



Furthermore, please find attached copies of the following documents in relation to questions on notice:

A	(Page 10) Question on notice from the Chair – “Can that postcard sent to ratepayers be tabled at some stage.”	1. Postcard to Ratepayers 2. “Local Government Reform – What it means to you Brochure and Survey” (Document Attached)
B	(Page 17) Statement by Mr Cummings – ‘I am more than happy to provide those statistics.’	Micromex Survey Results – refer to Q1 – (Page 5) <i>Overall satisfaction with the performance of Council</i> – see comments at the bottom of page 5 (Document Attached)
C	(Page 20) Question on notice from The Hon Lou Amato – “What was the cost of the survey?”	The survey undertaken by Micromex cost \$ 15,950

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact email

or via

Yours faithfully

Merv Ismay
GENERAL MANAGER

Encl.

Holroyd City Council

Amalgamation Research

Prepared by: Micromex Research

Date: February 2015



Methodology & Sample

Data collection

Micromex Research, together with Holroyd City Council, developed the questionnaire.

Data collection period

Telephone interviewing (CATI) was conducted during the period 27th January – 31st January 2015.

Sample

N=403 interviews were conducted.

A sample size of 403 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.9% at 95% confidence.

This means that if the survey was replicated with a new universe of n=403 residents, that 19 times out of 20 we would expect to see the same results, i.e. +/- 4.9%.

For the survey under discussion, the greatest margin of error is 4.9%. This means, for example, that the answer 'Yes' to the question on awareness (71%) could vary from 66% to 76% and the answer 'No' (25%) could vary from 20% to 30%.

Therefore, the research findings documented in this report should be interpreted by Holroyd City Council as an accurate and robust measure of the community's attitudes.

Interviewing

Interviewing was conducted in accordance with the AMSRS Code of Professional Conduct.

Data analysis

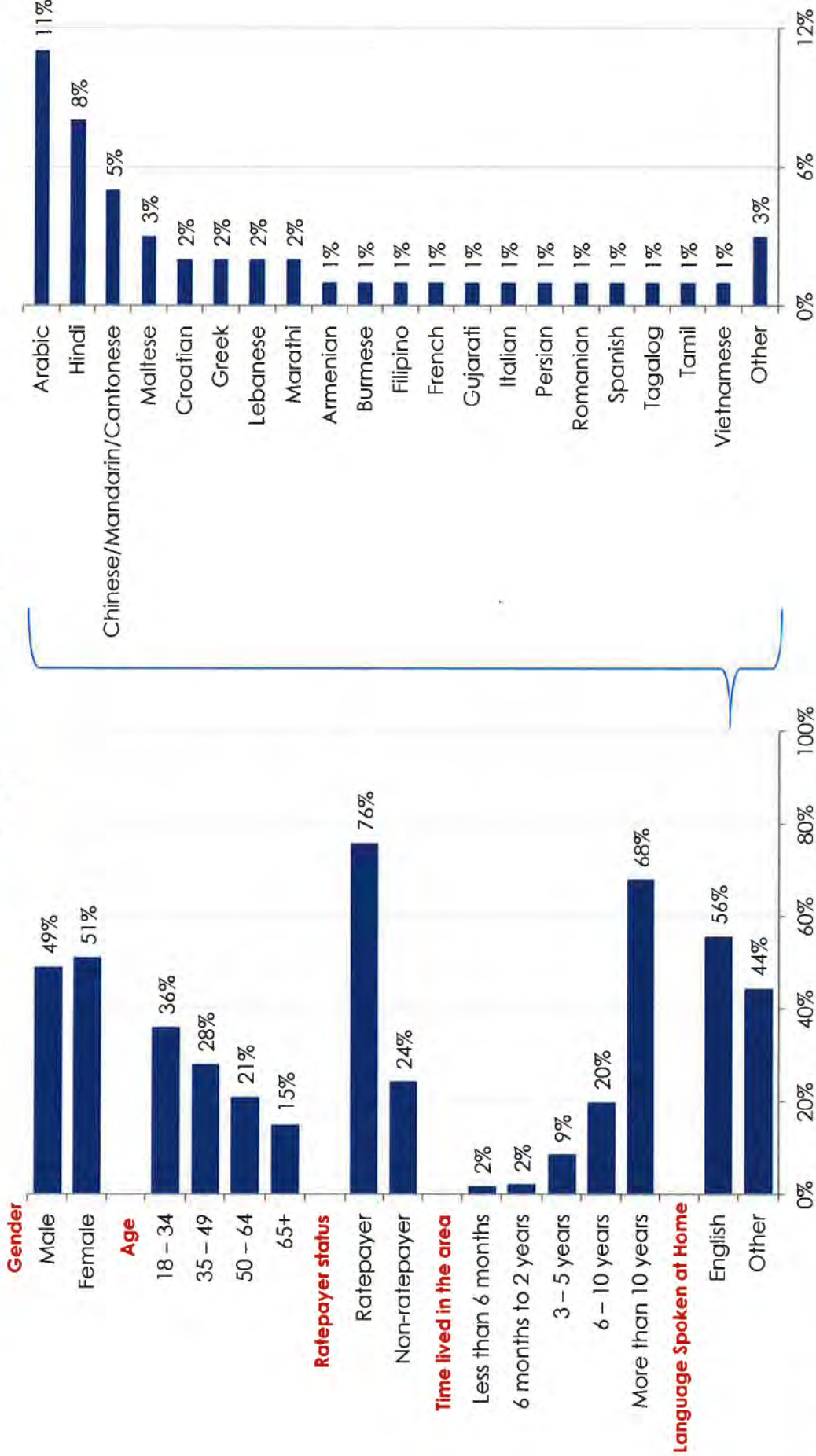
The data within this report was analysed using Q Professional.

