



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 6

MEDIA RELEASE

Committee finds local government reforms ‘unfit’

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 October 2015

The parliamentary committee inquiring into local government in New South Wales tabled its final report today. The inquiry focused on the NSW Government’s Fit for the Future reform program for local government.

The report makes 17 recommendations and nine findings. The Chair of the committee, the Hon Paul Green MLC, said ‘We found that many of the Fit for the Future measures are unreliable and we therefore called on the NSW Government to withdraw its statements that 71 per cent of Sydney councils and 56 per cent of regional councils are ‘unfit’ for the future. We also recommended that the Government commit to a policy of no forced amalgamations other than in exceptional circumstances.’

Mr Green continued, ‘This committee has listened to councils and other stakeholders around the state and we were concerned that what began as a consultative approach to reform, driven by both the State Government and the sector itself, has descended into a rushed and flawed process, which has focused too much on council amalgamations.’

‘Reforming local government is nothing new, but it is vital that we get the right reforms at the right time and in the right order, if we want to get this sector back on track. We’ve seen how committed councils are to their communities and we know that they are keen to keep improving. The Government needs to build a bridge and get back to working with the sector, so that councils across this state can keep on building the bridges we need, maintaining the roads we use and providing all of the other services that our councils deliver.’

‘I call on the NSW Government to take heed of our report and reconsider its plans for the future of local government before any steps are taken in relation to council amalgamations,’ concluded Mr Green.

The committee’s report, along with other information about the inquiry, is available on the committee’s website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/localgovernment

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For further information please contact Committee Chair, Hon Paul Green MLC, on 02 9230 3484