with great pride and integrity. Cr Glinatsis will remain a very important member of council representing his ward and serving on various committees.  
 Councillor Stan Kondilios was elected as our new Deputy Mayor. Councillor Kondilios' experience and knowledge as a lawyer, practicing in the environmental and planning fields, is an asset to Council. I look forward to working more closely with him in the coming months as my deputy.

**Amalgamations still on the agenda**  
 This week I call on the Baird Government to come clean about their intentions on amalgamations. The Government is currently forcing councils to spend much needed funds to conduct polls and information campaigns without clearly stating whether they intend to listen to the people or just ignore the information and force councils to amalgamate.  
 I have called on the Premier to outline the Government's policy and seek a formal mandate at the upcoming election in March. If the Government intends to force amalgamations on Councils without popular support, then it should have the decency to admit that to the people. I will continue to make sure that local democracy is preserved and that the City of Botany Bay remains independent.

**Youth Leadership Forum**  
 Council will host a Youth Leadership Forum at Botany Town Hall during May. The focus of the forum will be Our Country and will include discussion on our national values, identity, reconciliation and the future of our nation. Expressions of Interest are being sort from individuals aged 17 years to 23 years who either reside or attend school within the City of Botany Bay who would like to participate. This is an exciting new initiative which I look forward to being involved with. If you want to know more call my office on 9366 3600.

**Ben Keneally**  
 Mayor  
 facebook.com/Mayor Ben Keneally | twitter.com/MayorKeneally | EMAIL mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au

**BREAKFAST WITH THE MAYOR**  
 WEDNESDAY  
 25 FEBRUARY 2015  
 THE LAKES GOLF CLUB  
 CNR KING STREET AND  
 VERNON AVENUE MASCOT  
 7:00AM - 9:00AM

**Join the Botany Bay Business Enterprise Centre for breakfast with City of Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally.**  
 Mayor Keneally is leading an ambitious project that will transform the City of Botany Bay. Council is working closely with local residents and the business community to develop a coherent vision that we can work towards over the next 25 years. Don't miss out on the opportunity to meet the Mayor and hear Council's vision for our City and share yours.  
 COST: \$55 INC. GST PER PERSON.  
 BOOK NOW AT: eo@botanybec.com.au or www.stickytickets.com.au/23006



**NEWS**

**Visit from our Sister City**  
 The Mayor and Councillors welcomed a small delegation of four from Gaiarine, Italy, last week. Gaiairine and the City of Botany Bay have been sister cities since 1982. During the ordinary meeting of Council the Mayor Ben Keneally presented the delegation with a framed Message of Greeting from our City to theirs. Former Gaiairine Mayor, Vittorino Fantuz presented Mayor Keneally with a letter from the current Mayor of Gaiairine Mario Cappellotto.



**Chinese New Year Celebrations**  
 Council is happy to be a major sponsor of the Chinese Noodle Markets being planned for Dacey Gardens, Daceyville, on Saturday 21 February 2015 from 4pm to 9pm to celebrate Chinese New Year. This is a first for our community and our neighbours and it is shaping up to be a great night.  
 There are still stalls available for hire for a nominal fee. If you are interested please contact Trent 0408 673 930.

**ON EXHIBITION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979**  
**INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION No. 14/308/1**  
**APPLICANT: Zetland Developments**  
**PREMISES: 1364-1366 Botany Road Botany**  
**PROPOSAL: Integrated Development Application for the demolition of existing structures on site and construction of a mixed use development comprising of three (3) ground floor retail shops and twenty two (22) residential units with basement car parking for 39 vehicles, and associated landscaping.**  
 DA No. 14/308/1 defined as integrated development under the provisions of Section 91 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979, the development requires an approval of NSW Office of Water under the Water Management Act 2000 to permit dewatering on site.  
**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION No. 14/318/1**  
**APPLICANT: Krikis Tayler Architects**  
**SITE: 278 Bunnerong Road Hillsdale**  
**PROPOSAL: Construction of two apartment buildings containing 69 units, basement, car parking for 128 vehicles and associated tree removal and landscape works.**

Information and plans relating to the proposals will be on public exhibition until 06/03/2015 at the Customer Services Counter, City of Botany Bay Council, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays) and Central Library Eastgardens Ground Floor, Westfield Shoppingtown, Banks Ave, Eastgardens Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 10am to 6pm, Thursdays: 10am to 8pm, Saturdays: 9.30am to 4pm, Sundays & Public Holidays: Closed. Persons wishing to make a submission should do so in writing to: Director - City Planning & Environment, City of Botany Bay, 141 Coward Street, Mascot, NSW 2020. If a submission is an objection, the grounds for objection must be specified. Please quote the Development Application number in all written correspondence and must be received by Council on or before 06/03/2015. For further information, contact Council's City Planning and Environment Department on 9366 3666.  
**L Kirchner**  
 General Manager

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666  
 Email: council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.  
[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)



# HANDS OFF BOTANY BAY



## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

### Amalgamation Telephone Survey

Council has engaged Jitby Research to undertake a phone survey to gauge feedback from residents on council amalgamations. The survey will form part of Council's submission which is required under the State Government's Fit for the Future program. If you receive a phone call please take a few minutes to listen and respond to the questions. It is important that we hear what you have to say. The rumours are growing that the State Liberal Government is going to make a move on amalgamations both voluntary and forced. The City of Botany Bay is standing firm and will fight for the right to stand alone – to stay as we are. As I have said on several occasions if the Government proceeds to force amalgamations Council will hold a referendum and formally put the options to the people as we are entitled to do. This is an issue which should be decided by local residents and ratepayers – **not Macquarie Street.**

### Street Tree Planting program underway

Council has embarked on its annual street tree planting around our City. Street trees play an important role in improving our visual amenity and over the last two years council has put a great deal of time and effort into developing a Street Tree Management Plan which ensures the right tree is planted in the right place. I was very disappointed to receive calls to say that newly planted trees are being removed rather than cared for and nurtured. It is not clear whether it is being done by thoughtless vandals or concerned residents. Either way it is not acceptable and costs ratepayers money. If a street tree has recently been planted on your nature strip and you are concerned it may not be suitable for that location please contact Council or visit our website [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au). The Street Tree Management Plan details the type of tree that has been selected for your street and why. It is illegal to remove a Council tree and if caught heavy fines apply.

### Bus Trip for Seniors – Christmas in July

Council's Aged Services staff have organised a "Christmas in July" luncheon at the Camden Valley Inn on Monday 20 July. If you live locally would love a day out this could be the event for you. For a small cost you pick up the bus at Eastsakes Community Centre and enjoy the scenic ride up to Camden Valley Inn where you will be treated to a two course traditional Christmas lunch and entertained with a tribute to country superstar Johnny Cash. Tickets are \$60 per person and bookings are essential. For more information or to book a seat on the bus phone 99994640.

### Multicultural Fair Day road closure

Council will hold a Multicultural Fair Day on Saturday 13 June from 10am to 4pm in Eastsakes Reserve, Evans Avenue, Eastsakes. I am really looking forward to this event as it was such a great day last year. There will be all the fun of the fair with noise, delicious food and great entertainment.

To ensure the event runs smoothly Longworth Avenue which runs along the park from Evans Avenue to Barber Avenue will be closed from 5pm on Friday 12 June to 8pm on Saturday 13 June.

### Beckenham Church on the move

I have been advised by members of the Beckenham Church, Botany, that due to road widening works being undertaken by the Roads and Maritime Services they need to vacate the church by the end of June. The last service in the Botany Church before it relocates to Homer Memorial Church in King Street Mascot will be Sunday 14 June 2015. The church members are hopeful that they will be able to return to their church in a few years when the roads are completed.

### Ben Keneally

Mayor

[facebook.com/MayorBenKeneally](https://www.facebook.com/MayorBenKeneally) [twitter.com/MayorKeneally](https://twitter.com/MayorKeneally) EMAIL [mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au)

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

### Community Consultation under Sections 56(2)(c) and 57 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

On 23 July 2014, Council at its Meeting resolved to prepare a Planning Proposal in accordance with the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 and Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000 to amend the Botany Bay Local Environmental Plan (BBLEP) 2013.

### Objective

The Planning Proposal seeks to address a number of inconsistencies that were highlighted on review of the gazetted plan. These amendments include the following items:

- Amend the BBLEP 2013 by the removal of the Heritage Item 175 (street trees at the corner of Florence Avenue and Vernon Avenue, Eastsakes) from heritage listing under Schedule 5 – Environmental Heritage of the BBLEP 2013 and the associated heritage map;
- Amend the Land Acquisition Map in the BBLEP 2013 to remove the road widening over Part Lot 53 DP 1097375 (part of 1008 Botany Road Mascot);
- Amend the Land Zoning Map in the BBLEP 2013 so that the boundary of the (N1 zone corresponds to the allotment boundary under DP 1187426, which divided the BATA site at 128 and 130-150 Bunsenong Road, Pagewood into two allotments;
- Amend the Height of Building Map in the BBLEP 2013 so that the boundary of the heights corresponds to the allotment boundary under DP 1187426, which divided the BATA site at 128 and 130-150 Bunsenong Road, Pagewood into two allotments;
- Amend the Schedule 1 – Additional Permitted Uses of the BBLEP 2013 to include 'depot and public administration building' as permitted uses for 2 Hollingshead Street, Mascot (Lot 2 DP827779);
- Amend the Schedule 1 – Additional Permitted Uses of the BBLEP 2013 to include 'recreation area' as a permitted use for land located at Coward, John, Haran, Church, O'Riordan Street and Gardeners Road, Mascot (within the Mascot Station Precinct), Lot 1 DP 85917, Lot 2 DP 85917, Part Lot 3 DP 85917, Lot 4 DP 85917, Part Lot 5 DP 85917, Lot 1 DP 224757, Lot 278 DP 1100282 – known as Linear Park; and
- Amend the Floor Space Ratio Map of the BBLEP 2013 to show the 3:1 ratio for 284 Coward Street, Mascot (Lot 7 DP 245170).

### Intended Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal are:

- Revise the BBLEP 2013 with the intent of resolving errors and inconsistencies within the current document;
- Incorporate the changes proposed in this proposal to allow for the improved operation of the instrument; and
- Clearly and correct anomalies and discrepancies to present a consistent approach across the LEP instrument.

Council resolved on 22 April 2015 to place the Planning Proposal on community consultation.

**The Planning Proposal will be on community consultation from Tuesday 19 May 2015 to Friday 19 June 2015** at Council's Administration Centre, Ground Floor, 141 Coward Street Mascot, from 8.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. For the purpose of informing the public generally, the Council will also have key exhibition material on display on Council's website [www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au) and at the Central Library (Westfield Shoppingtown, Banks Avenue, Eastgardens). Library hours are available on Council's website. Please note the key exhibition material at the Library and on the website is not the full statutory exhibition under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 – the Council's Administration Centre will have the full statutory exhibition material available.

### Making a submission

Any person can make a submission in writing in regards to the Planning Proposal. Submissions must be lodged with Council **no later than 4.30pm on Friday 19 June 2015** and should be addressed to the General Manager, City of Botany Bay and posted to PO Box 331, Mascot, 1480; or Faxed to 9366 3777 or emailed to: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au).

**Note:** The City of Botany Bay is authorized to exercise the functions of the Minister for Planning and Environment under Section 56 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 in the making of the LEP.

Lara Kirchner  
GENERAL MANAGER

Council's Administration Office, 141 Coward Street, Mascot 2020. Telephone: 9366 3666. Email: [council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au) or PO Box 331, Mascot, 1460.

[www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au)





# MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTE NO 10

Meeting 28 November 2012

### 3. Proposed Council Amalgamations

The last week saw the release of yet another review paper from the State Government.

The Local Government Independent Review Panel released a paper entitled “The Case for Sustainable Change”. I’m pleased they didn’t think there was a case for unsustainable change.

The paper makes interesting reading. It endorses the benefits of a popularly elected Mayor with true executive authority, much as we already have in Botany Bay. It acknowledges that the challenges and opportunities for local government vary dramatically across the state and that “one size fits all” is no solution. Surprisingly, the paper spends almost no effort on questions of how to improve democratic accountability for Councils. Like most bureaucratic documents it seems to regard the notion of democratic accountability with suspicion.

The section on boundaries and amalgamation is rather unsatisfactory. It makes unsourced claims that efficiency and innovation will be improved through amalgamations, despite extensive academic literature that finds the benefits are very limited above a certain minimum efficient scale, and that most differences in performance above that point can be explained by differences in leadership and management.

Let me make clear my beliefs on this matter: Given the current service delivery and regulatory responsibilities of Council there is no benefit to be gained for our residents from amalgamation.

Indeed, local communities will only suffer from more remote decision making with less real understanding of local concerns. Government here in the City of Botany Bay is very local. And it works better because of that.

Now, there is a case to be made that a broader range of government services could be delivered more effectively by local government. That’s what happens in many international jurisdictions. There is a case to be made that these additional services can be better delivered by larger local governments. But we have seen no proposals along these lines from the State Government.

On the back of this Case for Change paper, many have started to speculate that the State Government is planning a round of forced Council amalgamations. Of course, with this government you know that any amalgamations will be based on politics rather than on policy.

In our local region we already have unedifying evidence that the Liberal Party is seeking to use amalgamations to further their own partisan cause. In a concerted effort across Randwick, Woollahra and Waverley Councils, Liberal

members have indicated their support for merging those three areas. Of course they haven't even spoken to the fourth Council in this region about their plans. This time it's not that they look down their Tory noses at our area – rather it's about a naked political calculation – it's about furthering their own party interests and not including a Labor voting area in their planned Eastern Suburbs Super Council.

Well here in Botany Bay we put community interests first. There is no benefit for our residents in an Eastern Suburbs Super Council. We have excellent community assets and no debt. We have highly responsive and accountable Councillors in our highly democratic system of one Councillor per ward. Any amalgamation would put all this at risk.

Without a genuine commitment to devolving more service delivery responsibility to local government, there is no point talking about amalgamation.

I move this minute be adopted.

**Local Government Reform**

At the last meeting of Council we made our views clear on the State Government's report on the future of Local Government. However, it appears from recent reports that the Liberal Government will move quickly next year to force amalgamations. Indeed a motion recently moved by Liberal and Green Councillors at Randwick Council shows they are eager to obtain our assets but not to represent our residents.

To ensure our residents are treated fairly and with respect by the State Government, we must clearly state that our policy is as follows:-

- i. The interests of our residents must come first in any consideration of Local Government amalgamation.
- ii. Without a proposal that includes substantial reform to the role of State and Local Governments, there is no case that service levels to our residents will be enhanced through amalgamation, indeed the opposite is likely.
- iii. Council to urgently write to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government to ascertain if they remain committed to their pre-election promise that there will be no forced amalgamations.
- iv. Unless the government provides a prompt, absolute and unequivocal commitment that they will not pursue forced amalgamation, then the City of Botany Bay Council will provide residents with a voice through a poll to be held on 2 March 2013, under section 14 of the Local Government Act as follows:

*"14.A council may take a poll of electors for its information and guidance on any matter"*

I move this minute be adopted.

