Making a *Fit for the Future* Submission to IPART

IPART has invited submissions from community groups and individuals as part of the Local Government reform process. The submissions will be used by IPART to help determine whether individual Councils are “Fit for the Future”, and will have a major bearing on the NSW Government’s decision on whether or not Councils are forced to merge.

Submissions can be lodged online [here](#) until COB on Friday 31 July 2015.

This is your chance to ensure your voice is heard.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is currently reviewing the submissions of almost all NSW Councils to determine whether they are “Fit for the Future”. The NSW Government has refused to comment on the future of Councils that do not meet the *Fit for the Future* criteria, which include financial ratios and a “scale and capacity” benchmark. (A full explanation of IPART’s review methodology, including all criteria, can be found [here](#).)

IPART has invited community groups and individuals to make their own submissions on the future of their Council, via their *Fit for the Future* webpage.

However it is important to note that the Tribunal is accepting submissions only in relation to individual Councils, rather than the *Fit for the Future* reform package as a whole.

Once you have navigated to IPART’s Fit for the Future page, you will need to scroll down until you reach the Council submission on which you would like to comment.

Here you can not only download and read your Council’s submission in full, but access a link which will bring up a submission form.

The form allows you to either upload a document to the size of 3MB, or to simply type your comments into an available dialogue box (up to 500 words – see screenshot below).
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**SUBMISSION CONTENT**

If you plan on uploading a document as your submission, you’ll want to structure it in a way that can be easily and clearly understood. One way to ensure your message is clearly communicated is to use **sub-headings** to make your points stand out. These subheadings could include:

- **Key issues.** In this section you would identify the key problem or problems you think need to be addressed. Examples could include the *Fit for the Future* criteria outlined in your Council’s submission, or a range of issues such as financial advantages or disadvantages; communities of interest, geographic cohesion or historical values; local elected representation; the impact of proposed change on the provision of adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities.

- **Evidence.** This subheading could include research that has been undertaken, or examples that support your argument. LGNSW has collected a wide range of research papers that may help you make your case, and you can find them [here](#).

- **Case studies** may involve your personal experience, the experience of your organisation or of people you know. They are designed to help illustrate how particular actions or policies impact on residents, ratepayers and community groups.

- **Summary.** This section is where you draw together your argument, and state the future you would like to see for your Council.
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PERSONAL INFORMATION

Most submissions received by IPART are made publicly available online. They may not publish certain submissions (or parts of submissions) due to an assessment of length, content, appropriateness or confidentiality. The submission form also gives you the opportunity to nominate whether you wish for your submission to be confidential, in full or in part.

If you are making a submission as an organisation – a business, association or community organisation – it is a good idea to identify who in your organisation has authorised it. This might be the Business Owner, Managing Director, President, Secretary, Chair or Executive Committee.

Tips

- IPART receives an enormous amount of material, so it makes sense to ensure your submission is as clear and easy to read as possible.
- If you are uploading a document, make sure your pages are numbered
- If it is lengthy, consider providing a brief Executive Summary at the front, and a contents list. This is also a good idea if your submission is accompanied by supporting materials such as research reports or other documents.

FURTHER INFORMATION

IPART has nominated Mr Derek Francis as its primary contact on this Review. You can contact Mr Francis by phone on (02) 9290 8421.