



Gladys Berejiklian
Premier of NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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ALL NSW MERGED COUNCILS TO REMAIN IN PLACE

All merged councils across NSW will remain in place as communities continue to enjoy the benefits of savings and improvements to services, Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Deputy Premier John Barilaro and Minister for Local Government Gabrielle Upton announced today.

“Since becoming Premier, the Deputy Premier and I have been travelling across NSW, listening to the views and considering the evidence,” Ms Berejiklian said.

“In addition to maintaining all existing mergers, we will push ahead with those councils in Sydney that are before the courts.

“Local government reform is particularly important in Sydney if we are to deliver on our commitments to increase housing supply, improve planning and deliver local infrastructure and amenity to communities. These are strong justifications for proceeding with mergers.

“Before the mergers last year, Sydney had 41 councils compared to 1 in Brisbane.

“We have also listened to concerns about local character in Sydney and will continue to ensure individual wards of merged councils will have a say in strategic planning processes so that local residents get an even stronger say in the planning of their neighbourhoods.”

Ms Berejiklian and Mr Barilaro also announced that the NSW Government would not be proceeding with regional councils that have yet to be merged.

“Whilst there have been a number of significant improvements in merged regional councils, we accept that a one size fits all model does not always apply outside Sydney,” Ms Berejiklian said. “The financial benefits over the next 20 years will be 6 times greater in the Sydney councils than those in regional areas.”

Mr Barilaro said the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is committed to listening, and delivering, for the communities across regional NSW.

“Local councils in the bush have done their fair share to contribute to stronger local government in NSW, and today we draw a line under local government amalgamations in the regions,” Mr Barilaro said.

“This decision has been made to ensure that we put an end to the confusion and uncertainty for those councils locked in drawn-out legal battles. I am looking forward to the local government elections in September to restore local decision-making to our regions.”

Ms Upton said three rounds of mergers in regional NSW over recent decades had seen

significant consolidation of councils, while metropolitan council numbers had remained largely unchanged since the 1940s, with some boundaries unchanged for more than 100 years.

“The reform process was particularly designed to weed out the duplication, mismanagement and waste of Sydney’s councils, an issue far less prevalent in regional NSW,” Ms Upton said.

“With more than 1.74 million people set to make Sydney home over the next 20 years, metropolitan councils need to keep up with housing and local infrastructure demands.

“The five remaining metropolitan mergers are expected to generate \$530 million in benefits over 20 years. Communities deserve to see these benefits.”

The Premier said new councils created last year will continue to serve their communities.

“New councils across NSW have been working hard to deliver better services for their communities,” Ms Berejiklian said. “Residents and ratepayers would be worse off if this was undone.”

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