Word Frequency Tagging

Verbatim responses for open questions were collated and entered into analytical software. This analysis 'counts' the number of times a particular word or phrase appears and, based on the frequency of that word or phrase, a font size is generated. The larger the font, the more frequently the word or sentiment is mentioned.



Sample Profile

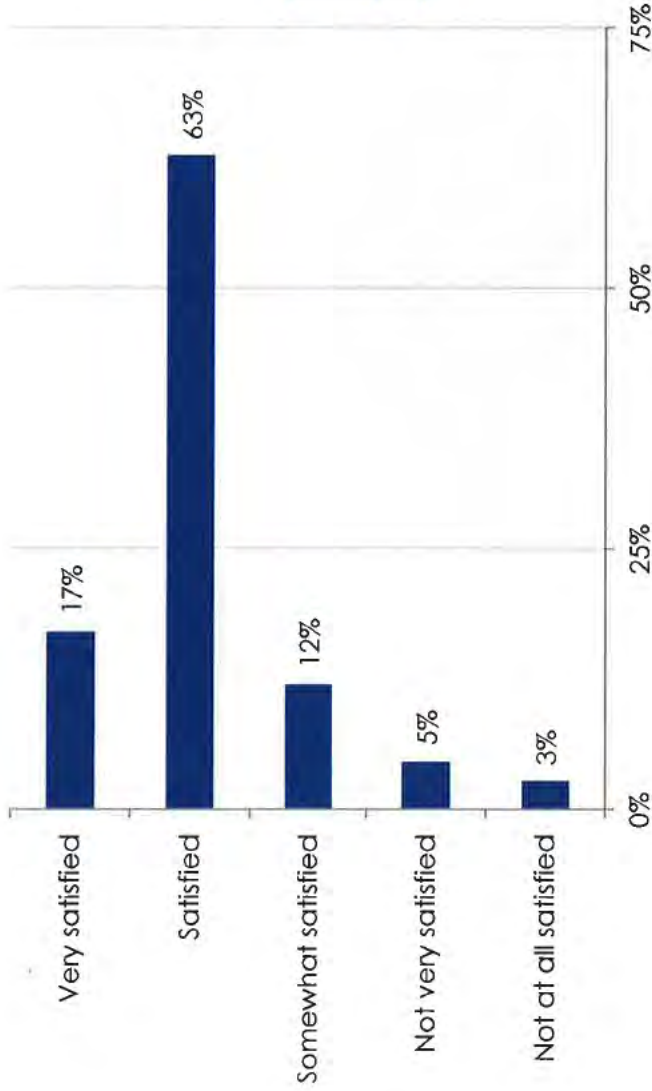


Base: n = 403

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2011 ABS Census data

Overall Satisfaction with the Performance of Council

Q1. In general, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, and their services, not just on one or two issues but across all responsibility areas?