## **1. Amalgamation Threat and Council's Response**

The drumbeat for forced Council amalgamations is growing.

I met with the Independent Panel members at a SSROC event last week. It was clear from discussions that the Panel is committed to recommending amalgamations. This is despite a complete lack of evidence that size has any impact on efficiency, strategic capability or resident satisfaction in local government. The Panel indicated that a draft report containing recommended new boundaries will be released to the public in the third week of April. The Panel also indicated that they would be making recommendations regarding the processes required to achieve amalgamations and left open the possibility this could include forced amalgamations.

The State Government remains non-committal on whether it will maintain its commitment to no forced amalgamations following the completion of the report.

Based on community feedback to me and to other members of Council, and on historical responses when amalgamation has been promoted in the past, I have no doubt that the local community will be opposed to any proposed amalgamation.

My concern is that they may not get a say.

We need to be ready to act to ensure that the community has a voice in this process.

This Mayoral Minute therefore authorises the following actions:

1. The Mayor to use his Mayoral column to alert the community to this threat
2. The preparation of a mail out to all residents and ratepayers to be sent immediately on the release of the draft Panel report, containing information on the recommendations regarding the City of Botany Bay and a postage paid card that allows residents and ratepayers to sign a petition against amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay
3. The commencement of preparations to hold a poll of all electors in the City of Botany Bay on the question of amalgamations, ideally timed to coordinate with other Councils
4. The obtaining of any legal advice and opinions relating to this matter

I move that this Minute be received.

## **1. Metropolitan Mayors' Association**

On 10 April 2013 I met with Mayors or Delegates from 14 Sydney metropolitan councils at a forum hosted by the City of Canterbury to discuss the formation of a new peak body to represent the common interests of councils in the Sydney Metropolitan Area.

The forum expressed concern over the effectiveness of Local Government Association NSW in its advocacy role and consultation with and on behalf of Sydney Metropolitan councils in a number of important areas, including Planning Reform, the Independent Review of Local Government, currently being conducted, the foreshadowed early intervention legislation and the Review of the Local Government Act.

The consensus of the forum was that Sydney Metropolitan Mayors should form an association that would focus on the Sydney metropolitan area and collaborate and consult with the Federal and NSW Governments to represent the common and emerging issues affecting councils in the Sydney metropolitan area on the future of this region. We noted that rural Councils are already represented via the Country Mayors' Association.

The new body would be known as the Metropolitan Mayors' Association (MMA).  
The Forum agreed:

1. The Councils of the Sydney metropolitan area share many common interests, including planning systems and regulations, infrastructure issues, economic development and the regulation of the local government sector.
2. The Councils of the Sydney metropolitan area want an efficient, consultative, cost effective and member focused organisation to coordinate action and advocacy on matters of shared interest.

The 14 Councils being broadly representative of NSROC, SHOROC and SSROC at the meeting agreed to submit a Mayoral Minute to their next available Council meeting seeking a resolution for the purpose of forming the MMA.

Canterbury City Council (SSROC) has agreed to write to all Councils in Metropolitan Sydney encouraging them to consider becoming a member of the Metropolitan Mayors' Association and to coordinate responses. Subject to receipt of responses, an inaugural meeting of the MMA will occur as soon as practicable.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council support the formation and membership of a Sydney Metropolitan Mayors' Association and advise Canterbury City Council of this decision.

I move this minute be adopted.

## 2. Amalgamation Update

I continue to work to keep the City of Botany Bay independent.

Mayors from six council areas, including the City of Botany Bay, have joined together to oppose the O'Farrell Government's call for the proposed "Global City" merger. These councils are Botany Bay, City of Sydney, Leichardt, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra.

The Councils have developed a joint submission that highlights the need for our six councils to remain independent.

Survey Cards from residents continue to be received at my office. As of Friday 21 June, 6,415 have called for the City of Botany to remain Independent and 256 to amalgamate. So far almost one third of all cards have been returned, with an impressive 96.2 percent of these voting against amalgamation.

The strong results from the amalgamation survey demonstrate that our community overwhelmingly supports the City of Botany Bay to remain independent.

The next step in our campaign will be to draw attention to the outstanding issue of county councils. The Independent Local Government Review Panel's paper *Twenty Essential Steps Future Directions for NSW Local Government* released in April 2013 explores the potential to establish county councils.

I believe that the proposed County Councils represent a "stealth amalgamation" agenda. The panel's report says "the Local Government Act already contains flexible provision in relation to the establishment and operation of County Councils. With a few minor amendments, those provisions can be used to create the type of organisation the Panel has in mind".

In reality, this would completely undercut the role of local councils. They would become powerless and meaningless. Amalgamation would be accomplished by stealth. This approach must be resisted.

The Panel writes "Stronger regional governance must be a central plank of local government reform". The report goes on to say "ROCs (Regional Organisations of Councils) have played a valuable role in regional advocacy and shared service delivery, but they are rarely strong in both". The Panel concludes "not all councils are members of ROCs, their performance is patchy and they tend to wax and wane".

The Panel's position on Regional Organisations of Councils, much like their position on local government in general, is based on assumptions, generalisations and fabrications. Not once do they offer any evidence for their alarmingly broad claims.

As Councillors are aware the City of Botany Bay is part of the South Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC). SSROC arranges inter-council procurement and co-ordinates services for sixteen local government areas, providing services for more than 1.4 million residents in Sydney.

SSROC had a 2011/12 Budget of approximately \$2.5 million, including both revenue and expenditure. SSROC undertakes contracts on a regional basis and through these contracts has achieved significant savings for member councils. These savings amount to \$20.7 million per annum, with an estimated \$105 million in savings over the past 10 years.

The continuing strong performance of SSROC and of the City of Botany Bay, demonstrates why well managed councils, regardless of size, can reap the benefits of Regional Organisations of Councils without the disadvantages of wholesale amalgamation or county councils.

I move this minute be adopted.

### **3. One year of serving the community**

Local Government is a unique and essential tier of our Government. No other branch of Government is as open and accessible to its constituents. Local Councillors are expected to be familiar with the minutiae of their ward. I know of no other Government officials who publish their mobile numbers and encourage constituents to call them!

This month we mark twelve months since the 2012 Local Government Elections. Twelve months ago the people of the City of Botany Bay overwhelmingly endorsed the work of my predecessor Ron Hoenig and chose myself and you, my fellow Councillors, to serve as their chosen representatives. Since then we have had a busy twelve months delivering for our community.

The most significant development has been the ongoing campaign against amalgamations. The survey we undertook with our residents was a resounding success and showed that we are on the right track. In total 6,965 survey forms were returned. This represents a response rate of 24%. In total 6,692 residents or about 96% indicated they would prefer that the City of Botany Bay remain independent, while only 283 residents indicated they would prefer that the City of Botany Bay was amalgamated. The high response rate and overwhelming support for continued independence demonstrate the strong support for the City of Botany Bay in our local community. I will continue to work to ensure that the City of Botany Bay remains independent.

On 1 July 2013 the Botany Bay Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 came into effect. The LEP establishes planning provisions for land within the City of Botany Bay under section 33A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The LEP aims to guide and encourage sustainable economic growth and development, identify and conserve heritage items of environmental and cultural significance. The LEP will create a liveable urban space through the promotion of design excellence in all elements of the built environment and protect



residential amenity. The LEP also designates which land within our city can be used for Residential and other purposes.

In 2013 Council has developed the Draft City of Botany Bay Development Control Plan (DCP). So far a number of submissions have been received to the DCP including those from government agencies, constituents and businesses. Council is presently in the process of reviewing submissions. The Draft DCP reinforces Council's Commitment to providing new housing stock in our community. Over the past six years Council has approved over three thousand new units in our local government area. Over the past year approvals for new developments in the City of Botany Bay were the same as Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils combined. Our community is a key growth area with a dynamic future. However Council has a responsibility to ensure responsible development which meets the needs of our current and future residents. The Draft DCP is designed to meet our current and future needs.

In the 2013-14 Budget a major change was introduced to the management of waste services in our community. For the first time the City of Botany Bay has issued commingled, 240L wheelie bins for recycling. As a result of having larger recycling bins our recycling service will change from a weekly to a fortnightly service. The change-over was undertaken in August to September and has now been completed, with recycling services rolled out throughout our community.

In 2013 Council has been working to improve the way we communicate and engage with our residents. Council has been working to improve our use of Social Media. I have established a Mayoral facebook page and a Mayoral twitter account to provide up-to-date information directly to our residents. Council's use of social media is interactive. It allows our residents to comment on the issues that effect them. Council is presently undertaking a series of improvements to our website in order to improve the accessibility and provide the latest information.

In changing the way Council engage the community, six successful Community Days were held. These events were an opportunity to celebrate our diverse communities and get to hear ideas and concerns from our residents. I think all of you will agree these days were a great success.

Each year Council undertakes routine maintenance works conducted on a needs basis. Over the past two years Council has undertaken a major project to renew and improve local park facilities throughout our community. This year Council has undertaken major works at Mascot Park now Lionel Bowen Park, Sir Joseph Banks Park, L'Estrange Park, Grace Campbell Reserve, Mascot Oval, Hughes Avenue Reserve, Garnet Jackson Reserve, Mascot Memorial Park, Arthur Park and Booralee Park.

I remain staunchly opposed to any reduction in services for our community. Council will work with all levels of Government to ensure our community receives the services it needs. I was very disturbed to learn that under the O'Farrell Government Botany and Mascot fire stations no longer operate as full-time stations. The danger of this policy was demonstrated on 11 July 2013 when Botany Fire Station was offline during a major fuel leak at the Caltex terminal. While we are very fortunate that the fuel did not ignite, there was a very real potential for disaster. The City of Botany Bay is located in the middle of some of the most danger prone sites in the Sydney metropolitan region including the airport, freight and shipping ports and chemical facilities. It is reckless and irresponsible to reduce the level of fire and emergency services to our community.

I move this minute be adopted.

## EXTRAORDINARY MAYORAL MINUTE

Meeting 10 September 2014

This morning the NSW State Government finally announced its response to the Independent Review Panel's Report into Local Government Reform.

As Councillors would be aware, the Panel recommended the City of Botany Bay merge with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

We always expected that the Government's response would actively support amalgamations – as it was set up to do just that.

In a surprise twist, the report stops short of recommending forced amalgamations, instead providing for a range of inducements for Councils that voluntarily agree to merge.

Apart from missing out on the proffered inducements, it is not clear whether there will be any other consequences for councils that refuse to merge.

The State Government needs to make a clear and unequivocal statement that there be no forced amalgamations during this or the next term of government.

The Government's 'Fit for the Future' package requires councils to show that its:-

- Operating Performance Ratio is greater than or equal to break even over three years;
- Own Source Revenue Ratio is greater than 60% over three years
- Building and Infrastructure Asset Renewal Ratio is greater than one over three years;
- Infrastructure backlog Ratio is less than 2%
- Asset Maintenance Ratio is greater than one.
- Debt Service Ratio is greater than zero and less than 0.2.
- Real Operating Expenditure per capita over time
- Has the scale and capacity consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Panel.

I am confident that the City of Botany Bay will be able to meet these tests of a "fit for the future" council without any mergers. I look forward to demonstrating to the State Government our strength in all these areas. Our Vision 2040 project alone should show we have the strategic capacity to continue as an

independent council. There will be no need for - or benefit to our residents in - the amalgamation our City with any other Council.

It is critical that Council put its best foot forward in this process, but that participation does not detract from day to day service delivery. I will therefore be moving that consulting resources be used to support this task.

This Council does support reform for the local government sector. In fact our system of governance with single Councillor Wards and a popularly elected Mayor ensures this Council operates at a very high level of efficiency and effectiveness. We have continually worked to improve services and outcomes for our local community. We have a long and proud history of looking after our residents by offering services that many other councils no longer offer.

Accordingly, I move that:-

1. The Mayor write to the Minister and the Premier seeking clarification that they stand by their no forced amalgamation position for this term and the next term of government.
2. The General Manager engages appropriate resources to prepare Council's 'Fit for the Future' response as requested by the State Government and the General Manager be authorised to allocate suitable resources, including funding for Council's response.
3. That if the State Government is intent on forcing the City of Botany Bay to amalgamate with any other Council, an immediate community campaign be conducted and the General Manager be authorised to allocate suitable resources, including funding, to undertake such a campaign in consultation with the Council.

I move this minute be received.

**1. Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel**

I remain committed to keeping our Council Independent.

Last year's resident survey demonstrated the strong support in our community for the City of Botany Bay. A total of 96% of respondents indicated they would like our Council to remain independent. The results of this survey demonstrate that our residents are strongly supportive of the work that we do and support the continued independence of our Council.

*Revitalising Local Government*

The Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel has now been released. The Report is titled *Revitalising Local Government* and is dated October 2013 but was not released to the public until 8 January 2014.

It has been clear from the outset of this process that the State Government has pursued a political agenda and the cost of this agenda has been significant.

A total of \$1.8 million, 18 months and four reports with 1,143 pages has been the cost of a process which has revealed little new about local government in this State.

From the title of this Report through to its predetermined conclusions, the flawed methodology underlining this report is clear.

There are some proposals which are worthy of due consideration including a legislative change to require directly elected Mayors, recognition of Local Government in the State Constitution, the requirement for all Councils to have a Chief Financial Officer and Mandatory Professional Development for Councillors and Mayors.

However these potentially worthwhile reforms are given little coverage in comparison to the proposals for boundary change.

*Sydney-Botany Amalgamation Proposal*

*Revitalising Local Government* contains a proposal to amalgamate the City of Sydney with the City of Botany Bay. This amalgamation is described as one of "relatively minor adjustments to the city's (Sydney's) current boundaries to enhance the potential for improved urban management". This proposal would see an expanded City of Sydney which includes the suburbs of Newtown and Paddington as well as the City of Botany Bay.

The panel concludes that this proposal “would produce a somewhat strengthened city with a population of around 300,000 in 2031”. Once again the panel reveals its preference for Councils with larger populations, without ever establishing a suitable rationale for this position.

The Sydney-Botany merger is proposed as an alternate to the Panel’s preferred model the Global Sydney model. The initial proposal for a “Global Sydney Council” is reiterated in the final Report. This proposal would see the City of Botany Bay amalgamate with not only the City of Sydney but Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

#### *Council’s Financial Position*

*Revitalising Local Government* parrots the incorrect conclusion contained with the Treasury Corporation Report released in April last year that our Council is in a “weak” financial position. This is despite Council’s external auditor describing our financial position as “sound” at the end of last Financial Year.

As Councillors are aware, the TCorp Report assessed our Council on the basis of the financial pressures faced by Councils now and into the future. The report assessed the *current* financial sustainability of the City of Botany Bay on the basis of *future* infrastructure expenditure estimates, described by Treasury as the ‘infrastructure deficit’. This would be the equivalent of the State Government listed as in deficit of \$14 billion because it is yet to build the North West Rail Link.

