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Submission: The Council of Ultimo/Pymont Associations (CUPA) enables the voluntary associations of the peninsula to coordinate their work. CUPA has built lines of communication with councillors, officers and departments of the City of Sydney, ensuring cooperation in the achievement of shared goals. This has been a slow process, which would have to begin from scratch if a larger and more remote body were to replace the City of Sydney. We have had no such success in identifying – much less partnering - State-level bodies. In our experience local government works best when it is genuinely local. Far from improving efficiency and financial benefits, council amalgamations have proved in the past to cost a large amount of money, and take a long time for new organisational structures to be established. The amalgamation of South Sydney Council with the City of Sydney was a clear example of this financial cost and bureaucratic burden. Services and communication would be disrupted for a long time as a consequence of this proposed amalgamation, and we doubt that understanding and cooperation would ever fully recover.