	Overall 2015	Overall 2013
Mean rating	3.87 ▲	3.56 ▼

NSW LGA BRAND SCORES	Overall 2015	Metro	All of NSW
Mean rating	3.87 ▲	3.45 ▼	3.31 ▼

	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non - Ratepayer	English	Other
Base	403	197	206	145	113	85	60	305	98	224	179
Mean rating	3.87	3.78	3.95	3.79	3.84	3.90	4.06	3.83	3.99	3.94	3.78

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

▲ ▼ = significantly higher/lower level compared to overall rating

This is a strong result for Council, with 92% of residents at least 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's performance. Mean satisfaction with Council's performance has significantly lifted since 2013 and the absolute mean score is the highest observed in the LGA category in more than 5 years

Concept Statement

The NSW State Government appointed an independent local government review panel to investigate the need for changes that will ensure councils are sustainable, efficient, and effective.

Based on the review panel's findings, the state government has recommended reducing the number of metropolitan councils from 41 to about 15. This is to be achieved through merging your council with other councils.

The argument against the merger is that a bigger council will be less responsive to the community's needs and local issues. An argument for the merger is that a bigger council could be more economically efficient in the delivery of services.

The review panel has made recommendations for Holroyd Council to be merged with Parramatta, Auburn, and the western portion of Ryde Council. This would create a large Western Sydney Council with a population of over 450,000 residents, however, this is only a recommendation, there is also the option to oppose any merger, or to propose an alternative idea.

Holroyd Council is a strong and sustainable Council from both a financial and service delivery perspective. Holroyd Council does not support the mega Council proposal as they believe a larger bureaucracy will make it much harder for you, our residents, to be heard.

Holroyd City Council is seeking our community's views on the recommendations.



Reason for Level of Support

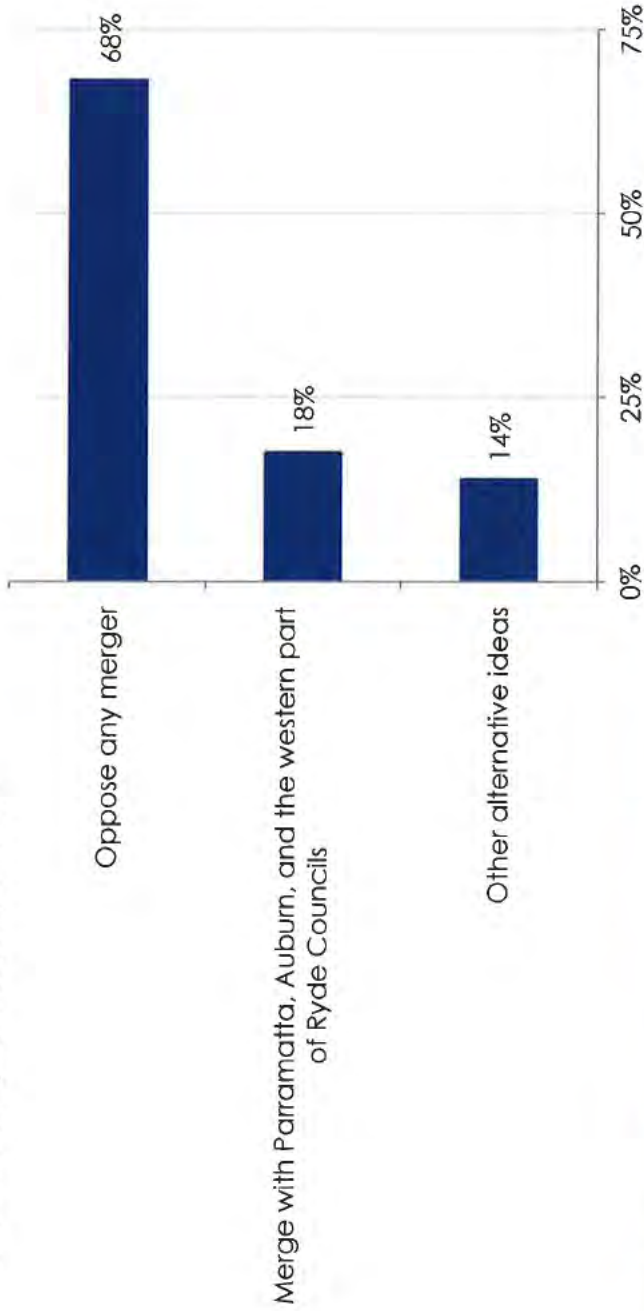
Q3a. How supportive would you be of Holroyd Council being merged with those 3 other councils in western Sydney?
 Q3b. Why do you say that?