This is dodgy accounting by a State Government which has fixed this report to fit with its agenda. The State Government wanted a report to state that Councils throughout NSW are financially unsustainable – so they moved the goal posts to make sure that’s what they got.

The panel now proposes that a local government finance facility be established, through an amendment of TCorp legislation. The scope of authority available to this finance facility has not been clearly established. This proposal might mean a hostile State Treasurer gaining authority over the fiscal management of Councils.

#### *Regional Joint Organisation*

As an alternative to both the Global Sydney Proposal and the Sydney-Botany merger the panel recommends a “Regional Joint Organisation” comprising the City of Botany Bay and Randwick, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

This Regional Joint Organisation appears to be simply a rebranding of the panel’s previous plan for mandatory “County Councils” in metropolitan areas.

The panel writes:

*“Many submissions to the Panel have argued that ROC (Regional Organisations of Councils), more or less in their current form should continue to be the primary form of*

*regional collaboration in local government, although some have proposed that their membership should become mandatory. The Panel's concern, however, is that the embedded culture of ROCs is one of voluntarism either in membership or participation in joint activities or both."*

This statement reveals that the Panel's Regional Joint Organisations represent a "stealth amalgamation" agenda. The Panel writes "there are also legislative impediments to effective shared services arrangements, including the need for each participating Council to separately approve tenders for regional provision of goods and services..."

The Panels changes would give the Regional Joint Organisations the ability to over-rule their constituent Council's on decisions concerning tenders and possibly other areas as well.

#### *Comments by the Mayor of Randwick*

In January the Liberal Mayor of Randwick Cr Scott Nash revealed his amalgamation proposal, Cr Nash proposes an amalgamation of the people of Randwick, Woollahra and Waverley Councils and Port Botany but not the residents of the City of Botany Bay. As Councillors and Residents in both Botany and Randwick are well aware the major impact of Port Botany - its associated infrastructure, transport routes and industries – falls on the City of Botany Bay not Randwick. In planning terms Cr Nash's proposal is incoherent. It seems Councillor Nash is only interested in rates, not residents.

The title of the report has changed. The agenda remains the same.

I move this minute be adopted.

## 2. Amalgamations Update

Since our Extraordinary Meeting last month there have been a number of developments in the ongoing issue of amalgamations.

On Monday 20 October 2014 the Premier used his address to the Local Government conference in Coffs Harbour to state his case for amalgamations. The speech saw some of the strongest language we have yet seen from the Government on the issue of Amalgamations. The Premier said “19<sup>th</sup> Century Boundaries... need to be challenged”. The Premier has also encouraged Councils to “put pride into the backseat and move the community into the front seat.”

Putting aside the fact that many Council boundaries, including those of the City of Botany Bay, have changed since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the rhetorical purpose of the Premier’s speech is clear. The Premier has sought to redefine the issue of amalgamation as an act which is in the community’s best interest. This is based on the flawed assumption that amalgamations will necessarily lead to improved outcomes for residents. The Premier also fails to accept that the residents of the City of Botany Bay and many other cities throughout Sydney and NSW remain overwhelmingly **opposed** to amalgamations. The 2013 survey demonstrated that 96% of respondents are opposed to our Council amalgamating with other local councils.

Surveys from throughout Sydney have demonstrated a similar dearth of support for boundary amendments. For example:

- In Canada Bay 85% of residents voted to remain independent.
- In North Sydney 71.4% voted against amalgamation.
- In Randwick 77% of residents voted to remain independent.
- In Woollahra 80% of residents voted to remain independent.

It would appear that the only location where a majority support amalgamation is the Baird Government’s Cabinet table. Indeed, given the media and property industry barracking for a “tough” Premier to drive amalgamations, it seems that Pride may well be in the driver’s seat of the Baird Government.



On 11 September 2014, the day after our Extraordinary General Meeting I wrote to the Premier Mike Baird seeking clarification that the NSW Government stood by its policy of 'no forced amalgamations' for this term and whether they would take that policy to the next election.

I have now received a response from the Premier. While the Premier's letter was intended as a response to my letter of 11 September 2014 it in no way responded to my letter. Instead, the Premier chose to ignore the very real concerns and question I had raised and simply cut and pasted the information from his media release on the *Fit for the Future* package.

The Premier's obfuscation and silence sends a clear message. The State Government will force amalgamations on the people of NSW even though there will be no real benefit.

I have written to Clover Moore Lord Mayor of Sydney in her capacity as head of the Metropolitan Mayors Association and requested that she convene a meeting. I am advised that a response from Cr Moore will arrive shortly.

I move this minute be adopted.

**1. *Fit for the Future***

Let me be entirely clear: the City of Botany Bay remains completely and implacably opposed to any amalgamation under any circumstances.

We hold this clear and unequivocal position as a function of both our considered beliefs regarding Local Government administration and the views and preferences of our local community.

We have on many occasions set out the evidence that our City is not only efficient and effective with its resources, but that it is also responsive and caring towards its residents. We have reviewed economic analyses that show more generally that scale effects are non-existent in local government above a minimum threshold. We know from our own observations that very large Local Government areas in Sydney – such as Liverpool and Blacktown – have not received any greater level of strategic engagement with State Government. We have read the reports and know that the “Independent” Panel’s case for change was only made by eliding the difference between the very real challenges of rural and regional local government and the situation in metropolitan Sydney. We are therefore clear that no benefit is to be gained through amalgamation. We are confident that this position retains the strong support of the local community – because we asked them! Prior to the 2013 survey Council clearly stated our position and our community overwhelmingly supported that position!

Our approach has been one of clear communication with our local residents and community consultation. What a contrast to the State Government position!

The State Government’s *Fit for the Future* process is a bureaucratized veneer on an ill-considered effort to curry favour with a media organization that has no understanding of local government and no desire to engage with the details and issues at stake.

So the State Government has put cash on the table to assist with this process? Well let me tell you - when State Governments actually offer to throw money at Local Government to do something – you know it’s definitely something that the State Government doesn’t want to do itself.

Even the name of the policy package belies the lack of confidence the State Government has in its own policy. When a Government chooses to name a policy program with a vague, Orwellian, anthropomorphic title, rather than simply describing what the policy actually does, then there are two possible explanations. Either the Government failed to really think the policy through or the government’s knows that the community won’t support what it actually wants to do or possibly both of these explanations are true.

This State Government has become addicted to vague language in the area of Local Government policy. We are told not only that we must be “Fit for the Future” but that “no change is not an option”. What does this strange, passive voice, double negative even mean? Does it mean they will force amalgamations? No one will tell me – not the Premier, not the Minister for Local Government nor the bureaucrats running the Office of Local Government. But they repeat these non sequiturs as though they constitute a mantra that will explain all, if only they are repeated often enough.

Well Councilors, the truth is that this is the mantra of a government that lacks the courage of its convictions.

- If the NSW Government truly believed that the forced amalgamation of local Councils would be popular politics – then they would say what they wanted to do.
- If the NSW Government truly thought there was a strong case to be made on policy grounds – then they would try and make that case.
- And if the NSW Government truly believed that amalgamation would deliver positive results for the communities affected - then they would start by doing it in their own backyard and moving with alacrity to merge Manly Council, Mosman Council, North Sydney Council, Lane Cove Council, Hunters Hill Council, Pittwater Council and Warringah Council. But they won’t.

Instead they trot out meaningless phrases.

The agenda here is clear. They don't want to be the ones to force amalgamations – they want other people to do the work for them. That's why they are keeping their language vague – so they can fool the easily frightened into jumping before they think they will be pushed.

And the NSW Government is having some success with this strategy. Some of our neighbouring Councils have passed resolutions and have started to panic. The smell of fear is in the air and it can cause the weak to lose their bearings.

But we should have no such fears.

- Our position is clear and evidence based;
- We know we have the capacity and the resources to stand alone;
- The community support us; and
- The State Government is unwilling to clearly state its policy.

In these circumstances it is clear that we can be confident in standing strong and in standing for our independence.

I therefore move that:

- The Mayor and GM will be clear in all multi-lateral fora such as LGNSW and SMM, and in all bi-lateral discussions with neighbouring Councils, and in any discussions with relevant unions or other associations, that the City of Botany Bay will remain independent and will not participate in any amalgamation proposals.
- Should the position of the State Government change to unequivocal support for forced amalgamations – then – and only then – will the Council reconsider its preferred approach.

I move this minute be adopted.

## **2. Amalgamations Update**

In recent months some Councils, including those located in South and East Sydney have begun to publically explore 'options' for amalgamation. The position of these Councils is that amalgamation is inevitable and the best option, even for those communities adamantly opposed to amalgamation, is to concede defeat.

I don't understand why anyone would choose to surrender before the battle truly begins. That is what they are doing.

If the State Government truly believes that amalgamations are in the best interest of the local government sector it would make Council mergers a key platform of their upcoming bid for re-election. Rather than building a case based on half-truth and obfuscation, rather than hiding behind buzzword phrases of ensuring Councils are "Fit for the Future" and postponing the ultimate show down until after the March 2015 election, the Liberals should make it clear that a vote for the Baird Government is a vote to overturn 150 years of local government in this State on the bizarre assumption that larger Councils are somehow better than smaller Councils.

Recent history has demonstrated that no Government, no matter the margin of their victory or the popularity of their leader, is immune to public opinion.

That is why this Government has resorted to underhanded tactics in order to minimize the political fallout. The NSW Government's 'Fit for the Future' exercise is an exercise in placing political gain ahead of genuine policy reform. The government has commenced this process with a pre-established agenda which it has sought to implement through political bullying.

In 2013 the City of Botany Bay polled our residents and found that an overwhelming 97% of respondents were opposed to amalgamation. This

was an incredible outcome which demonstrates the overwhelming opposition to Council boundary changes in our City. It also demonstrates that I and my fellow Councillors have an obligation to advocate on behalf of our constituents against amalgamation.

The Government has encouraged Councils to undertake consultation with their communities, seeking to steer the conversation in a way that presupposes amalgamation is the only option.

How can the Government expect Councils to undertake meaningful consultation when the Government's intentions are unclear? If the City of Botany Bay undertakes a formal poll which reflects a similar overwhelming opposition to amalgamation will the NSW Government honour the people's wishes?

In the coming weeks Council will distribute further information to local residents about our campaign against amalgamation and asking them to support Council on seeking clear answers from the Liberal Government.

I should note that I am pleased to see opposition to this process emerging in Liberal heartland. It is good that conservative Councils and their communities are showing that there is an alternative. I look forward to working with these Councils to oppose the State Government on their flawed agenda.

I move this minute be adopted.

**1. Housing Supply and Local Infrastructure**

The recent report *Missing the Mark* released by the Property Council of Australia found that the City of Botany Bay is one of the few Councils in Sydney that is meeting and even exceeding its annual target for housing supply as set by the NSW Government.

This report was based on an independent audit of housing provision performance of local councils in the greater Sydney area. Our performance was measured against the housing targets established in the 2005 *City of Cities Strategy* and the *Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036*. The report graded each council's performance from "A+" for those Councils deemed a "standout performer" through to "D" for those that had "grossly underperformed".

On this grading system the City of Botany Bay was awarded an "A".

Let's be clear about why this is an important achievement. It's important because maintaining growth in our housing supply, with a range of housing types, is one of the most important levers for keeping housing affordable.

I have recently received many letters from residents of the new ParkGrove development. In the course of making representations regarding the Development Application for ParkGrove West, they often comment about having been priced out of buying a torrens title property in the south eastern part of Sydney, how pleased they were to be able to afford to buy a large apartment in a well planned development that promised great amenity for the new residents.

This combination of goals – of increasing supply while delivering great amenity for current and future residents – is what we strive to deliver and what we are proud of delivering. It's why we have some of the strictest development guidelines and controls in NSW and why we take slightly longer to approve developments: because we are committed to

getting them right. It's also why we are committed to continuously monitoring and improving our development controls, why we have been fighting for more than a year to delete the bonus clauses, and why we will continue to fight on this matter.

In this context it is also worth noting the recent decision at appeal before the Land and Environment Court in *City of Botany Bay v Botany Bay Developments 2 Pty Ltd*.

Technically, this decision determined the part of the *Residential Flat Design Code* that is relevant for consideration with the clause in the SEPP that refers to the ability of the consent authority to refuse development applications based on unit sizes. In effect, this case confirmed the ability of Council to insist on apartment sizes larger than the bare minimum set out in certain state planning instruments.

This was a great outcome for the City and a great outcome for existing and future residents. Larger apartments mean better internal amenity for residents and lower intense development which benefits neighbours.

And let's be clear we will continue to fight hard to defend our planning controls and ensure good development in our City. This is about achieving quality developments that are in line with our planning controls. We make no apology for strongly defending our planning controls. Indeed in this last year we have spent a substantial amount on planning appeals and currently have five matters before the L&E Court.

This is surely proof, if any were needed, that this Council does not have a development at all costs approach. Rather we follow a careful and considered approach to meeting the State Government supply targets while protecting the amenity of current and future residents.

But let's return to our positive report card from the Property Council.

First – it's the clearest proof that the campaign to merge Councils – as promoted by the Property Council – is ill-conceived and irrelevant to the needs of Sydney. Size is irrelevant.



Second – it should be the basis for a renewed discussion with State Government about our critical infrastructure requirements – in public transport, roads and educational and recreational facilities.

I will be writing this week to our new Planning Minister and asking that he take note of our strong performance in housing delivery and proposing that – if he is serious about improving the supply of housing – then he should encourage his NSW government colleagues to give priority to Council areas that are delivering on their housing supply targets. We should be at the front of the queue for public transport augmentation and road capacity improvements. I have a long list of requests that were not prioritized by the former Transport Minister:

- The extension of the M20 to Banksmeadow shops;
- Increased frequency and reliability for the 309, 310 and X10 bus routes;
- A transport interchange at Mascot Station and shuttle services from Botany and Eastlakes to Mascot station;
- The extension of the light rail through to Eastgardens;
- Extend the 309 Bus Service to Eastgardens;
- Improve bus services for Eastlakes residents;
- Provide additional school special bus services for local primary and secondary school students that attend schools located outside our City; and

I also have a list of priority intersection upgrades to discuss with the Roads Minister.

I will be proposing to Minister Stokes that it would set a very positive example to all councils if these matters were to be addressed as a consequence of our excellent delivery of new housing

Our local residents should be rewarded for their generosity and welcoming attitude to growth. Our City has maintained a sensible approach to housing supply and new development. Local residents recognise the importance of increased housing supply and our community continues to welcome new residents. The State Government should reward this commitment.

I move this minute be adopted.

## 2. “Fit for the Future” Community Consultation

Our local residents support the City of Botany Bay and are opposed to any move to amalgamate our Council. I am grateful for the response that Council has received in our consultation with residents regarding this matter.

As Councillors are well aware, in July 2013 the City of Botany Bay conducted a mail in survey of our residents. We achieved an astonishing 27% response rate and found that an overwhelming 97% of respondents were opposed to amalgamation.

