

**Submission
No 171**

INQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Ms Margery Whitehead

Date received: 13/07/2015

1st July 2015

The Director,
General Purpose Standing Committee No 6.
Parliament House
Macquarie St.,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

RE. Inquiry into Local Government in NSW
and in particular the NSW government's
Fit for the Future reform agenda.

I am a resident and a ratepayer of the
Randwick City Council area and chair of the
Kensington, West Kingsford Precinct
Committee. (KWKP)

I am opposed to a merger of Randwick
City Council with any other council.

KWKP voted unanimously in favour of a
stand alone Randwick Council. This is the
community's preference as expressed at its
meeting in January 2015 and in its
resolution in May 2015.

Opposition to any merger was expressed in
debate Councilor Park's minutes of 26 May 2015.

- Council is financially strong and debt free
- Council delivers for the community and is a capable partner of federal and state agencies
- The Randwick community has indicated they prefer to stand alone rather than merge with other councils.

In the minute this is followed by statements that contradict this position. The vote was a bare 8/5 for. This suggests that Randwick City Councillors are confused and that the process causes confusion, and even that the councillors, in truth, are opposed to any merger. It also suggests that amalgamation is being forced on Randwick City Council.

The community survey prepared by a select group (second selection) of councillors can be seen by any person who can read, to be open to interpretation in favour of amalgamation. Even so the vote was 49% against, 32% for amalgamation with 19% unsure. Urged to take a position for amalgamation in the final question those unsure were then subbed into the supportive 32% making it 51%.

Is this methodology supported by our parliament? Is this the means used to secure the outcome it seeks? If so, it is clearly dishonest.

Democracy, for its very existence requires honest dealing, transparency, integrity, an educated electorate. To win power and sustain its success, it must be willing to listen to and accommodate the reasonable wishes of its constituents.

Council amalgamations would weaken our democracy making it easier for the government to ignore the electorate.

Handwick City Council area is a large and complex area. It needs the focus of its own council which should be retained as a stand alone council.

Yours faithfully,