Not At All to Not Very Supportive (71%)	
Creating such a large Council area would negatively impact service provision	28%
Larger Council area will lead to less locally effective/responsive Council	25%
Good current performance of Holroyd Council makes a merger unnecessary	21%
Amalgamation would force Holroyd to take on financial/organisational problems of other Councils	13%
Certain areas would be prioritised over others in an amalgamated Council	4%
Concerned over maintenance of specific facilities - community services, green waste, leisure facilities, outdoor areas	3%
Larger population would reduce community consultation/increase Council infighting	3%
Demographics of Councils proposed for merger would not be compatible	2%
Somewhat Supportive (13%)	
Somewhat supportive of amalgamation but some concern over implementation - financial effects, position of Holroyd within new Council, viability of other Councils	3%
Generally in favour of Council reform	2%
No strong preference for either outcome at this stage	2%
Not convinced that an amalgamation would allow for effective service delivery	2%
Supportive of merger if larger Council can achieve better service provision	2%
Supportive to Completely Supportive (16%)	
Merger will allow more efficient service delivery from Council	9%
Dissatisfaction with Holroyd Council performance makes amalgamation attractive	2%
Amalgamation would reduce problem of overgovernment	2%
Larger Council area will be more accountable/transparent/professional	2%

The majority sentiment is that a large council would provide less effective/responsive servicing for the local community

Preferred Options

Q4. As we indicated, the Review Panel has recommended some options for Holroyd, however, there are also options to oppose the merger, or to propose an alternative idea. Which of the following would be your preference?



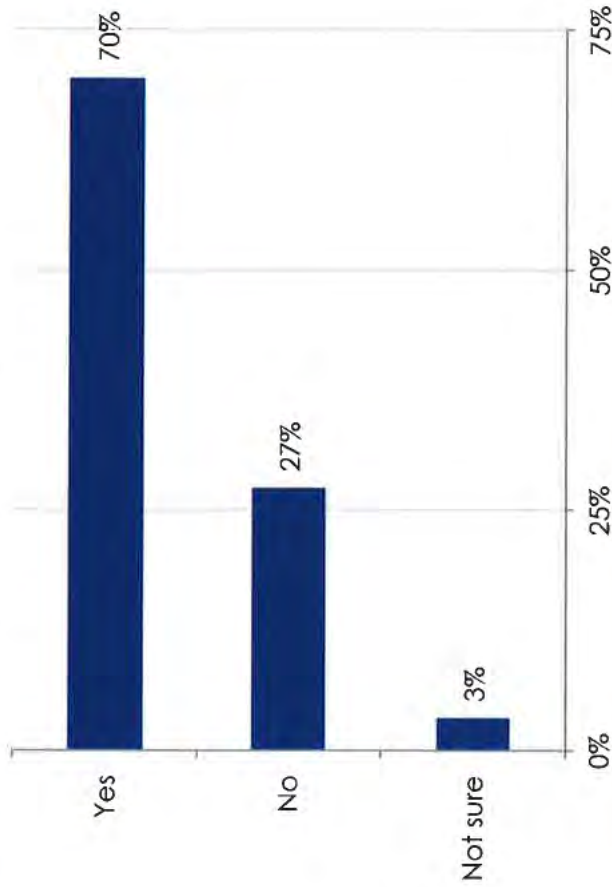
	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non - Ratepayer	English	Other
Base	403	197	206	145	113	85	60	305	98	224	179
Oppose	68%	64%	72%	65%	65%	67%	84%▲	71%	60%	74%	61%
Merge	18%	19%	16%	22%	20%	15%	9%	15%	25%	11%▼	26%▲
Alternate	14%	17%	11%	14%	15%	18%	7%	14%	15%	15%	12%

▲ ▼ = significantly higher/lower level compared to overall rating

Support for amalgamating with any council was low, with 68% of residents opposed to any merger

Awareness of the Proposed Amalgamation

Q5a. Prior to this call were you aware of the proposed amalgamation of Holroyd with other councils?