In March 2015, Council launched the *Hands off Botany Bay* campaign. A flyer was sent to each household in the City explaining the Government’s plans and asking for residents to provide submissions supporting our City’s continued independence. So far approximately 1,400 responses have been received as a result of our “Hands off Botany Bay” campaign. These responses have been sent directly to Minister Toole so that he can see, first hand, the strength of community opposition to forced boundary changes.

In order to conform to the NSW Government’s process Council is required to undertake further consultation with our residents. To be frank, nothing has changed since the survey was conducted two years ago. But in order to comply with the Fit for the Future process we will this time undertake a random telephone survey of residents. Taking this approach will help show that our survey results two years ago were not skewed by the methodology used at that time. This survey will ask residents to indicate their preference for one of five options:

1. Remain independent.
2. Merge with Randwick only.
3. Merge with Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Sydney
4. Merge with Sydney only.
5. Merge with Rockdale and Marrickville.

Residents will be asked to nominate a minimum of two preferences.

Councillors, I am confident that our residents will again make clear their overwhelming preference for the City of Botany Bay to remain

independent. Let us hope that the State Government will listen to the people.

Let me be clear Councillors that should there be any hint from the State Government that a forced amalgamation process is being considered, then we will act swiftly to order a poll under the Local Government Act. By way of this Minute we will resolve to place Council officers on notice and to authorise expenditure to enable the Council to be ready to conduct this poll with three weeks notice.

I move this minute be adopted.

**1. The City of Botany Bay is “Fit for the Future”**

As Councillors are aware Council is required to respond to the Fit for the Future reform program by way of a formal submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) by 30 June 2015. IPART has been appointed as the expert panel by the NSW State Government to assess whether councils are 'fit' or 'unfit' in relation to the methodology developed and to provide recommendations to the Minister for Local Government by 16 October 2015.

Our response has consistently and appropriately been that the City of Botany Bay is sustainable. We have sufficient scale and capacity to meet the current and future expectations of our community. We can demonstrate our performance against all of the Fit for the Future financial benchmarks. We have an enviable reputation of capable political and managerial leadership, meeting the challenges of urban renewal and growth and delivering for our community. We enjoy strong community trust and satisfaction.

Councillors let me be clear. Tonight we will adopt a draft Council Improvement Proposal for submission to the IPART. I can advise Councillors that I will personally finalise this prior to the due date of 30 June.

Our submission will demonstrate that we are in fact fit for the future. Our submission will demonstrate that we already have sufficient scale and capacity and we can demonstrate a compelling case to continue as we are.

Despite all the facts being on our side, our submission may not meet the arbitrary scale criteria the Government has set. But that matters little. The outcome of this process is actually meaningless. Councils that are declared “fit for the future” and which resolve to merge will only receive two benefits – funds to support the one-off costs of a merger and access to discounted borrowings. We do not want these benefits, nor do we need them.

As you know there are certain people in Local Government running around saying that the State is holding “a gun to the head” of councils. There is a great

deal of scare mongering about this process. But the documents and the process are clear – this is a process to support voluntary mergers only.

Based on everything published by this government, it cannot be said that forced amalgamation will be a consequence if a council does not volunteer to merge...

...Of course, should the state government try to pull a fast one and suddenly change their tune regarding the consequences of this process, then they would stand condemned for their mendacity. Such an outcome would be a betrayal – but it would be a betrayal by the State Government. We will not be the betrayers of our community.

The City of Botany Bay is 'fit' to remain as a stand-alone council now and well into the future. We move forward confidently with this process.

I move this minute and our draft Council Improvement Proposal be adopted.

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

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News



### If councils get bigger they must also get better

- by: Ben Keneally
- From: The Daily Telegraph
- March 01, 2013 12:00AM

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**RECENTLY** Lucy Turnbull argued for bigger Sydney councils and regional planning bodies, but there was something missing: evidence. Turnbull said bigger councils would be more efficient and strategic. But she offered no data or even anecdotal evidence to support these assertions.

Indeed, if you compare councils across Sydney there is simply no correlation between size and cost effectiveness or delivery of new housing, or any other strategic objective.

Take the example of my City of Botany Bay. We are one of Sydney's smaller councils with only 40,000 residents. But we have low rates, high service levels and no debt. Significantly, we are one of very few councils that has met the metropolitan strategy targets for new dwellings. And we have very satisfied residents.

"Big government" is rarely a better, more efficient solution. So it's strange to see business interests rushing to embrace it in this case. Rather than size, the critical factor that determines efficiency and strategic capability is governance. Councils with stable, clear leadership are invariably better than councils with a revolving door of mayors and general managers.

Similarly, voting systems that deliver stable but contestable majorities also deliver more effective government. In Botany, our single member wards make voting simple and ensure each councillor is directly accountable to their residents - and that no one can be elected by courting a noisy minority. Reformers should be focusing on governance issues such as these if they wish to deliver better results from local government.

Turnbull also makes the broader argument that bigger local governments will empower local government in

relation to the state. But this is true only if the powers and funding of local government are also increased. Nothing like this is even being discussed.

That's why Turnbull's comparison between Sydney and Brisbane is misleading.

The Brisbane City Council is responsible for a much wider range of services and activities, such as public transport. It has the funding and legal authority to deliver these services.

If we simply merge Sydney councils as they are, we will end up with massive bureaucratic organisations dedicated to simple tasks such as maintaining parks, local roads and footpaths. The current mixed performance of large Sydney councils proves this will not be a good outcome.

So Brisbane City Council shows there is a case for reforming local government - that is devolving state government roles to local councils. Looking around the world, it's clear that local government could deliver many state government responsibilities effectively, even at relatively small scale.

Indeed, many services are better when they are delivered and controlled locally. Communities get better results when they are free to innovate and tailor solutions to local needs. Local public servants tend to keep a sharper eye on costs. And politicians are more accountable. We stand ready for a discussion about reform that will actually deliver better services for the people of Sydney. An empty debate about amalgamating councils as they currently are is not the place to start.

**Ben Keneally is mayor of Botany**

# Randwick won't rule out merge

BUT DON'T FORCE IT, PREMIER

THE time has come for local government reform, this was the message Randwick Mayor Scott Nash delivered to the Premier on Thursday.



**Russell Crowe goes into battle (Gladiator-style) for the Rabbitohs, who say Coogee is theirs.**

The day after the State Government unveiled its Fit for the Future package, offering a \$258 million carrot for councils to merge, Premier Mike Baird and Local Government Minister Paul Toole met with representatives from the Randwick and Waverley councils.

Cr Nash reiterated the council position of no forced amalgamations but said he was "big supporter" of local government reform.

"I don't think it's prudent to come out and say we are opposed to amalgamation full stop," he said.

An independent report commissioned by Randwick Council in February 2013 found merging with Woollahra and Waverley councils, as well as Port Botany, could create more than \$500 million over 10 years.

The report put forward the merge as an alternative Premier Mike Baird did not rule out forced mergers. "If we get to the end of the process and councils are not fit for the future, we have to consider what options we can work with them. The current position is not sustainable," to the Local Government Review Panel's preferred "global city" that would see Botany, Woollahra, Waverley and Randwick swallowed up by Sydney Council.

Waverley Council has given tentative support for a voluntary merge with Randwick and Woollahra but Botany Council vehemently opposes any amalgamation.

Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally has condemned the State Government's use of "dodgy figures" to push its council amalgamation agenda.

"The government is using historical data that it knows is incorrect in order to build a case for forced council amalgamations," Mr Keneally said of the claim Botany was in a weak position.

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# Super council in sharp focus

## MERGER INCENTIVES TO PROMPT DISCUSSION

WILL Randwick Council be tempted by a \$22 million carrot to push for an eastern suburbs super council? Amalgamations are back on the agenda after the State Government announced on September 10 that groups of Sydney councils that merge could receive \$22.5 million.

While Randwick Council has a position of no forced amalgamations, it paid for a report last year which showed a merge of Randwick, Woollahra, Waverley and Botany Bay councils could create a surplus of more than \$500 million over 10 years.

The report was presented to the State Government as an alternative to the 'global city model' – merging the eastern suburbs councils and Botany Bay into City of Sydney – which was recommended by the Independent Local Government Review Panel.

It is understood Randwick and Waverley councils are open to an eastern suburbs council but Woollahra and Botany councils oppose it.

Woollahra Mayor Toni Zeltzer said the Fit for the Future package was not a good fit for residents and read like a forced move to bigger councils.

"The only voluntary aspect of the reform appears to be choosing which neighbouring councils to join up with," she said.

Ms Zeltzer said a merge of Woollahra and City of Sydney could be an option.

Randwick Council will discuss the Fit for Future reforms at tonight's council meeting, and decide whether to start community consultation on what has been announced.

Under the Fit for Future reforms, all councils must submit a proposal by June 30 about how it meets criteria relating to financial sustainability, effective infrastructure and scale and capacity.

"Randwick Council is streets ahead of many local government areas in this process, we've done that work," Randwick Mayor Scott Nash said.

"Fit for Future encourages councils to speak to their neighbours. We should be speaking ... and sharing ideas on how we should respond to the reforms."

The Fit for Future website states if a council is happy to merge, but its neighbours are not, independent facilitators can help bring the councils together to consider options and take advantage of the incentives.

Botany Mayor Ben Keneally wrote to Premier Mike Baird last week, asking what the next steps were if their residents were against amalgamation.

Waverley Mayor Sally Betts said the council "could and should only support amalgamation if it benefits the community".

"We're looking forward to working with the state government and our neighbouring councils to put a proposal to the community," she said.

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# Councils call for answers

## AMALGAMATION PLAYED DOWN

WHILE the State Government tries to distance itself from forced amalgamation claims by the Treasurer, Randwick and Botany Bay councils are calling for answers.

Premier Mike Baird said on Thursday that Andrew Constance had expressed a personal view, not government policy, when he told a meeting that Sydney should have just five councils and the government might need to "pull out the stick" to make mergers a reality.

Randwick Labor councillor Tony Bowen wants Mr Baird to confirm he is not planning to create five mega Sydney councils with a population of up to one million residents each.

"It seems the government has a vision of mega councils where local democratic representation would be swamped by 'local' government bodies half the size of the entire state of South Australia," Cr Bowen said.

Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally said Mr Baird used his address to the Local Government conference on October 20 to state his case for amalgamations. "The speech saw some of the strongest language we have yet seen from the government on the issue of amalgamations," Mr Keneally said.

"The Premier said '19th century boundaries ... need to be challenged'. The Premier has also encouraged councils to 'put pride into the back seat and move the community to the front seat'."

Mr Keneally said: "The Premier's obfuscation and silence sends a clear message. The State Government will force amalgamations on the people of NSW even though there will be no real benefit".

While standing behind the no forced amalgamations mantra for now, Mr Baird said "councils losing a million dollars a day is unacceptable. It can't go on, there needs to be change".

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# Councils may face mergers

## AMALGAMATIONS CONSIDERED

RANDWICK and Waverley councils' days are numbered after the NSW Government refused to rule out forced amalgamations, Coogee MP Paul Pearce has warned.



Mr Pearce, responding to Premier Mike Baird's refusal to rule out forced council amalgamations on November 4, said families, small businesses and neighbourhoods would lose their voice in decision making if "monster councils" were created.

"The Liberals and Nationals don't care if local councils are balancing their books and delivering good services to the community – the only thing they care about is how big the council is and ripping local councils out of the hands of local communities," he said.

"A local council must have the support of the local community if it is to be successful – riding roughshod over local communities and forcing our council to amalgamate will not deliver better outcomes for the area."

Mr Baird told NSW Parliament on November 4 the financial position of councils was not sustainable, and they should "be bold and grab hold of those opportunities to make sure they are fit for the future".

"Losing a million dollars a day is not sustainable, it needs to be changed," he said.

A report commissioned by Randwick Council last year showed a merger of Randwick, Woollahra, Waverley and Botany Bay councils could create a surplus of more than \$500 million over 10 years. The report was presented to the State Government as an alternative to the 'global city model' put forward by the Independent Local Government Review Panel. that merges the eastern suburbs councils and Botany Bay into City of Sydney.

# ‘No way’ to dodge mergers

## COUNCIL TO EXPLORE OPTIONS

RANDWICK Council as we know it will not exist after the 2016 local government elections.

This is the reality Randwick Council is grappling with as life after Fit for the Future starts to dawn.

Randwick Council needs to soften its hard stance against mergers, according to deputy mayor Anthony Andrews who believes it is time to be a leader and look at a change of boundaries.

“If we sit back and do nothing, Randwick will go. We are being forced to amalgamate,” he said.

NSW local councils must submit a Fit for Future proposal to the state government by June 30 outlining how it proposes to be viable in the future. A spokeswoman for Minister for Local Government Paul Toole said where the Independent Review Panel recommended a merger, the council must accept this or put forward a proposal that was “broadly consistent with the panel’s recommendations”. A spokeswoman for Minister for Local Government Paul Toole said to do nothing was not an option. “If we are to have sustainable local government, it is clear that the system needs to change.”

The panel’s preferred merge is a global city of Sydney, Randwick, Woollahra, Waverley, and Botany Bay councils.

Labor councillor Tony Bowen said the bar had been set so high so councils were forced to consider merging.

“Virtually no council can meet the criteria not to seek mergers and thereby are compelled to explore amalgamation,” he said.

Randwick council is expected to create a working group made up of the general manager, mayor and a councillor from each party to explore options for its Fit for Future submission before Christmas.



Community consultation will be held before a proposal is sent to the state government next year.

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# We must protect jobs

RANDWICK Liberal Mayor Ted Seng has established a working party in response to a United Services Union approach over Fit for the Future, with the primary objective of ensuring protection of council employees' conditions: With council amalgamations on the horizon and all our council workers' jobs under threat I am of the view that this council must act, and the ALP in particular must step out of its comfort zone and have policies in place that will protect the jobs and hard earned benefits of our council workers. With amalgamations looming it is very important that we all work together to get the best outcome for all our workers.



**Karissa Woolfe reported a stunning day in the Centennial Parklands celebrating the Daschunds In The Park Christmas Party/Daschund Rescue Australia Fundraiser on Sunday. See our Facebook page for the results.**

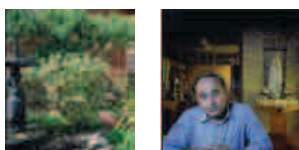


**Karissa Woolfe reported a stunning day in the Centennial Parklands celebrating the Daschunds In The Park Christmas Party/Daschund Rescue Australia Fundraiser on Sunday, See our Facebook page for the results.**

Some councillors sadly are crippled by the manacles of ignorance and the chains of arrogance when it comes to amalgamations .

We have been offered an opportunity to sit at the table of transition and sign a promissory note that will give our workers certainty and security.

I am of the view that now is the time to make real the promises to all our workers, that we will always protect their interests in council and be true to our ALP beliefs of: equity, social justice and a "fair go for all".  
NOEL D'SOUZA, Randwick Labor



Councillor

# Shadow over airport revenue

## SYDNEY AIRPORT FORKS OUT \$25M IN RATES SINCE 2005

THE rate rich landscape of Sydney Airport is casting a long shadow over the Fit for Future merger talks, with a push towards a global city council surrounding the airport and Port Botany.



