

**Submission
No 1**

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON PROTECTING LOCAL WATER UTILITIES
FROM PRIVATISATION**

Organisation: Narrabri Shire Council

Date Received: 24 October 2023

Our Reference: 2107239 DLA :DLA
Your Reference: Joint Select
Committee on
Protecting Local
Water Utilities from
Privatisation
Contact Name: Donna Ausling

Joint Select Committee on Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation

Attention: Mr Patrick Glynn
Committee Manager Parliament of NSW
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Submission Via Portal: waterutilities@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Tuesday, 24 October 2023

Re: Staff Submission –Joint Select Committee on Preventing Water Utilities from Privatisation

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the above inquiry.

Narrabri Shire Council strongly supports arrangements that maintain Local Government responsibility for the operation and management of water supply and sewerage services and Local Government ownership of water supply and sewerage infrastructure. Maintaining Local Government responsibility and ownership will ensure locally appropriate water supply and sewerage provision in the context of sustainable whole-of-community outcomes in addition to safeguarding financial sustainability.

To ensure that such assets are protected into the future, a commensurate regulatory reform program is considered appropriate. The recent reforms to protect the Hunter Water Corporation and Sydney Water Corporation from future privatisation are acknowledged and provide a potential legislative 'road map' to ensure that such assets are community-owned and led in perpetuity. Corresponding statutory amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Water Management Act 2000* could also give further weight to the attainment of such an objective.

The partnership between the local government and state government departments are crucial for the community wellbeing. Without such strategic partnerships it would leave communities without direction in Water and Sewer Infrastructure Programs, Aboriginal Communities Water Program, Water Efficiency Programs, Reconnecting River Country Program and Leak Detection and Water Loss Management.



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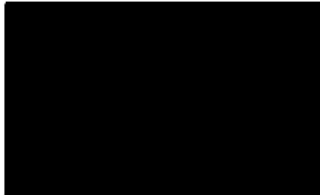


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The sustainability of a privatised local water utility (LWU) is focused on a fiscal outlook before environment and health deliverables. The regulation of this industry that is bound by strict statutory requirements for both environmental and health outcomes would find private entities rationalising their performance on a profit base rather than a service base to the community like local government does. A privatised LWU would be required to increase rate tariffs and availability costs to meet their regulatory requirements and profit margins. The development and forging of stakeholder relationships take incredible knowledge skill and commitment, which could never be realistically held accountable of a private entity.

Should you require any additional information or clarification in this regard you are invited to contact Council's Director Planning and Sustainability, Ms Donna Ausling at (02) 6799 6866 or by emailing council@narrabri.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully,



Rob Williams
General Manager