	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non - Ratepayer	English	Other
Base	403	197	206	145	113	85	60	305	98	224	179
Yes	70%	68%	70%	56%▼	72%	73%	90%▲	76%▲	49%▼	82%▲	54%▼
No	27%	29%	26%	36%	28%	26%	8%▼	22%▼	44%▲	14%▼	44%▲
Not sure	3%	3%	4%	8%▲	0%	1%	2%	2%	7%	4%	2%

▲ ▼ = significantly higher/lower level compared to overall rating

Awareness of the proposed amalgamation was high, with 70% of residents indicating they had prior knowledge of the proposed merger

Summary Of Results



Holroyd City Council
Amalgamation Survey – January 2015

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is _____ from Micromex Research and we are conducting a survey with residents about the future of the Local Government area on behalf of Holroyd City Council.

Q51. Before we start I would like to check whether you or an immediate family member work for Holroyd City Council?

- Yes No
(If yes, terminate survey)

Q52. Which of these age groups do you fit into?

- 18–34
 35–49
 50–64
 65+
(If under 18y/o, terminate survey)

Q53. Which suburb do you live in?

- Fairfield
 Gurraveen
 Granville
 Greystanes
 Guildford
 Guildford West
 Holroyd
 Mays Hill
 Merrylands
 Merrylands West
 Parramatta
 Pemulwuy
 Pendle Hill
 Prospect
 Smithfield
 South Wentworthville
 Toongabbie
 Wentworthville
 Westmead
 Woodpark
 Yennora
 Other (Please specify).....

Q54. How many years have you lived in the Holroyd Local Government Area?

- Less than 6 months
 6 months to 2 years
 3–5 years
 6–10 years
 More than 10 years

Q4. As we indicated, the Review Panel has recommended some options for Holroyd, however, there are also the options to oppose the merger, or to propose an alternative idea.

Which of the following options would be your preference? Prompt

- Oppose any merger
- Merge with **Paramatta, Auburn and the western part of Ryde Councils**
- Do you have any other alternative ideas? (please specify)

Q5a. Prior to this call were you aware of the proposed amalgamation of Holroyd with other Councils?

- Yes
- No (Go to Q6)
- Not sure (Go to Q6)

Q5b. Where did you first hear about the proposal to amalgamate Holroyd with other Councils?

- TV news
- Radio
- Newspapers (please specify)
- Word of mouth (please specify)
- Brochure/ Flyer (please specify)
- Other (please specify)
- Can't recall

Q6. Do you own or rent the property you are living in?

- I/We own/are currently buying this property
- I/We currently rent this property

Q7. Do you speak any languages other than English at home? (If 'Yes', what languages)

- English Only
- Arabic
- Chinese/Mandarin/Cantonese
- Greek
- Italian
- Korean
- Macedonian
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Other (please specify)

That completes our interview. Thank you very much for your time.

Q8. Gender (determine by voice):

- Male
- Female

Say NO to Mergers

The NSW State Government is proposing a merger between Holroyd, Parramatta, Auburn and the western portion of Ryde. This would create a mega-council that would "service" a population of over 450,000 people and Holroyd residents' rates would go towards paying off the immense debt of these other councils. We believe this move would take the "local" out of our local community and changes like paid street parking will become a real possibility.

According to the State Government, 25% of councils are in a weak or very weak position, losing \$1 million a day. This is not the case for Holroyd – we are financially strong and sustainable.

Please tell us your opinion on this proposed merger, by ticking one of the boxes and placing this card in the post. No stamp required.

I OPPOSE the State Government proposal to merge Holroyd with Parramatta, Auburn and Ryde.
For more information on this option visit www.handsoffholroyd.com.au

I SUPPORT the State Government proposal to merge Holroyd with Parramatta, Auburn and Ryde.
For more information on this option visit www.fiforthemerge.com.au

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Tick this box if you do not wish to remain updated on this campaign.

For more information or to sign the petition, please visit www.handsoffholroyd.com.au

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU



Holroyd City Council thanks you for your feedback. To date over 11,000 community members have given their support. We encourage you to read this information and have your final say on this important issue. Your feedback is critical in helping us complete our Final Submission.

What is 'Fit For The Future' about?

'Fit For The Future' is a State Government program that aims to improve the sustainability of the local government sector and to improve alignment with the State Government. All councils in NSW are to be assessed against a series of key criteria which are inclusive of seven sustainability benchmarks. Based on a NSW State Government Independent Report, it is proposed to reduce the number of Metropolitan Sydney councils from 41 to 15.

What are the Facts?

FACT: Holroyd City Council supports reforms of local government that will improve the efficiency of the sector and that will support a stronger working relationship between the State Government and councils in the interest of providing the best outcomes for the community.