**Carol Hancock, from Captured by Carol, took this amazing photo of a plane's large shadow over Coogee beach on her iPhone. She has been a Botany resident for eight years and one of her favourite things to do on a Sunday with her husband and daughter is the "gorgeous coastal walk from Coogee to Clovelly" followed by a bike ride at Sir Joseph Banks Park. While at Coogee on a Sunday she saw the planes flying directly over Coogee as they were making their descent towards Mascot. "I couldn't help but be amazed by their size and energy, all while beach-lovers seemed completely unaware of the huge aircraft that appeared so close you could reach out and touch it."**

Rockdale Labor Mayor Shane O'Brien is keen to win the support of Marrickville and Botany Bay councils to propose a merge that inherits all of the airport as part of the council's submission for the State Government's Fit for Future reforms.

Rockdale Council contains the second largest piece of Sydney Airport in its boundaries, Botany Bay has the most and Marrickville has a small slice.

The boundary change could also include south ward of Randwick City to contain all of Port Botany.

"The income generated from the ports and airport – two massive pieces of infrastructure – which have a significant impact on public space, should stay with the councils responsible for that space," Mr O'Brien said.

The Fit for Future package offers councils financial incentives to merge. airport in the proposed Global City council of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Botany Bay councils.

Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally said the State Government must tell councils what its plan was.

"Will there be forced amalgamations or not? Our residents don't want to be amalgamated," he said.

A spokeswoman for Minister for Local Government Paul Toole said to be sustainable "the system needs to change".

Mr O'Brien said it was important councils discussed mergers with neighbours.

"The Government needs to hear different ideas besides the panel's recommendations and it needs to be a bottom up approach, it can't be from the top down."

# COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS AGENDA

The state government's Fit for the Future reform agenda, which includes \$258 million in incentives for councils to merge voluntarily, is likely to include forced amalgamations after the March 28 state poll, when it is not burdened by a no forced amalgamations election pledge. Randwick Council is convinced forced mergers will be on the agenda in 2015 and is asking its residents to help shape the future of local government. Information packs detailing seven merger options have been mailed to residents as part of the council's Fit for Future community consultation process. The first in a series of pop-up information stalls will be at Coogee beach on January 17. Randwick Mayor Ted Seng said the council was against forced amalgamations but standing alone was not an option as it did not meet the Fit for Future criteria. Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally is refusing to enter into merger talks until forced amalgamations are officially on the state agenda.

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## Divergence on mergers

### COUNCILS GO THEIR OWN WAY

WHILE Botany Bay Council refuses to discuss boundary changes with neighbouring councils, Randwick Council is consulting the community about preferred amalgamation options.



According to the state government's Fit for Future reforms, Botany and Randwick City Councils do not meet the size and scale to be an efficient council in the future and have been forced to consider amalgamation.

Randwick Council has mailed out seven merge options to residents to consider. Information stalls will be held across the LGA to explain these ideas.

Botany Bay mayor Ben Keneally said he would not entertain the idea of voluntarily amalgamating, and would look at options only if the State Government's "no forced amalgamation" policy changed.

A spokeswoman for the Minister for Local Government said by voluntarily merging, councils would have

access to facilitators to Randwick Council has stalls at Coogee Beach on Saturday and Monday at 10am, Maroubra Beach on Monday at 2pm and Clovelly Beach on Tuesday at 10am. discuss the options, funding to prepare a business case and in Sydney, up to \$22.5 million to help the new council meet the community's needs.

"Those who choose not to participate in the Fit for Future process will not be able to access the opportunities that Fit for the Future councils will enjoy," she said.

"This includes cheaper finance to invest in infrastructure and eligibility for greater local planning powers."

The starting point for developing the Fit for Future proposals is the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel – which calls for a global city combining Randwick, Woollahra, Botany Bay, Waverley, and City of Sydney councils.

Worldwide redheads make up two per cent of the population.

Most natural redheads have brown eyes. But like red hair, blue eye colour is a recessive trait, meaning that both parents must carry the gene for a child to be blessed with it. This makes those with red hair and blue eyes, like Ms Nyssen, the rarest minority in the world, with only one per cent having both.

Vote for your favourite redhead at [thegingernet.com](http://thegingernet.com) KINGSFORD red head Manon Nyssen was working at the launch party for the Australia's Hottest Ginger competition when she decided to enter her own flaming looks into the race.

The 20-year-old model and Environment Management student at University of NSW has always embraced her hair colour and has vowed never to dye it.

"I am a passionate person who is always excited about life. I think it's the fire on the outside coming inside," she said. "Gingers are only a small population, and I love it. A lot of other people love it too."

There has been more than 2000 entries and 110,000 votes in the competition.

If Ms Nyssen wins, she will score \$10,000 in prizes including a modelling contract.

The competition is not only searching for good-looking male and female redheads, but also has a category for hottest ginger mo and pet.

Ms Nyssen said the competition was shining a positive light on a minority group.

"In high school I would get some comments, but I never took them to heart. I was never bullied."

"It's kind of like there has been an injustice against people with red hair, it's cool we're being appreciated in this competition."

She is eyeing off a top 20 finish. The winner will be announced in February.

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Article rank | 20 Jan 2015 | Southern Courier

Dr Bronwyn Kelly, a former director corporate and technical services of Waverley Council, is a freelance adviser on local government reform

# Get in or lose out

## EXPERT URGES JOINING CITY

AMID speculation the move to bigger councils is inevitable we need more information on the proposed global city council, according to one local government consultant.

Bronwyn Kelly said Randwick Council's Fit for Future information pack, listing seven possible merger options, failed to highlight the positives of merging with Sydney Council.

"Randwick or an eastern beaches block of councils, if permitted in preference to the global city, would eventually end up as the poor relation – a 'have not' potentially surrounded by significantly wealthier 'haves'," the Randwick resident said.

Randwick Mayor Ted Seng said the Independent Review Panel's final report recommended an amalgamation of City of Sydney, Woollahra, Waverley, Randwick and Botany councils – building a "global city" with more than 500,000 residents.

"We don't support the creation of a global city as we value our Randwick identity, local representation and existing quality services," Cr Seng said. NSW councils have until June 30 to show how they are Fit for the Future. The Independent Local Government Review Panel's final report said Sydney councils should be "significantly reduced" from 41 to between 15 and 18. "Sooner or later, amalgamations will have to be part of the package," it said. Opposition local government spokeswoman Sophie Cotsis says the true plan behind the facade of "Fit for the Future" is forced council amalgamations. Randwick and Botany councils are at odds with the Premier's blended vision, with Randwick looking at its options, including an eastern suburbs super council, and Botany opting not to participate in merger talks.

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# DEFEND THE REALM

Botany Mayor Ben Keneally and Randwick Mayor Ted Seng have differing views on just how far negotiations for council mergers should go.

THE clock is ticking for Randwick and Botany Bay councils to lead their communities through the politically explosive council amalgamation minefield.



With deadline for the Fit For The Future, the State Government's latest merger push, looming, the two southeast councils are at opposing ends of the amalgamation battle.

According to the Liberal Randwick Mayor Ted Seng, the best way to stave off the threat of a mega City of Sydney, an amalgam of five councils, is to present the State Government with a viable alternative.

But the Labor Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally says now is the time to fight to protect the local identity.

At last Wednesday's council meeting, Cr Keneally and his new deputy mayor Stan Kondilios vowed to take the fight not only to the State Government but to Randwick and other "defeatist" councils by refusing to hand over non-public information.

"There is no reason for us to be enabling other communities that want to give in to this process," Cr Keneally said.

It is not just the flow of information but the quality of community engagement that has some, like local government consultant Bronwyn Kelly, calling for balance. There are calls for more information on the merits of the Local Government Review Panel's preferred option – the global city council – to be made public. Panel chairman Graham Sansom said local government was big business. "NSW councils spend around \$10 billion each year and employ some 50,000 people," he said. "Better local government is vital for the state's future. We can't afford councils that are unsustainable."





# Mayor fights merger

A DEFIANT Botany Bay mayor has snubbed the push to consult on amalgamations and launched a petition to keep the council independent.

ANYBODY thinking the Fit For The Future consultation in Botany Bay was going to deliver a real platform to debate council amalgamations has lucked out.



The Hands Off Botany Bay information pack delivered to residents is defiant from the opening page.

Botany Bay Labor Mayor Ben Keneally, who has been a fierce opponent of the State Government's merger push, is unapologetic about his council's decision not to promote the benefits of the global city merger, which would combine Sydney Council with the three eastern suburbs councils and Botany Bay.

The information pack, which has been labelled a form letter, asks for signatures to oppose mergers.

There is no option to give comments or support amalgamation.

Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally said the council would not consult residents on Fit for the Future until the State Government "comes clean on its intentions".

In the Hands Off Botany document Mr Keneally says "amalgamation is a bad idea" and he urges residents to sign the petition to keep Botany Bay independent.

"Sign up. Join the campaign. Keep Botany Bay independent," the brochure says.

Local Government Minister Paul Toole said councils not participating in the process would exclude their communities from the Government's \$1 billion incentive package, including access to low-interest funds to invest in infrastructure.



"This year, we have seen 23 councils apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to lift rates above the normal cap – simply raising rates is not the answer to creating a sustainable sector," he said.

STATE ELECTION: COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS

# Opposition parties draw a firm line on the local government merger agenda

GREENS AND LABOR CANDIDATES VYING FOR THE SOUTHEAST SEATS ON MARCH 28 ARE UNITED IN THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS, WHILE LIBERAL CANDIDATES POINT TO ECONOMIC BENEFITS. WHO DO YOU AGREE WITH?

**COOGEE**

**Labor candidate Paul Pearce**

I reject the need for the amalgamation of Randwick Council with any neighbouring council. Randwick is financially sound with a growing population base. Forced amalgamations of councils, as is the clear intention of the State Government, is undemocratic. Voluntary amalgamations should only occur after a referendum of voters is carried out. The current survey distributed by the Randwick City Council does not satisfy s16 and s17 of the Local Government Act and lacks legitimacy as a process. Local government must remain local.



from the electoral backlash against the Queensland Liberal National Party and abandon this arrogant Fit for the Future program. It is simply a clever way of forcing NSW councils to choose from the least repellent amalgamation options. It is appalling that Labor-controlled Rockdale Council wishes to annex the southern parts of Randwick and Botany councils.



Forced amalgamations won't guarantee fiscal responsibility. What we need in local government is long-term financial planning.

**Labor MP Michael Daley**

Randwick and Botany are two of the best councils in NSW. I know I speak for the overwhelming majority when I say there is no telling reason why they should be forced to merge unwillingly. Premier Mike Baird wants to force amalgamations so he can hike up rates and shift costs off his balance sheet. If the Liberals sincerely think forced amalgamations are going to make our community stronger and our quality of life better then they are a long way from making that case.



closest to the people. The councils that cover Heffron have the overwhelming support of the people. The Liberals have had an amalgamation agenda with the aim of destroying local democracy since they have taken office. There should be no compulsory amalgamation of councils without the overwhelming support of the local people.



**Liberal MP Bruce Notley-Smith**

Local government boundaries in the eastern suburbs are, by and large, the same as they were when incorporated about 150 years ago.



**MAROUBRA**

**Liberal candidate Brendan Roberts**

We know that the current system is not working and councils are losing \$1 million a day. The NSW Government has delivered up to \$1 billion reform for local councils to ensure we have a strong, modern local government sector to deliver the housing, jobs and infrastructure that local communities deserve. To access support under the reform package, each council has been asked to prepare a submission on how it will become Fit for the Future.



**HEFFRON**

**Greens candidate Osman Faruqi**

Councils are the level of government closest to local communities. Councils like City of Sydney, Marrickville and Randwick have a track record of responding to community campaigns for greater investment in public services and protection of our natural environment. It is outrageous and anti-democratic that the Liberal Government is making extra funding for councils contingent on mergers. Forced council mergers are driven by cost-cutting, not the needs of the community. The Greens strongly oppose them.



**Liberal candidate John Koutsoukis**

Residents want to know their rates are being spent efficiently. The work of the Local Government Independent Expert Panel provides a blueprint for healthy councils that can support current and future needs of their communities. This \$1 billion reform is an opportunity for councils to be relieved of regulatory burden, to have access to cheaper finance to fix failing infrastructure, and to deliver for communities - now and in the future.



**Greens candidate Lindsay Shurey**

The long-term financial plan implemented by former Greens Mayor Murray Matson in 2004 has made Randwick Council financially sustainable. There is no need for Randwick to amalgamate. Premier Mike Baird should learn

**Greens candidate James Cruz**

The Liberals have all but admitted forced amalgamations are about taking more planning decisions away from communities and handing them to super councils. Their review panel provided no evidence that amalgamations would lead to more financially sustainable councils but fiscal planning reforms initiated by Greens councillors have already made Randwick Council financially secure. Wages are affordable, rates suitable and services are highly valued by residents.

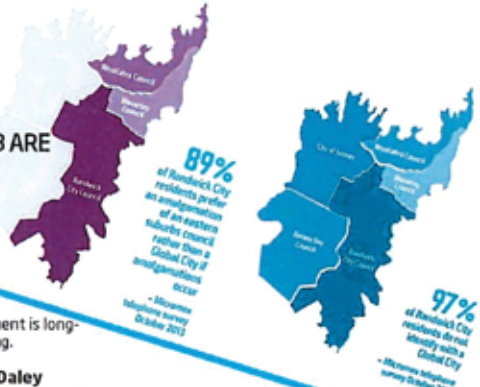


**Labor MP Ron Hoenig**

There has been a concerted attack over the past four years on local government - the tier

**46 DAYS UNTIL POLL DAY**

Next week's topic will be light rail and WestConnex. If you have a question for the candidates email [news.southerncourier.com.au](mailto:news.southerncourier.com.au)

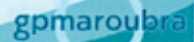


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COUNCILS AMALGAMATE

# Mind made up

## NO NEED TO CONSULT - MAYOR

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"Sign up. Join the campaign. Keep Botany Bay independent," the brochure says.

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"This year, we have seen 23 councils apply to be Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to lift rates above the normal cap - simply raising rates is not the answer to creating a sustainable sector," he said.

Do you support Botany Bay Council's tough stance? Email news@southerncourier.com.au

### MERGER FURY

In the consultation near the Botany Bay Mayor Ben Kennedy says "Amalgamation is a bad idea that doesn't work. You can do something about it. Sign up to join our campaign to keep Botany Bay independent. Sign up to the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay by signing the petition."

HANDS OFF BOTANY BAY



## Councils unite to fight state

LOCAL government is mobilising against mergers.

Five inner west councils have joined ranks to fight forced council amalgamations. Leichhardt, Morrichville, Hurwood, Ashfield and Canada Bay's united front comes as seven northern Sydney councils also announced they are looking at a joint approach to the deeply unpopular amalgamation push.

