



17 July 2015.

Dr. Peter Boxall AO.
Chairman,
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal,
PO Box K35
Haymarket Post Shop
SYDNEY. NSW. 1240

Dear Dr. Boxall,

RE Pittwater Councils Fit for the future Submission.

The Palm Beach and Whale Beach Association Inc. (PBWBA) write in support of Pittwater Councils Fit for the Future submission to the tribunal.

The PBWBA has in excess of 400 paid up members. It is the oldest community organisation on the Northern beaches having been established in 1918. We were at the forefront of Pittwater's separation from Warringah 23 years ago and continue to advocate that Pittwater remain as it is within its present boundaries.

The reasons that brought about the birth of Pittwater 23 years ago are still relevant today.

- The community have been extensively surveyed and the results show that 89% want to stay as we are.
- The community want "local" to remain in their council. They want to have a say in Planning and services. They want an independent Council.
- Independent consultants have said that Pittwater meets the requirements of Fit For The Future.(FFTF)
- The Government has not put forward any business case for amalgamation nor have they advanced any credible evidence of the likely cost of amalgamation. The NSW public are in the dark on these important issues.
- Bigger is not better. In fact there is evidence that the five biggest councils in NSW are amongst the worst performers when measured against Tcorps core measure of financial sustainability, "operating performance ratio" *
- Two independent reports by eminent local government specialist Prof Brian Dollery found a merger of three Northern Beaches Councils would not improve financial sustainability**

Most importantly the job of Councils is to focus on what the community needs and wants, these are local issues and can only be serviced efficiently by local councils. FFTF focuses on financial issues and implies that councils are an arm of the State Government which they aren't. The whole processes has been extremely divisive, secretive and importantly it has disenfranchised the community. Little weight is given to community interests

In conclusion the PBWBA strongly asserts the independence of Pittwater to stay as it is and supports Pittwater Councils submission.

Yours Faithfully
For the Palm Beach and Whale Beach Association Inc.

Storm Jacklin

*<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/five-largest-councils-found-to-be-bottom-of-the-class-on-key-ratio-20150706-gi6102.html#ixzz3g7RPI5FG>

**<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/no-evidence-that-local-government-amalgamation-will-improve-performance-20150504-1mzezy.html>