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The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

By Online Form

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Draft Terms of Reference for NSW Council Financial Model Review

Kempsey Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to IPART regarding the draft Terms of Reference for the review of the financial model of NSW Councils.

In addition to the matters already specified, it is our considered opinion that IPART should also consider:

- Whether the current level of financial reporting and disclosures, and the breadth and depth of audits necessary, considering the level of expenditure this entails, provides value for money to the community.
- Whether the levying of property rates as a significant component of a council's general fund income is equitable.
- How the availability, or lack thereof, of state government funding for large infrastructure projects, particularly those replacing ageing infrastructure, impacts a council's financial sustainability.
- The impact on councils of statutory fees and charges not increasing at the same rate as a council's cost base and not reflecting the true cost of providing such services.
- Whether the current pension rebate model is fair and equitable and how it impacts council's financial sustainability.
- Whether current rates exemptions are fair and equitable and how they impact council's financial sustainability.
- Whether the current NSW rate peg is a necessary control given the long-term financial planning requirements of the integrated planning and reporting framework, and the accountability of councillors to residents and ratepayers through local government elections.

Once again, the Council thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Terms of Reference.

Yours faithfully



Daniel Thoroughgood
Acting Director Corporate and Commercial