FACT: The State Government will offer councils who voluntarily merge the assistance of a fully funded facilitator, subsidised funding to prepare a merger business case, access to technical experts and access to a pool of \$268 million dollars in direct funding for the merger. The Auburn/ Parramatta/ Hills/ Ryde merged entity may receive up to \$22.5 million dollars.

FACT: The cost to merge the councils into a single entity is estimated to exceed \$100m and would take approximately 3-5 years to achieve. Based on the current State Government advice, the \$22.5m in support funding would not be made available as the councils within this proposed group are opposing a voluntary merger.

FACT: Holroyd City Council has listened to its community and will seek to achieve the outcome that best represents the community's majority preference.

FACT: Holroyd City Council has engaged the services of a State Government approved independent consultancy Morrison Low, who has analysed and modelled the proposed merged entity as the basis for Council's 'Fit for the Future' Submission.

FACT: Holroyd has money to fund its infrastructure now and into the future. The Merged Council would not have enough money to fund its infrastructure.

The Independent Local Government Review Panel and the Holroyd recommendation

The State Government appointed an Independent Local Government Review Panel (The Panel) to undertake a complete review of the Local Government sector and identify options for sustainable governance models. This included looking at council structures, possible boundary adjustments, councils' current and forecasted financial performance (based on NSW Treasury Corporation's Assessments) and how councils currently met the needs of their communities.

The Panel recommended that Holroyd be merged with Auburn, Parramatta, parts of The Hills and Ryde Councils, to achieve a **projected** population of approximately 558,500 by 2031. The **immediate** population of this merged entity would be in the vicinity of 386,500 people. Holroyd's current population is 111,100.

The Panel's rationale for this includes:

- The need for stronger unified local government to develop Parramatta as a second CBD
- Close functional interaction and economic/ social links between these councils
- Parramatta's northern boundary proximity to its CBD and the need to relocate it to the M2 Motorway, which would facilitate planning and improve socio-economic mix and community linkages
- Incorporation of part of Ryde to strengthen links between Parramatta and the Global Sydney Corridor; and improve scope for integrated planning around Epping Station

The 'Fit For The Future' Program

The State Government has developed the 'Fit For The Future' Program which requires that each council address the following criteria, in relation to the recommendations made in the *Revitalising Local Government Report* released in October 2013:

- Scale and Capacity
- Financial Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Effective infrastructure and service management

The 'Fit For The Future' Program requires councils to have Scale and Capacity to meet the challenges ahead and assess each council against 7 financial based benchmarks. Holroyd has assessed itself with the assistance of an independent consultant (Morrison Low) and has found that as a standalone entity Holroyd Council will meet or exceed all of the Benchmarks by the set date of 2019/2020 and be able to sustain this level of performance over the long term. The seven Benchmarks include:

- Operating Performance
- Own Source Revenue
- Asset Renewal
- Infrastructure Backlog
- Asset Maintenance
- Debt Service Ratio
- Real Operating Expenditure

The independent assessment shows that the proposed merged entity will only meet 3 of the 7 Benchmarks by the set date of 2019/2020.

WHAT ARE OUR OPTIONS:

1. HOLROYD REMAINS AN INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL



POPULATION **111,100** 2014 ABS ERP DATA, PROFILE ID

PROJECTED POPULATION **155,900*** BY 2031

TCORP ASSESSMENT CURRENT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – **MODERATE** (Holroyd Treasury Report January 2015)

TCORP ASSESSMENT CURRENT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OUTLOOK – **POSITIVE** (Holroyd Treasury Report January 2015)

OLG INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT REPORT – **STRONG** (Local Government Infrastructure Audit June 2013)

STAFF – **466**

COUNCILLORS – **12**

RESIDENTS PER COUNCILLOR AT 2015 **9258****

INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG **\$12m**

2013/2014 Audited Financial Statements: Special Schedule 7

* Holroyd City Council estimates based on growth trends already realised with the implementation of the LEP 2013

