



**Paul Toole**  
Minister for Local Government

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday, 6 January 2016

### **COUNCIL MERGER PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD FOR EXAMINATION**

Minister for Local Government Paul Toole today referred the NSW Government's 35 council merger proposals to the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government (OLG) for examination and report under the Local Government Act.

"Independent analysis by KPMG of the proposed mergers shows significant financial benefits for NSW of up to \$2 billion that can be reinvested in improved infrastructure, better services or keeping rates stable," Mr Toole said.

"The proposed mergers have been informed by four years of consultation with NSW councils, independent assessment, council merger preferences, and feedback from communities and stakeholders. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach and we have recognised that each community area in NSW is unique."

The Chief Executive of OLG will assign the function of examining and reporting on each merger proposal to Delegates.

Delegates will prepare reports after allowing the community to have its say by conducting a public inquiry (public meetings) and calling for written submissions. The reports prepared by the delegates will consider the factors set out in the legislation, which include financial considerations, communities of interest, elected representation, employment of staff, service and facilities, and the attitude of residents and ratepayers.

"The delegates will provide a report on the proposals against the factors in the Act and will take into account written submissions and comments raised in public meetings. I would encourage those wishing to contribute to provide a written submission on the website or attend a public meeting," Mr Toole said.

Delegates' reports will go to the Minister, as well as the independent Local Government Boundaries Commission, which will comment on each report. The Minister will consider the Delegates' reports and the comments of the Boundaries Commission before determining the outcome of merger proposals.

Details on the proposals, delegates and the consultation process can be found at [www.councilboundaryreview.nsw.gov.au](http://www.councilboundaryreview.nsw.gov.au)

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