The State Government has given councils until the end of June to present their preferred merger options, or to justify why they are sustainable without doing so.

## Debate to give policy insights

COOGEE state Liberal MP Bruce Nolley-Smith, Greens candidate for Coogee, Lindsay Shurey and the ALP candidate for Coogee, Paul Pearce will debate council amalgamations and the State Government's Fit For The Future policy at a forum hosted by resident action group Kensington Voice at Randwick Boys High School on Thursday.

Kensington Voice's Rosemary Mackenzie believes the State Government's amalgamation push is an attack on democracy that could provide an open door to big developers.

"We are strongly opposed to any change of council's boundaries," she said.

The event will run from 7.30pm and registrations are from 6.30pm.

## A model move to present seven options

Laura Ambrosio

RANDWICK Council has defended its decision to give its residents access to alternative council merger options.

Randwick Council sent its residents a survey asking

people to rank their preferences of seven merger options, including standing alone, an eastern suburbs council and a global city.

Going back from residents in Stage 2 of Randwick Council's Fit for the

Future process and follows three months of informing residents about the State Government reforms by direct mail, with pop-up stalls at beaches and shopping centres and putting posters at bus shelters.

Randwick Mayor Ted Seng said the council would not be making any decisions until the residents had their say. "I won't apologise for conducting comprehensive community consultation," he said.



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Article rank | 10 Feb 2015 | Southern Courier

## MERGER FURY

In the consultation mailout Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally says: "Amalgamation is a bad idea that doesn't work ... You can do something about it. Sign up to join our campaign to keep Botany Bay independent. ... Say NO to the amalgamation of the City of Botany Bay by signing the petition".

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Article rank | 17 Mar 2015 | Southern Courier

## No amalgamations

I SUPPORT City of Botany Bay Council's campaign against forced amalgamations .  
The council asked residents two years ago if they were willing to amalgamate and the overwhelming majority said no.

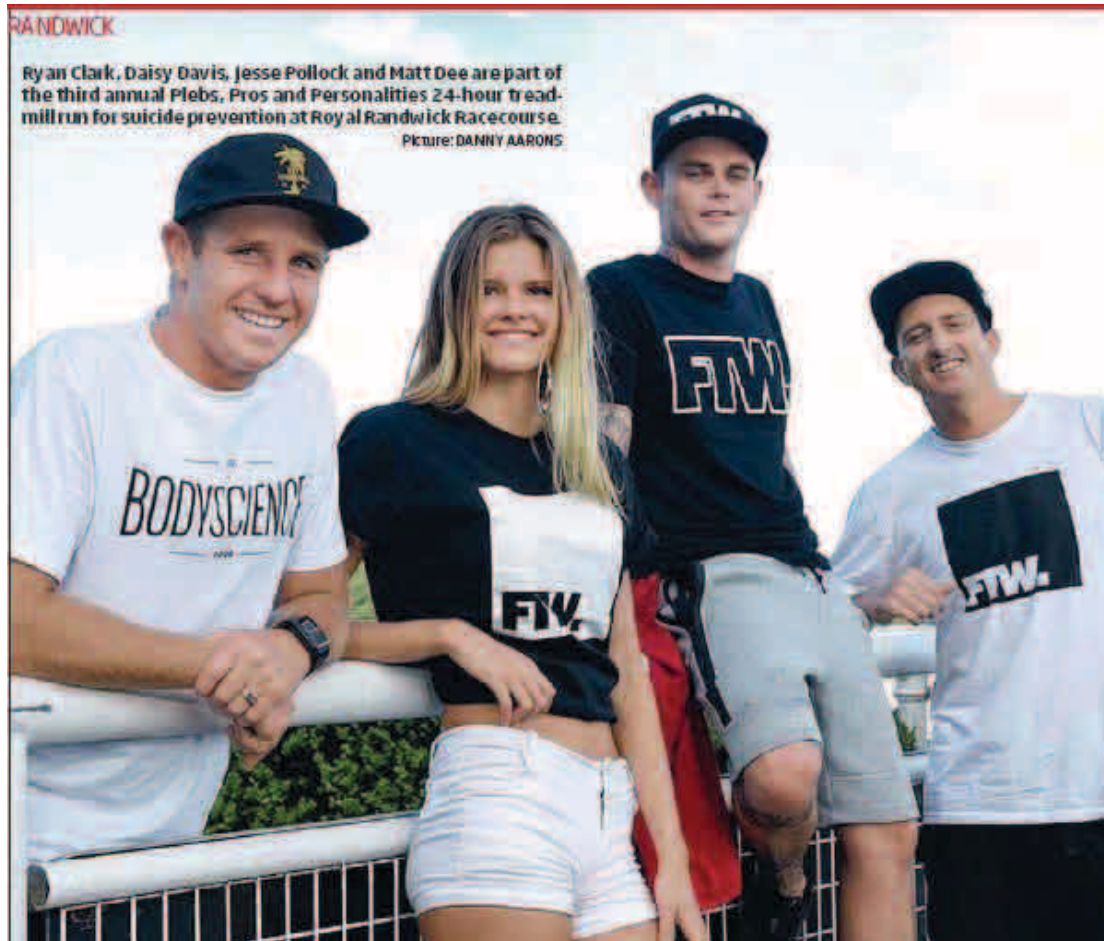
We fought off amalgamation in the 1970s and we don't want it now.

KIRSTY HAYDEN, Botany

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# Calls for Baird to rule out mergers

WITH the NSW Coalition's election win on Saturday the State Government is no longer pillared by a no forced amalgamations pledge – so does that mean the push for an uber-Sydney council is on?



Picture: DANNY AARONS

**Ryan Clark, Daisy Davis, Jesse Pollock and Matt Dee are part of the third annual Plebs, Pros and Personalities 24-hour treadmill run for suicide prevention at Royal Randwick Racecourse.**

Premier Mike Baird said Saturday's win meant he had a mandate to push on with his power privatisation plan but Randwick Labor councillor Tony Bowen is calling on him to rule out forced amalgamations.

"It was very telling Mr Baird wouldn't commit to a position before the election, it doesn't reflect well on the government's intentions."

Mr Bowen was one of the Randwick councillors to put his name next to the call for a stand-alone Randwick Council in an email campaign run by community group Kensington Voice ahead of the state election.

Also supporting a stand alone council were Labor councillors Kathy Neilson, Noel D'Souza and Geoff Stevenson, Greens councillors Murray Matson and Lindsay Shurey and Liberal councillors Harry Stavrinou and Robert Belleli,

The online call came as Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore asked Mr Baird to rule out forced mergers.

As chairwoman of the Sydney Metropolitan Mayors, Ms Moore was seeking the Premier's commitment on behalf of 26 councils ahead of the election.

"Before the (2011) election the Liberal Party gave a guarantee that it would not go down the expensive, disruptive and anti-democratic path, but up to now the Premier has avoided giving a response," she said.

She said it was unacceptable Mr Baird had refused to answer repeated requests for his position.

The Independent Local Government Review Panel recommended merging City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Botany councils.

When asked about forced amalgamations on Monday, a spokeswoman for the Minister for Local Government Paul Toole said the NSW Government expected all councils to take part in the Fit for the Future program - the Government's response to the panel's final report.

Randwick's analysis report, that examines Fit for the Future merger options will be debated in April. THE Plebs, Pros and Personalities 24hour run for Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA) has returned for a third year with more runners and celebrities and a new location at the Royal Randwick Racecourse.

PPP4SPA has raised more than \$150,000 in two years. Last year 1500 people attended the event and the crowd is expected to double this year.

"It's not about making money, it's about bringing people together and getting the conversation started," organiser Ben Higgs said.

Celebrity supporters are South Sydney Rabbitohs players including captain Greg Inglis, swimmer Michael Klim, model Didier Cohen, the Bondi Rescue Crew and Maroubra chef Colin Fassnidge. Former Wests Tigers player Braith Anasta, who lost his father to suicide at 15, is back on board, as is his wife Jodi. A group of six organisers will run the entire 24 hours.

Community members, athletes and members of Life Cycle Fitness, Vision Personal training and Maritime Union of Australia will also run.

"Sydney is the big event, but the idea is for anyone with a treadmill and enough legs to fill it to host their own events as well," Mr Higgs said.

PPP4SPA will be held on May 8. Get involved at [ppp4spa.com.au](http://ppp4spa.com.au).

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Article rank | 28 Apr 2015 | Southern Courier | – James Taylor and Adam Bell

# State remains quiet on council amalgamations

SILENCE from the State Government over the prickly issue of amalgamations has pushed Botany Bay Council to launch a third attempt to harness public support in the battle for their independence.

Between 700-1000 residents will receive a call from an independent survey organisation to ask them their position.

They will be presented with five options – remain independent, merge with Randwick only, amalgamate with Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Sydney to create an uber-council, merge with Sydney only or join with Rockdale and Marrickville.

On March 16, council presented 1400 signed flyers from its "Hands Off Botany Bay" campaign to Local Government Minister Paul Toole. It followed a similar mail survey in July 2013.

Randwick councillors didn't waste any time after the state's election last month to call for Premier Mike Baird to rule out forced mergers. The government has given councils until June 30 to put their hands up to merge with their neighbours and has put millions in incentives on the table.

Should they refuse, the government has said it will "consider its options". The government has the power to force councils to merge under existing legislation.

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## Mayor's bid to rid us of global city

Laura Aubusson

AS THE State Government hurtles towards local government reform the push to stave off an expanded Sydney council with a population bigger than Tasmania could already be lost.

On Thursday, the same day the Liberal Government rebuffed an attempt to have forced council amalgamations taken off the state agenda, Randwick Liberal Mayor Ted Seng threw his weight behind a merging of eastern suburbs councils.

Armed with Randwick Council's biggest community consultation program, that found 51 per cent of more than 6400 people surveyed preferred a merger option, Cr Seng is pushing for an amalgamation between Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra. He said this could bolster the council's coffers by \$235million over 10 years. But Woollahra does not want a bar of it.

**See page 5**

COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS

Move hints at amalgamation

THE clearest indication of a forced council amalgamations agenda came last week with the State Government voting down an attempt to have forced mergers taken off the state agenda.

Despite unanimous opposition from the Green, Labor and Independents, the Liberal Government rejected State MP Alex Greenwich's motion on May 14 opposing council amalgamations.

In response, Mr Greenwich said the amalgamations "could very well be the undoing of the Liberal government in the 2019 election".

The State Government's Fit for the Future proposal suggests the amalgamation of 14 LGAs reducing 24 Sydney councils to nine including a supercouncil consisting of the City of Sydney, Botany Bay, Waverley, Randwick and Woollahra.

City of Sydney's population would increase from 188,000 to 505,000. **James Gorman**

Most residents open to change

A SURVEY of more than 1500 Waverley residents found just 35 per cent want to remain independent.

Of the 65 per cent who preferred a merger in Waverley, a merger with Randwick and Woollahra was the most popular option (23 per cent).

A Woollahra resident survey showed more than 80 per cent were against any merger with neighbouring councils.

**BOUNDARY ST, CLOVELLY IS THE FITTING NAME OF THE BORDER BETWEEN WAVERLEY AND RANDWICK. BOTH COUNCIL AREAS HAVE ITS OWN COLOURED STREET SIGN**

**RANDWICK COUNCIL'S FIT FOR THE FUTURE SURVEY SHOWED THE MOST SUPPORTED MERGE OPTIONS WERE RANDWICK, WAVERLEY AND WOOLLAHRA, AND RANDWICK AND WAVERLEY**

**WHEN ASKED PREFERENCES IF AMALGAMATIONS HAD TO OCCUR, 90 PER CENT OF RESIDENTS CHOSE AN EASTERN SUBURBS COUNCIL WITH FIVE PER CENT VOTING FOR A GLOBAL CITY**

**RANDWICK COUNCIL WILL DEBATE AMALGAMATIONS AT A COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY, MAY 26. SEE MORE AT YOURSAYRANDWICK.COM.AU/FUTURE**

Waverley Liberal mayor Sally Betts. Randwick Liberal mayor Ted Seng.

# Merger creates division

PLEBISCITE OFF THE AGENDA

Laura Aobusson

RANDWICK Council will not hold a plebiscite on council amalgamations because the NSW Electoral Commission is "refusing to release the electoral roll".

Randwick Labor councillor Tony Bowen has labelled the reason for scrapping the poll as a "dog ate my homework excuse". He said it was "a betrayal of residents".

The row over the plebiscite is part of one of the most fierce Labor versus Liberal battles to hit Randwick Council—as both camps prepare to wage war on council amalgamations from opposing battlegrounds.

Randwick Liberal Mayor Ted Seng said an eastern suburbs council of Randwick, Woollahra and Waverley could create \$255 million in savings over ten years.

He said providing an alternative merge option, like a smaller eastern suburbs council, was the best way to defeat the Independent

**FIT FOR FUTURE**

A Randwick Council survey asked residents if they supported amalgamation: 49 per cent voted no, 32 per cent voted yes and 19 per cent were unsure. In a separate question, residents were asked to preference seven options; 49 per cent voted for no change, 51 per cent chose one of the six mergers.

Local Government Review Panel's recommendation of a global city—taking in Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Botany Bay.

While the Labor camp says Randwick Council has no mandate to push ahead with merger talks.

But it could all be a moot point with Woollahra penning a letter to the Randwick and Waverley mayors asking them to not include it in any Fit for the Future merger proposals.

Cr Seng said council's Fit for the Future consultation showed the Randwick people rejected the global city model, fearing loss of local identity and services.

**WANTED**

**Why Botany Bay has a bounty on its head**

BOTANY Bay Council has hit the most wanted list as the State Government hurtles towards the amalgamation of seven city councils under the banner of Fit for the Future.

And the rewards are plenty—with Botany Bay sitting in the shadow of the rate-rich landscape of Sydney Airport, that perks out more than \$2.5 million in rates per year to three councils—Botany, Marrickville and Rockdale.

Rockdale Labor Mayor Shane O'Brien is keen to win the support of Marrickville and Botany Bay residents to form a merger that inherits all of the airport.

The boundary dispute could also include south-west of Randwick to take in all of Port Botany.

Marrickville is undertaking the formation of an airport council, commissioning a report to investigate this as one of three merger options. Randwick Independent Deputy Mayor Anthony Andrews said it makes "sense to create a council that has similar communities of interest" and he is pushing for Botany to be included in the Randwick push for greater

suburban council taking in Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Botany.

Ben Kennedy (pictured above) has remained defiant in the face of the Liberal Government merger push, refusing to hand over documents to help neighbouring councils build their merger cases. He was at his cheeky best at the Botany Future Awards at Eastlakes in Wednesday night, announcing: "Ladies and gentlemen we are in two wonderful cities here. The City of Randwick and the City of Botany Bay and they (these always remain) two wonderful cities. The independent Local Government Review Panel's preference in terms of Sydney Airport is for it to be included in one council area, the Global City Council that would see the merging of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Botany Bay councils."