** Based on 12 Councillors and using 2014 ABS Population Data & Holroyd Treasury Report January 2015

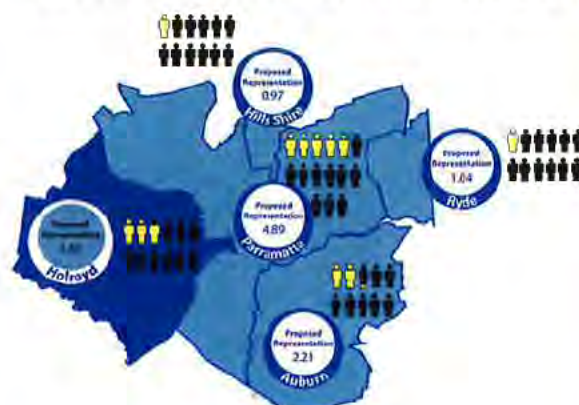
ADVANTAGES

- Holroyd City Council meets 7 Sustainability Benchmarks
- Holroyd City Council will no longer have a backlog of infrastructure works after 2019/20
- Holroyd City Council remains financially sustainable and can maintain current and future services reflective of our community need both now and into the future
- The SRV (Special Rate Variation) funds remain in our community and are spent on Holroyd assets, infrastructure and services
- Holroyd maintains our local identity and sense of community with greater level of representation of local matters
- Planning coordinated to reflect Holroyd residents' needs only
- Avoids the costly process of a merger

DISADVANTAGES

- We don't meet the scale (population) level required by the State Government
- We could be forced into a merger

2. HOLROYD MERGES WITH AUBURN, PARRAMATTA, PART OF THE HILLS & RYDE



POPULATION **463,756*** 2014 ABS DATA

PROJECTED POPULATION **558,500** BY 2031[‡]

TCORP ASSESSMENT CURRENT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – **UNKNOWN**

TCORP ASSESSMENT CURRENT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OUTLOOK – **UNKNOWN**

OLG INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT REPORT – **UNKNOWN**

STAFF – **1800** (ESTIMATED BASED ON 3+ COUNCILS)

COUNCILLORS – **12** (ESTIMATED)

RESIDENTS PER COUNCILLOR **32,206****

INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG – **\$103m**

*2014 ABS ERP Data, <http://profile.id.com.au>. Taking into account only 1/3 Ryde population and the suburbs of Northmead, North Rocks, Carlingford, North Parramatta, Oatlands and a portion of Winston Hills currently within the Shire.

[‡] Projected population as per the Panel's Final Report 'Revitalising Local Government' pg 104

** Based on 12 Councillors and using projection estimates based on 2014 ABS ERP data

ADVANTAGES

- Meets the State Government requirement for scale (population)
- State Government will offer flexibility with procurement and simplified reporting to the merged entity
- State Government will make it easier for a merged entity to secure rate rises
- Planning coordinated to represent a larger more diverse area
- Combined resources greater than a standalone Council
- Creates a single entity for the State Government to consult with

DISADVANTAGES

- Only meets 3 of the 7 sustainability Benchmarks
- Inherit other council debts
- Cost of amalgamation predominantly borne by the councils who merge would be in excess of \$100 million
- Lower level of representation by Councillors
- Will still have a backlog of infrastructure works after 2019/20

Impacts of a merger for Holroyd

Projected Performance against the 7 Sustainability Benchmarks. The Government has set 2019/2020 for the Benchmarks to be met.

Fit For The Future Benchmarks	Holroyd 2019/2020	Merged Entity 2019/2020
Operating Performance	✓	✗
Own Source Revenue	✓	✓
Asset Renewal	✓	✗
Infrastructure Backlog	✓	✗
Asset Maintenance	✓	✗
Debt Service Cover	✓	✓
Real Operating Expenditure	✓	✓
TOTAL	7	4

Correct at time of printing

Independent analysis of Holroyd's future performance in relation to the 'Fit For The Future' criteria shows Holroyd Council will meet all 7 benchmarks by 2019/2020. The proposed merged entity will only meet 3 of the 7 benchmarks.

Holroyd City Council's existing long term financial plan provides a sustainable source of funding for future infrastructure, asset renewal and maintenance and will be able to maintain current services long into the future.

Why is Scale and Capacity so important?

The State Government has recently reported in the media that their preference is for fewer councils in Metropolitan Sydney. Accordingly they have set an initial "Scale and Capacity" criterion that all councils must achieve. "Scale" refers to the population of a council and "Capacity" is the ability to achieve outcomes. In addition to this, a further three criteria must be achieved including financial sustainability, effectively managing infrastructure and services, and efficiency.

