

18 July 2019

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
PO Box K35  
Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240  
By email: [ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Tribunal Members

### **Response to IPART Review: Local Government Election Costs**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on your draft report *Review of local government election costs June 2019*.

IPART is well positioned to provide independent feedback to the NSW Government regarding the cost of local government elections, to ensure that all councils across the state have equal opportunity to provide quality election services, regardless of a council's size or location.

We also welcome IPART's capacity for price regulation with regard to local government elections, which will assist in the development of competition over the next few years which should also promote efficiency gains over time.

Kiama Municipal Council has conducted its last three elections, 2008, 2012 and 2016 through the services of the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) and have largely been satisfied with the provision of services. Both elections were completed without any major issues and were declared within a reasonable timeframe.

Council also agrees with the impactor pays philosophy, however is also mindful of the substantial increase in cost being proposed under this methodology. Addressing issues such as a reduction in the provision of pre-polling opportunities and access to electronic polling services needs to be further investigated in an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiencies.

The proposed cost increase of 49% for the NSWEC to facilitate the 2020 local government election for Kiama Council is significant. If the proposed fee increases are adopted, it would be helpful if this could be phased in over the next two local government elections. If similar increase in costs was to continue to future elections, then Council would be forced to consider other private providers for the delivery of local government election services within the Kiama LGA.

Yours faithfully



**Kerry McMurray**  
General Manager