Talk to what you think

**Reward**  
Lucrative airport rates



REARBY 11

# Merge is on the verge of proceeding

## SENG PUSHES FOR NEW ALLIANCE

Lucy Anderson

TED Seng was the first and is still the only eastern suburban council mayor to surrender to the Fit For The Future amalgamation process, but he will not be standing alone for long.

The Randwick Mayor has been pressing for a western suburban alliance that would have created a super power, taking in Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra. But his vision of a Liberal powerhouse, taking in some of Sydney's most affluent suburbs, has fallen in the last hurdle due to a lack of support from the now Liberal block.

The Randwick Liberal morning before Randwick Council tonight is for a merger of Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra.

If the council fails to win support from Woollahra to proceed, the best case is for a Randwick and Waverley merge.

"It's time to face the fact, standing alone is not an option. We need to be in control of our own fate," Cr Seng said.

The motion is expected to gain majority support but with a strong anti-merger contingent, of Labor's Tony Bowen and Geoff Stephenson and Liberal Robert Bellini, a resolution motion could be lodged as early as tomorrow. If a resolution motion is lodged an extraordinary meeting will be held this week to push through the decision to proceed with a merger proposal.

At this point Cr Seng will not be standing alone, he will have the backing of Randwick Council to proceed with an amalgamation of the Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra councils.

Greens Councillor Murray Mason, who is head of the Randwick-Botany Greens, has come under pressure for supporting the Fit For The Future process, splitting from the official Greens policy. But he said the stakes were too high to not be part of the process.

He said Randwick had been handed a "loaded pistol".

And there are some ominous deadlines looming with merger submissions due by June 30 and basic new council written to be formed by the end of October.

It is at this point that a number of Randwick councillors, including Cr Mason and Liberal Cr Harry Stavros, believe councils could be sacked as the State Government scrapishes, new transition committees.

"The only option is to submit a Fit For The Future proposal to ensure Randwick has some control in determining its own destiny," Cr Stavros said.

Cr Mason said he would move an amendment tonight asking for "a binding referendum prior to any merger being implemented".

Should Randwick proceed with a fit for the future merger?

### Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra merge

- Population: 276,000
- Website: [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)
- Local LGA's: 400
- Resident population: 2.2M
- Ward population: 11,000
- Residential area: 51,000
- Business area: 6,000
- Council area per resident: \$1,220
- Greenland per resident: 20m
- Area: 200,000sqm (200ha)

85% of Randwick Councillors prefer an amalgamation of all western suburbs councils over Fit For The Future amalgamation.

### SHOULD RANDWICK CITY COUNCIL BE AMALGAMATED?

Response	Percentage
Yes	38%
No	40%
No	22%

### VOX pop YOUR RANDWICK COUNCILLORS ANSWER THE QUESTION EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW: SHOULD RANDWICK BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN FIT FOR THE FUTURE?

**TED SENG**  
Liberal Mayor  
Standing alone is not an option. Government are likely to accept. A merger with Waverley and Woollahra will retain eastern suburban identity and deliver \$225m in savings and is a far better outcome than a global city merger that nobody wants.



**JANESELYN ANDRIEUS**  
Independent Deputy Mayor  
Have don't propose a feasible alternative at the May 25 council meeting, one that the community is receptive to, we risk being forced down the global city path which no one wants.



**TONY BOWEN**  
Labor  
Randwick Council should stand alone. No justification has been made for dismantling our local council. It's wrong to our residents. Any merger requires a referendum on our residents' desire for our council's future.



**MURRY MASON**  
Greens  
Randwick Council has been given a loaded gun. It can shoot itself dead by denying the findings that we can't stand alone or split or a non-fate part and propose a reduced merge that meets criteria.



**ROBERT DELELLI**  
Liberal  
Randwick Council must take the position of Woollahra and Waverley councils to stand alone. Putting an alternative will give a green light to the State Government to amalgamate us. If it's not broke why fix it?



SOUTHERN COURIER, Tuesday, May 26, 2015 05

# Move on to merge

A CANDLELIGHT vigil, with chants of "the death of democracy", will be held before tonight's Randwick Council meeting.

The council, which has been on the front foot of the State Government's Fit for the Future amalgamation push, is expected to endorse the amalgamation of the Randwick, Waverley and Botany councils at tonight's meeting.

The decision would put the full weight of one of Sydney's largest councils behind the Fit for the Future reform program - despite an independent survey that found 49 per cent of Randwick residents are opposed to council amalgamations.

While Waverley is expected to pursue its own merger option, with Randwick and Woollahra, Botany Bay remains a staunch opponent to the push for councils to amalgamate. But Randwick Mayor Ted Seng said "it is time to face the facts, standing alone is not an option".

**Full report page 5**

## COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS

# A merger on cards after vote

## RANDWICK AN EARLY MOVER

Laura Aubusson

BY THE end of October Randwick Council could be no more, ending the 155-year-old history of one of Sydney's oldest councils.

The eastern suburbs council is leading the Fit for the Future reform push, as one of two Sydney councils who have put up their hands for a voluntary merger.

The vision for an enlarged eastern suburbs council, taking in Randwick, Waverley and Botany Bay, passed its final hurdle on Saturday with the majority of councils voting down a last-ditch, stand-alone attempt.

Randwick Mayor Ted Seng said "make no mistake, our hand has been forced".

"Burying our heads in the sand would have sealed our fate as a global city," he said.

Greens councillor Lindsay Shurey, who with Labor's Tony Bowen, Geoff

## NEW POSITIONS

Randwick Council and Auburn Council were the first two Sydney councils to vote for a voluntary merge as part of Fit For The Future on Tuesday.

Stevenson, Kathy Neilson and Liberal councillor Robert Belleli fought the merger bid to the end, said she wanted to go down fighting.

Labor councillor Tony Bowen labelled the decision "the blackest day in council's history".

Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally joined a public rally against council amalgamations outside the Randwick town hall prior to Saturday's meeting.

During the debate, he urged the council not to surrender to the Fit for the future process. "Why do this work for them. Let it be on them," Cr Keneally said.

# Keneally hits out at plan

**BOTANY** Bay Mayor Ben Keneally has declared his council will not be stamped into voluntary amalgamations, hitting out at the "fearmongering" surrounding the Fit for the Future reform push.

Responding to Randwick Council's "implicit" invitation to join a merged Randwick, Waverley and Botany Bay super power, Cr Keneally declared "we say to city of Randwick, thanks, but no thanks".

"The process, as it has been announced, is for voluntary mergers," Mr Keneally said. "We have no have interest in being stamped through fearmongering or

coerced into a position of merging on a voluntary basis. It's not something this community wants and it's not something that this council wants."

At Wednesday's council meeting the mayor and councillors George Glinatsis and Stan Kondilos picked apart Randwick's merger methodology, that predicted \$143 million in savings over 10 years, stating it was based "a simple assumption" that generalised the merged council's cost per resident.

"Nowhere do they say which services will be cut, nowhere do they make clear whether that assumption ... is justified," he said.

SOUTHERN COURIER, Tuesday, June 2, 2015 05

9 June 2015

**LABOR PUSHES FOR REFORMS TO BE POSTPONED**

The call has gone out for the Liberal State Government to delay its Fit for the Future council reform.

The bill was passed by Labor on Friday following the release of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal final methodology.

It was anticipated the methodology would give councils some parameters for the scale and capacity requirements, but Labor claims IPART has failed to provide any modelling justifying the key assumption that bigger is better.

Labor Randwick councillor Geoff Stevenson said the focus of local government reform must be the delivery of better services, but IPART's methodology was clearly designed to simply make bigger councils.

Councillors Stevenson and Greg Moore were two of the local government representatives at a seminar featuring Graham Sanson, the man who drew up the blueprint to merge 11 Sydney councils into about 14, at Campbelltown on Friday.

Mr Sanson accused the State Government of rushing the reform process and even predicted that after a lot of noise the merger push would fail, according to Cr Stevenson.

IPART chair Peter Small has put the onus on councils to demonstrate how their alternatives are as good or better if they did not go with the proposed merger changes outlined by the panel.




Some of the country's most influential people who are Woollahra residents say no to council mergers, write Botany Bay Mayor says Hands Off Botany Bay.

## Resistance from end to end

**BOTANY BAY, WOOLLAHRA TO FIGHT MERGERS**

LOCAL governments, on both ends of the proposed Sydney mega council, are squaring up to fight the Fit for the Future reform push.

Spurred by the failure of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's final methodology to nail down the scale and capacity of the Fit for the Future modelling, Botany Bay Mayor Ben Keneally was all smiles yesterday as he showed off his Hands Off Botany Bay bumper stickers.

The stickers, as well as T-shirts, are part of the around Botany Bay is unleashing against the latest merger push. Another council to declare war is Woollahra, which has hired one of Australia's top spin doctors to push its argument.

City PR's Tim Allerton, a former journalist, was a regular specialist on advertising and marketing TV show Green Planet. His clients include her Baron Justin Hemmes and Aussie Home Loans chief John Symond.

Mr Allerton said his role was to highlight the "very negative ramifications" of amalgamations.

"We are on a complete war footing now and you will see a pretty strong campaign over the next few months, which will involve outdoor signs, advertisements, posters and rallies," he said.

Mr Keneally has declared his council would not be stamped into voluntary amalgamation, hitting out at the "fearmongering" around Fit for the Future.

"The State Government has not said it will force amalgamations," he said.

"Fit for the Future is a voluntary process for those councils that are not sustainable. We will prove to the IPART that we can remain independent and are sustainable into the long term."

The Botany Bay anti-merger campaign moves to the Middlefield Fair Day at Easthills Reserve this Saturday, where Hands Off Botany Bay bumper stickers will be handed out.

# MEDIA RELEASES

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Mayor Ben Keneally



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Thursday, 31 January 2013

#### **Did Page Slip Up or Back Flip?**

Mayor of the City of Botany Bay, Ben Keneally is left confused by two recent letters from the Local Government Minister, Don Page regarding forced amalgamations.

Mayor Keneally recently wrote to the Premier and the Minister to request they confirm that the Coalition's pre-election promise of "No Forced Amalgamations" was still Coalition policy. The Premier referred his response to Mr Page.

"In an extraordinary turn of events I received two different replies from Minister Page dated less than two weeks apart," said Mr Keneally.

"Both letters had the same document identification number but their contents were widely different on the most important element."

"The first letter dated 18 January 2013 reaffirms the Government's commitment to their pre-election promise", said Mr Keneally. "However in the second letter no such affirmation exists. A whole paragraph has simply vanished."

"Mr Page, Mr O'Farrell and the Government as a whole, must now own up. Is it no forced amalgamations or do they intend to push amalgamations through without listening to the people?"

# Mayor Ben Keneally



Thursday, 28 February 2013

## **Botany Bay Mayor Slams Liberal's Plan for Eastern Suburbs Super Council**

Botany Bay Mayor, Ben Keneally, has angrily rejected Liberal Party plans for an Eastern Suburbs super Council that would take over Port Botany from the City of Botany Bay.

"I reject the findings of the study regarding the supposed benefits of amalgamation. The report is a simple desktop exercise driven by a few basic assumptions that aren't supported by reality", said Mayor Keneally.

"The plan to take over Port Botany is a blatant cash grab with no basis in good urban planning.

"The reality is that the overwhelming majority of the freight that comes through the Port travels on roads or rail through the City of Botany Bay. It makes no sense to have planning and regulation of the Port separated from the beginning of the logistics chain. The impacts of port operations are overwhelmingly felt by our residents.

"What this plan effectively says is, 'we'll take the cash from the port but you can keep the truck congestion, the road noise and the rail noise.' That's how they view this part of the world.

"The Liberals are happy enough to take rates from businesses in our area, but the people of Mascot and Botany are not welcome in their snobby Eastern Suburbs Super Council. They think we will lower the tone.

"We'll frankly, to rephrase Grouch Marx, I don't want to join a club that doesn't want me as a member. Our residents are very happy with this Council and want to stay independent."

# MEDIA RELEASE

6 June 2013

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## Mayors team up to reject Local Government ‘super Sydney’ proposal

Mayors of six council areas which the Independent Local Government Review Panel proposes to group together into a single “super Sydney council area” have put forward a joint submission calling for sensible, practical reform to local government in NSW, not simply mergers for the sake of mergers.

The six councils – Botany Bay, City of Sydney, Leichhardt, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra presented the submission to Professor Graham Sansom at a recent meeting where he admitted the Panel had not done any cost-benefit analysis of the proposed mergers.

“We share a strong conviction that local government best serves its communities when it is truly “local” in character,” the Mayors say in their submission.

“We believe that the proposed super Sydney Council would lose this “local” character and would not deliver any meaningful benefits to the communities we serve.

“We do not believe that the Panel has put forward a compelling, evidence-based case for change and we have no interest in the voluntary merger it proposes.

“We have significant concerns about the proposal, outlined in our joint submission along with alternatives to council amalgamations which include strengthening Regional Organisations of Council.

“Local Councils have a fundamental role to play in the leadership and governance for their area. Local government is not just an administrative outpost of the State Government designed to simply deliver services delegated to it.

“Local Government must have the authority and capacity to identify community needs and aspirations; set strategic priorities, and develop effective plans to implement them.

“Decision-making will become more remote from residents and ratepayers, opportunities for direct contact with political leaders and senior staff will be reduced; and the sense of common interest with fellow residents will be diminished.

“There is no guarantee that amalgamations will deliver benefits and our submission includes worrying information about the effects of the recent creation of Auckland as a super Council. As a result of Council mergers, Auckland could be facing a debt as large as \$12.6 billion by 2021-

2022, and the NZ Auditor General has warned that this debt could be increased further if some of the assumptions the Council has made in its long term plan are incorrect.

“Amalgamations into large local government areas of up to 800,000 residents will inevitably lead to a reduced sense of local control. The Panel’s proposal for Local Boards within enlarged councils presents an inevitable dilemma.

“If Boards have little power or responsibility and no resources to take action on behalf of their communities - they will be little more than lip service local representation.

“But giving Local Boards real authority and resources would create a fourth tier of government and an additional layer of bureaucracy.

“We are united in our view that any major reform of local government structures and boundaries should be done democratically.

“There must be a clear process for allowing residents and ratepayers to be heard. These views must be considered and taken into account. The Panel’s recommendations include no provision for this.

“We are committed to ensuring our local communities are heard before the proposal for a “super Sydney” council progresses any further,” the Mayors say in their joint submission.

# Mayor Ben Keneally



Monday 8 September 2014

## **MAYOR OF BOTANY BAY CONDEMNS BAIRD GOVERNMENT'S DODGY FIGURES**

Mayor of Botany Bay, Ben Keneally, has condemned the State Government's use of dodgy figures to promote their council amalgamation agenda.

The NSW Government has today sought to pave the way for Council amalgamations across Sydney using an outdated and inaccurate report on Councils' finances.

"The Government is using historical data that it knows is incorrect in order to build a case for forced Council amalgamations.

"The claim that the City of Botany Bay's finances are 'weak' could not be further from the truth. A recent 2014 assessment by TCorp upgraded the City of Botany Bay to "moderate", with capacity to meet our financial commitments in the long term.

