

TITLE: **Mayoral Minute: Mosman Council Submission - Merger Proposal - Mosman, Manly and (part) Warringah (MM)**

MAYOR: **Councillor Peter Abelson**

MOSPLAN REF: **LE.02**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayor and General Manager be delegated authority to finalise Mosman Council's submission on the Merger Proposal for Mosman, Manly and part of Warringah having regard to Council's stated opposition to the proposal, the matters raised in this Mayoral Minute, and to any other matters considered relevant to the submission.

MAYORAL MINUTE

The NSW Government's Merger Proposal for Mosman, Manly and part of Warringah has now been on exhibition for more than a month. Mosman Council has sought to inform the local community about the proposal and about opportunities to provide comment on the proposal to the Government's Delegate.

As an organisation critically interested in the Merger Proposal, Mosman Council will be making its own submission on the proposal prior to the Government's final deadline on 28 February 2016. In accordance with Council's determination of 1 February 2016, this Council has resolved to formally oppose the Merger Proposal and its submission will address some of the key concerns which Council has already communicated to the local community, including:

- The proposal is a completely different concept to anything previously proposed by the NSW Government, its agencies or independent panels
- The merger proposal does not acknowledge that the Mosman community has consistently voiced its opposition to any amalgamation, through council polls and other independent surveys
- The merger proposal fails to provide any real sense of impacts on longer term service levels or rates payable in Mosman under a merged council
- With significantly reduced representation by locally-elected members, Mosman residents and ratepayers will have less control over future service, asset and expenditure decisions affecting Mosman Council
- Mosman Council has a strong financial outlook. The merger proposal does not accurately depict Mosman Council's financial position or its capacity to renew and maintain local infrastructure
- The merger proposal lacks sufficient detail to make informed decisions

Further, the submission will address each of the factors listed in section 263(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993* as they pertain to Mosman. These factors are:

- the financial advantages or disadvantages of the proposal to the residents and ratepayers of the areas concerned
 - the community of interest and geographic cohesion in the existing areas and in any proposed new area
 - the existing historical and traditional values in the existing areas and the impact of change on them
 - the attitude of the residents and ratepayers of the areas concerned
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- the requirements of the area concerned in relation to elected representation for residents and ratepayers at the local level, the desirable and appropriate relationship between elected representatives and ratepayers and residents and such other matters as considered relevant in relation to the past and future patterns of elected representation for that area
- the impact of the proposal on the ability of the council to provide adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities
- the impact of the proposal on the employment of the staff by the council
- the impact of the proposal on any rural communities in the resulting area
- the desirability (or otherwise) of dividing the resulting area or areas into wards
- the need to ensure that the opinions of each of the diverse communities of the resulting area or areas are effectively represented
- any other factors relevant to the provision of efficient and effective local government in the existing and proposed new areas

In addressing each of the above factors, Council's submission will have due regard for the views of the Mosman community, as expressed in previous consultations and in more recent forums such as the Public Inquiry held on 2 February. In order to complete Council's submission as expeditiously as possible, I propose that authority be delegated to the General Manager and myself to finalise Council's submission and to lodge this submission with the NSW Government by the due date.

