

## **INQUIRY INTO ABILITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

**Organisation:** Hornsby Shire Council

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From Hornsby's perspective the main focus areas requiring thought and attention are

- Funding for natural disasters should be more clearly defined especially when State Governments put in place arrangements after the natural event, the extent of funding, the time lags place extraordinary burdens on local government
- Caps of development contributions means there is a significant gap in the cost of delivering community infrastructure. no recognition of cost increases in 20 years means new communities are not seeing the infrastructure they deserve with all rate payers feeling extra burden financially and in having to stretch existing facilities beyond what is possible.
- Inability to fund the gap on development contributions to the total cost of new and necessary infrastructure.
- The sustainability of what we are being directed to fund in waste management given the edict from the EPA around FO or FOGO (yet we pay tipping fees and a fund at State level is established

remediation of old landfill sites built to long ago standards is having a significant impact on resources

- SRV's become an automatic response to the challenges local govt face but are cumbersome, inefficient, alarmist and expensive.

changing expectations and cost shifting

imbalance between State govt able to increase costs consistently but local govt heavily constrained in its ability to gain revenue.

Water Quality/quantity infrastructure Water quality and quantity infrastructure is hugely important to protecting waterways for recreational use, economic benefit and ecological benefit. However, it requires a lot of initiatives. Something that is difficult to fund under the current framework.

The existing Stormwater Service charge is fraught with problems and requires urgent reform. Refer to the attached White paper from Stormwater NSW outlining the issues with it. Refer to page 9. Council's financial capacity to protect the Blue Grid under current funding models falls well short of the required amount.

Whilst Hornsby Council is in a unique position with the Catchment Remediation Rate. It will reach a limit of being able to build initiatives as well. At which point our capacity to improve our water quality will end.

A funding model that considers the weight of new initiatives required to protect the Blue grid would improve Council's capacity to deliver services for the public.