"The City of Botany Bay remains debt free, with more than \$50 million in investments. Furthermore, our City has kept rates low and has never applied for a rate increase above the rate pegging amount.

"Finally the City of Botany Bay's independent auditor has confirmed that Council's financial position remains 'sound'," Mr Keneally said.

"As an example, the City of Botany Bay cash expense ratio is considered below benchmark yet by TCorp's own admission, as at June 2013, Council held substantial long term investments. If these term deposits were included in this ratio, we would be well above the benchmark for our entire 10 year financial plan.



# Mayor Ben Keneally



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Wednesday, 10 September 2014

## **Botany Bay Mayor calls Extraordinary Council Meeting**

Botany Bay Mayor, Ben Keneally, has called an Extraordinary Council Meeting for 8:00 pm tonight. The Extraordinary Meeting will consider today's response by the State Government to the Independent Review Panel's Report into Local Government Reform.

The independent Review Panel recommended the City of Botany Bay merge with the City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

"The City of Botany Bay welcomes the Government's 'Fit for the Future' package however it fails to provide assurances to communities that there will be no forced amalgamations" said Mr Keneally.

"The residents of Botany Bay need to know that the State Government will not push ahead with forced amalgamations and compromise local democracy.

"We have asked our residents if they want to amalgamate or remain independent. Overwhelmingly almost 97% of respondents want to remain independent", said Mr Keneally.

Mr Keneally said "Council is looking forward to demonstrating to the State Government that the City of Botany Bay can meet each of the criteria and the benchmarks set by the State Government".

"I am confident that Council can prove to the State there is no need to amalgamate Botany Bay with any other Council" said Mr Keneally.

# Mayor Ben Keneally



Friday, 10 October 2014

## **"Premier Must Come Clean on Plans for Amalgamation"**

The Mayor of the City of Botany Bay, Mr Ben Keneally, has called on Premier Mike Baird to come clean on the issue of forced amalgamations.

After the Government announced its 'Fit for the Future' package Mr Keneally wrote to the Premier seeking an assurance that the government maintained its policy position against forced council amalgamations. The Premier's reply failed to answer the question, simply cutting and pasting his press release as a response.

"It is not good enough that the Premier won't answer a straightforward question", said Mr Keneally.

"I am concerned that the Premier's avoidance of the question signals his intention to simply ram through amalgamations after the State Election. The voters of NSW deserve a clear statement of his intentions."

"I will be working with Mayors from across Sydney and across the political spectrum to demand that the Premier is honest with the people of NSW and clearly states his intentions."

"The residents of Botany Bay need to know that the State Government will not push ahead with forced amalgamations and compromise our local democracy.

"Overwhelmingly our residents want to remain independent", said Mr Keneally. "It is ludicrous to believe that our residents will get the same service with just one council serving all of Botany Bay, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra and Sydney"

"Our Council is financially viable, highly efficient and well run, yet small enough to be caring and really understand local concerns".

"Botany Bay people do not want to be governed from George Street', Mr Keneally said.

"I am confident that the City of Botany Bay can prove with objective data that there is no need to amalgamate Botany Bay with any other council. The State Government need to answer the simple question – will they or won't they force amalgamations", said Mr Keneally.

# Mayor Ben Keneally



Thursday 29 January 2015

## END THE DOUBLESPEAK – IT’S TIME FOR HONESTY ABOUT AMALGAMATION

The Mayor of Botany Bay, Ben Keneally, today condemned the Baird Government’s *Fit for the Future* strategy as a smoke screen for compulsory amalgamation.

“*Fit for the Future* gives each Council two options, they can tell the Government which model of amalgamation it prefers; or, prove to the Government it can survive without amalgamation.

“At no point has the Premier or the Minister for Local Government been required to make, let alone prove, their case for widespread amalgamation.”

Mayor Keneally said that the Government continues to refuse to even define key terms including “scale and capacity”.

“The Minister for Local Government says Councils must prove they have ‘scale and capacity’ yet nobody seems to be able to explain what this means.

“In 2013 the City of Botany Bay undertook a poll of local residents on the issue of amalgamation which found that 97 per cent of respondents opposed amalgamation and supported Botany Bay remaining independent” Mr Keneally said.

“If Councils are to further consult with our residents regarding amalgamation, the Baird Government must first be honest about its intentions.

“There is no point wasting money on polls or referenda if the Government intends to ignore the outcome.

“If the Government intends to force amalgamation on Councils without popular support, then it should have the decency to admit that to the people.

“The Government should outline its policy and seek a formal mandate at the upcoming election in March.

“I will continue to fight to make sure that local democracy is preserved and that the City of Botany Bay remains independent.”

# CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING AMALGAMATIONS PROCESS

MY-F14/301



 **COPY**

CITY OF BOTANY BAY | BEN KENEALLY MAYOR

11 September 2014

The Hon Paul Toole MP  
Minister for Local Government  
52 Martin Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

I write in relation to the Government's response to the Independent Review Panel's report into local government reform released yesterday.

As you are no doubt aware, the 'Fit for the Future' package is silent on the issue of forced amalgamations. I understand the Government is keen to see 'voluntary mergers' but if a Council is in a sustainable financial position and has the support of its residents to remain independent, what position will the Government take?

I understand the Government's position at the last election was that there would be no forced amalgamations of Local Government Areas. Would you please advise as a matter of urgency whether your Government remains committed to this pre-election promise and whether you will take this promise to the next election as well?

It is critical to our residents that we receive a clear and prompt statement of the State Government's position in this matter.

Yours faithfully

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Ben Keneally.

**BEN KENEALLY**  
**MAYOR**



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Premier of New South Wales  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Minister for Western Sydney

3 October 2014

Councillor Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
City of Botany Bay  
PO Box 331  
MASCOT NSW 1460

**RECEIVED**  
- 9 OCT 2014  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE**

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the Government's announcement of funding support for Councils.

As you are aware the NSW Government recently announced up to \$1 billion in funding to support councils to become Fit for the Future and to strengthen communities across NSW.

The Fit for the Future reform package responds to the final recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel and the Local Government Acts Taskforce and reflects the priorities identified by the sector during the past three years of consultation.

The NSW Government has committed a funding and support package to assist councils to make the changes needed to become Fit for the Future. These include:

- \$258 million to assist councils who decide to merge and make the changes needed to provide better services to our communities;
- \$13 million to support Councillors that lead the transition to a new council;
- \$5.3 million for new regional Joint Organisations;
- \$4 million innovation fund to assist small rural councils develop innovative ways of working;
- access to experts to develop a plan and implement change;
- the development of a new streamlined Local Government Act that aims to reduce red tape and regulation and places Integrated Planning and Reporting at the heart of council operations; and
- reviews of the regulatory burden on local government and the rating system.

Councils that become Fit for the Future will have access to a range of further initiatives supporting them to provide improved services and infrastructure to their communities, including:

- access to a State borrowing facility to fund local infrastructure, with potential savings to NSW councils of up to \$600 million in interest payments;
- more flexibility with procurement and simplified reporting;
- access to a streamlined IPART process for setting rates; and
- eligibility for additional planning powers.

Every Council in NSW is being asked to submit a proposal to the NSW Government by **30 June 2015**, outlining their plans to become Fit for the Future. The proposals will be assessed by an independent expert panel. Councils will need to demonstrate how they will become and remain sustainable, provide effective and efficient services, and develop the scale and capacity to partner with the State to meet the needs of their communities into the future.

The NSW Government will provide guidance and support to councils to prepare their proposal. Further details about the nature of this support are available from the Office of Local Government.

More information, and the detailed response to each of the Panel and Taskforce recommendations, is available at: [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au).



**The Hon Paul Toole MP**  
Minister for Local Government

**RECEIVED**

- 5 DEC 2014

**MAYOR'S OFFICE**

Ref:  
MIN: 2014-504145  
Doc ID: A395568



Clr Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
The Council of the City of Botany Bay  
PO Box 331  
MASCOT NSW 1460

01 DEC 2014

Dear Clr Keneally

Thank you for your letter of 11 September 2014 about local government reform and the issue of amalgamations.

The Government has made its position clear in the Fit for the Future package – its focus is on supporting local councils to voluntarily make the changes they need to improve their sustainability and deliver the services their communities need. That is why the NSW Government is investing a record amount to support councils in this endeavour.

The Fit for the Future reform package will help create smarter, modern local councils that can work together with the State to deliver the housing, jobs and transport people need. In metropolitan areas this includes changes to accommodate the forecasted population growth of two million Sydney residents in the next twenty years.

The Independent Local Government Review Panel made a number of recommendations about the scale of existing councils. These recommendations should serve as your starting point for your plans to become Fit for the Future. Even if your council is presently financially sustainable, the issue of scale and capacity will need to be considered by your council as part of your proposal.

I note that you attended a briefing on Fit for the Future in Sydney on 17 September 2014. I trust that the information provided at this event, and in the Fit for the Future templates and guidance released recently, has clarified the NSW Government's position on local government reform. Further details of the reform package may be found at [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**Paul Toole MP**  
**Minister**

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CITY OF BOTANY BAY | BEN KENEALLY MAYOR

Ref: MY-F14/301  
Toole, Paul - GA

10 December 2014

The Honourable Paul Toole MP  
Minister for Local Government  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001  
[office@toole.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@toole.minister.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Minister

I refer to your letter received by my office on 5 December 2014. I note that this letter was intended as a response to my letter of 11 September 2014 regarding ongoing concerns about the issue of Council amalgamations.

While I note your response, with respect, your correspondence does not answer the questions posed. As such, I have repeated these questions in full in this letter. Firstly, while I understand that the Government is keen to see 'voluntary mergers' but if a Council is in a sustainable financial position and has the support of its residents to remain independent, what position will the government take? Secondly, would you please advise as a matter of urgency whether your Government remains committed to the pre-election promise of no forced amalgamations and whether you will take this promise to the next election as well?

Minister, I put to you that contrary to your claim, the Government has not 'made its position clear' on the issue of Council mergers. While it is apparent that your agenda includes a focus on mergers, there remains deep concern within my community and within the Local Government sector as to whether your Government will break its prior commitment of 'no forced amalgamations'.



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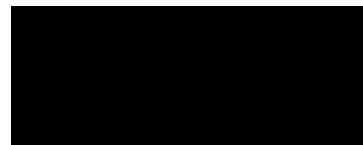
In relation to your letter of 1 December 2014, I request clarification on the definition of "scale and capacity" which you state will need to be considered by Council as part of the proposed *Fit for the Future* Assessment process. I note that the website [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au) refers readers to the original recommendations of *Revitalising Local Government* "for more information". Yet I can find no reference to the issues of "scale and capacity" within the report's recommendations. I note that on page 71 of *Revitalising Local Government* the report states:

*"... increased scale and capacity...will enable councils to remain sustainable, provide adequate services, and be valued partners in the system of government."*

However, there is no definition provided within the report or on the website as to what exactly "scale and capacity" means. Minister, I find it very peculiar that it is not adequately defined given your Government considers this to be a core concept of your proposed review process.

Please contact me if I can be of any further assistance to you.

Yours faithfully



**BEN KENEALLY**  
**MAYOR**





CITY OF BOTANY BAY | BEN KENEALLY MAYOR

Ref: MY-F15/175  
Toole, Paul - GA

18 February 2015

The Honourable Paul Toole MP  
Minister for Local Government  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Minister

I refer to my letter of 11 December 2014 regarding Council amalgamations.

I note that more than two months later my correspondence on this important matter remains unanswered. I have enclosed another copy of my letter for your consideration. In particular I note my outstanding request that you state a position on whether the Government's prior commitment of 'no forced amalgamations' remains State Government policy. I note that in *Southern Courier* on 10 February 2015 in the article *Oppositions parties draw a firm line on the local government merger agenda* the Liberal Member for Coogee said *The Baird Government maintains the policy of no forced amalgamations.*

I kindly request that you either confirm or deny your colleague's public statements in writing by return correspondence.

Yours faithfully



**BEN KENEALLY**  
**MAYOR**



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Office of  
Local Government

5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541  
Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541

Our Reference: A416193  
Your Reference:  
Contact: Innovation  
Phone: 02 4428 4100

RECEIVED  
27 MAR 2015  
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Clr Ben Keneally  
Mayor  
The Council of the City of Botany Bay  
PO Box 331  
MASCOT NSW 1460

20 MAR 2015

Dear Clr Keneally

Thank you for your letter of 25 February 2015 to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole MP, in response to your initial letter of 10 December 2015 concerning local government reform in NSW.

As the Government has moved into the caretaker period ahead of the State election on 28 March 2015, convention dictates that Ministerial correspondence be attended to by the relevant agency.

As you would be aware, the NSW Government released Templates 1 (Merger Proposal) and 2 (Improvement Proposal) with associated guidance to councils on 28 November 2014 (available from [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)). The Government is asking all metropolitan councils in NSW to submit one of these proposals by 30 June 2015. I refer you to the guidance material provided with each template for an overview on how to address scale and capacity and the requirements for completing either proposal.

It is not appropriate for the Office of Local Government to respond to your question on the election policy commitments of the Baird Government.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to the Minister.

Yours sincerely

  
Steve Orr  
Acting Chief Executive  
Office of Local Government





CITY OF BOTANY BAY | BEN KENEALLY MAYOR

Ref: MY-F15/483  
Toole, Paul - GA

8 April 2015

The Honourable Paul Toole MP  
Minister for Local Government  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Minister

I refer to the letter received on your behalf from Mr Steve Orr Acting Chief Executive, Office of Local Government. I enclose for your reference copies of our prior correspondence including my letters dated 11 September 2014, 10 December 2014, 18 February 2015 and 11 March 2015. Minister, more than six months and four letters later I have yet to receive an answer to my simple question. Once more I ask, will the government seek to force Council mergers or will it stick to its prior commitment of 'no forced amalgamations'?

I find it deeply troubling that neither you nor the Premier sought to resolve this matter prior to the election. The Baird Government had ample opportunity to present a clear plan for the future of the local government sector. If the government truly believed that widespread amalgamation was in the interest of the sector and residents throughout NSW why did they not seek a mandate for any such proposals? Instead, despite the hundreds of pages of policy documents published by the NSW Liberal Party and NSW National Party, there was no local government policy. As such, the Baird Government cannot claim a mandate to make widespread changes to the local government sector prior to the March 2019 election.

In response to my letter of 25 February 2015 Mr Orr advised that because he was writing on 20 March 2015, during the caretaker period of government, the Minister was not able to respond to my correspondence. Minister, this argument is unacceptable in light of the fact I had sent three prior letters in September, December and February without receiving a substantive answer. Indeed this conduct appears to me a deliberate attempt to once again avoid addressing the issue of amalgamations in NSW.



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Now that the election is over and you have been reappointed Minister for Local Government, will you end the uncertainty and provide an answer on this simple question: will the NSW Government stick to its prior commitment of 'no forced amalgamations'?

Yours faithfully



**BEN KENEALLY**  
**MAYOR**

