

media release

Tuesday, 14 February 2017

**Mosman
COUNCIL**

Mosman Council disappointed by metro merger decision

Mosman Council has expressed extreme dismay over today's merger announcement by the NSW Premier and remains set to continue its two-pronged legal battle to remain independent.

Mosman Mayor Peter Abelson said he was most disappointed by the announcement that the NSW Government still intends to proceed with current merger proposals in Sydney, including the proposal for Mosman to merge with North Sydney and Willoughby, subject to the results of current court proceedings.

"It is extremely disappointing to hear that the NSW Government has disregarded the overwhelming views of Mosman residents and vowed to continue this drawn-out process for an unpopular program which was based on deeply flawed reasoning and financial modelling," Cr Abelson, a noted economist, said.

"The NSW Government apparently has absolutely no understanding of the high service levels provided in small local areas or of the deep feelings that households have for some control over their lives, services and environment that is lost in larger impersonal and more bureaucratic government units.

"However, we remain hopeful that the Premier and her Cabinet may yet change their mind in regard to the merger of Mosman Council, as our submission to the Minister for Local Government on the revised delegate's proposal to merge us with North Sydney and Willoughby (requested by the previous Minister) has not yet been sent. It would be an extreme miscarriage of justice if a decision to merge us has already been made without the legally agreed process being followed.

"Mosman Council has remained unequivocal in its belief that amalgamation would impact very negatively on Mosman residents and ratepayers and this concern is borne out by numerous polls and surveys indicating more than 80% of our community don't want to merge.

"Mosman Council has a proud 123-year history of being a strong and efficient council and, while this decision means ongoing uncertainty during the coming months, we will be continuing our fight for independence through the courts."

Mosman Council's legal action in relation to the merger proposal for Mosman, North Sydney and Willoughby will continue in both the Land and Environment Court and the NSW Court of Appeal.

The action in relation to the Delegate's revised report on the merger proposal is scheduled to be heard in the Land and Environment Court on 23 March, while Mosman's appeal regarding the Land and Environment Court judgment of 20 September 2016 is due to be heard in the Court of Appeal on 3 and 4 April 2017.



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