XX Month 2024

The Hon. Chris Minns MP
Premier

kogarah@parliament.nsw.gov.au

The Hon. Stephen Kamper MP

Minister for Lands and Property

office@kamper.nsw.gov.au

Dear Premier and Minister

**New NSW Government levy on burials and cremations**

I write to you on behalf of <Council name> to ask that you urgently reverse your government’s decision to impose a new tax on burials, cremations and ash interments.

Councils have received confirmation from your government that from 1 July 2024 a new tax will be levied on all cemetery operators carrying out more than 50 burials a year. For smaller operators the levy will commence from 1 July 2025. The tax will be set at $156 per burial, $63 per ash interment, and $41 per cremation.

Councils operate in an extremely tight fiscal environments and this new levy cannot be absorbed by current council budgets. It will inevitably need to be passed on to community members. Imposing further costs on grieving families to pay for a regulator during a cost-of-living crisis is not a fair approach.

Local government is the largest provider of bodily interment in NSW, responsible for 42% of burials in 2022-23. In rural and regional NSW this rises to more than 80% of all burials.

It is particularly disappointing that this new cost shift has been imposed on councils and communities during a cost-of-living crisis, and while the parliamentary inquiry into local government financial sustainability – and cost shifting – is underway.

Respectful and affordable interment services are a critical public good provided by local government cemetery operators. If the NSW Government intends to increase regulation of cemetery operators, it needs to justify this decision to the community and fund the costs of this regulation from its own core budget.

Premier and Minister, would you please demonstrate your commitment to helping the NSW community through this cost-of-living crisis, by urgently reversing your decision to impose this new tax on councils and the NSW community?

For further information or to arrange a meeting, please contact <contact name> at <email> or on <phone>.

Your sincerely

Cr XXXXXXX
Mayor