



## **Inquiry into local government in New South Wales**

### **Terms of Reference**

1. That General Purpose Standing Committee No. 6 inquire into and report on local government in New South Wales and in particular:
  - (a) the New South Wales Government's 'Fit for the Future' reform agenda,
  - (b) the financial sustainability of the local government sector in New South Wales, including the measures used to benchmark local government as against the measures used to benchmark State and Federal Government in Australia,
  - (c) the performance criteria and associated benchmark values used to assess local authorities in New South Wales,
  - (d) the scale of local councils in New South Wales,
  - (e) the role of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in reviewing the future of local government in New South Wales, assisted by a South Australian commercial consultant,
  - (f) the appropriateness of the deadline for 'Fit for the Future' proposals,
  - (g) costs and benefits of amalgamations for local residents and businesses,
  - (h) evidence of the impact of forced mergers on council rates drawing from the recent Queensland experience and other forced amalgamation episodes,
  - (i) evidence of the impact of forced mergers on local infrastructure investment and maintenance,
  - (j) evidence of the impact of forced mergers on municipal employment, including aggregate redundancy costs,
  - (k) the known and or likely costs and benefits of amalgamations for local communities,
  - (l) the role of co-operative models for local government including the 'Fit for the Futures' own Joint Organisations, Strategic Alliances, Regional Organisations of Councils, and other shared service models, such as the Common Service Model,
  - (m) how forced amalgamation will affect the specific needs of regional and rural councils and communities, especially in terms of its impact on local economies,



- (n) protecting and delivering democratic structures for local government that ensure it remains close to the people it serves,
  - (o) the impact of the 'Fit for the Future' benchmarks and the subsequent IPART performance criteria on councils' current and future rate increases or levels, and
  - (p) any other related matter.
2. That with the agreement of the committee participating members' travel costs be covered by the committee.
  3. That the committee report by Monday 17 August 2015, unless the committee resolves to table at a later date.

*Resolution passed 27 May 2015, Minutes No. 7, item 18 page 131 - 132.*

#### **Committee membership**

<b>The Hon Paul Green MLC</b>	Christian Democratic Party	<i>Chair</i>
<b>The Hon Lou Amato MLC</b>	Liberal Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
<b>The Hon Catherine Cusack MLC</b>	Liberal Party	
<b>The Hon Ben Franklin MLC</b>	The Nationals	
<b>The Hon Peter Primrose MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	
<b>Mr David Shoebridge MLC</b>	The Greens	
<b>The Hon Ernest Wong MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	

\*Mr Peter Primrose has replaced Mr Daniel Mookhey as a member of the committee for the duration of the inquiry.

Mr Ben Franklin has replaced Mr Scott Farlow as a member of the committee for the duration of the inquiry.



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