A council must prove that it has sufficient 'Scale' and 'Capacity' against the following key elements:

- More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending
- Scope to undertake new functions and major projects
- Ability to employ a wider range of skilled staff
- Knowledge, creativity and innovation
- Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development
- Effective regional collaboration
- Credibility for more effective advocacy
- Capable partner for State and Federal agencies
- Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change
- High quality political and managerial leadership

Holroyd City Council has worked in partnership with Federal and State Governments to deliver many projects and programs to our community and can provide evidence based examples to demonstrate our Capacity. However, the 'Scale' which has been set for the Merged Council is a **projected** population base of 558,000 by 2031. As a standalone Council, Holroyd will not reach the 'Scale' criteria.

The alternative to successfully addressing the criterion of 'Scale' is for Holroyd City Council to make a submission, that shows that Holroyd City Council, as a standalone entity, is 'superior' to the merged entity.

Holroyd City Council continues to pursue shared services and joint organisational arrangements and opportunities with neighbouring councils and strategic partners and sees this as an alternative to merging. This would mean working in partnership to deliver the same services across several local government areas.

May 2015
Community engagement on
Fit For The Future Submission



22 June 2015
Community feedback incorporated
into Submission



23 June 2015
Submission presented to Council
meeting for adoption



30 June 2015
Council Fit For The Future
Submission due



October 2015
IPART makes recommendations to NSW
State Government based on submission



March 2016
Implementation of NSW State
Government decision begins



September 2016
Local Government Elections based on
new councils

Where to from here?

While the report from the Independent Local Government Review Panel has outlined the need for Holroyd to merge with Auburn, Parramatta, parts of the Hills Shire and part of Ryde Councils, Holroyd City Council cannot ignore the feedback from its residents and ratepayers. Council will therefore present the two options listed in our options table, in its Draft Submission which reflect the community's feedback.

The Draft Submission will be made available on Council's website www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture for the Community to view prior to being submitted to IPART.

Further details are available on our dedicated Fit For The Future webpage www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture.

Holroyd City Council's position:

Holroyd City Council supports local government reform and improvements which strengthen our community and its future. We believe that successful local government can be achieved by individual councils that are strong and Fit for the Future in their own right.

This is Council's final survey before making its submission. Please complete this survey, cut, fold and glue it so that the address is showing and mail to Council. No stamp is required. Survey will close on the 19 June 2015 for inclusion into the Final Submission. To complete the survey online please visit www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture.



FIT FOR THE FUTURE SURVEY

The NSW State Government appointed an independent Local Government Review Panel to investigate the need for changes that will ensure councils are sustainable, efficient, and effective. Based on the Panel's findings the State Government has recommended reducing the number of metropolitan councils from 41 to about 15. This is to be achieved through merging bordering councils. The argument against the merger is that a bigger council will be less responsive to the community's needs and local issues. An argument for the merger is that a bigger council could be more economically efficient in the delivery of services.

The Panel has made recommendations for Holroyd City Council to be merged with Parramatta, Auburn, the western portion of Ryde and a small portion of the Hills Councils. This would create a large Western Sydney Council with a population of over 450,000 residents, however, this is only an option. There is also the option to oppose any merger and Holroyd remain a standalone Council.

This is Council's final survey before making its submission. Please complete this survey, cut, fold and glue it so that the address is showing and mail to Council. No stamp is required. The survey will close on the 19 June 2015 for inclusion into Council's Submission. To complete the survey online please visit www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture.

Holroyd City Council is seeking our community's final views on the recommendations.

1. Please indicate your age:

- 18 – 34
- 35 – 50
- 51 – 65
- 65+

2. Do you own or rent the property you are living in?

- Own
- Rent
- Other

3. Do you speak any languages other than English at home?

- English Only
- Arabic
- Tamil
- Singhalese
- Other.....

4. Are you aware that the State Government is reviewing Local Government?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

5. In general, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, and its services, not just on one or two issues but across all responsibility areas?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

6. The Review Panel has recommended some options for Holroyd. Which of the following options do you prefer the most?

- Holroyd standing alone as a single Council
- Holroyd amalgamating with Auburn, Parramatta, part of Ryde and part of the Hills Councils

7. Do you support or oppose Holroyd City Council being merged with Parramatta, Auburn, the western portion of Ryde and small part of The Hills Council?

- Strongly oppose
- Oppose
- Indifferent
- Support
- Strongly support



Delivery Address:
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MERRYLANDS NSW 2160

No stamp required
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Holroyd City Council
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