



TO EVERY RESIDENT AND RATEPAYER IN DUNGOG SHIRE WHO CARES ABOUT THE STATE OF OUR ROADS, BRIDGES, SPORTING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## Port Stephens Council, having been spared a merger with Newcastle, has again offered to merge with Dungog Council

Port Stephens Council recognises that Councils of the future will need to be bigger and more effective to avoid forced mergers.

SO FAR OUR COUNCIL HAS NOT RESPONDED TO THEIR OFFER – HOWEVER IT HAS CALLED AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL FOR **1 MAY 2017 AT 6PM** AT THE DOUG WALTERS PAVILLION TO DECIDE ITS RESPONSE

### What is the current situation?

- The Government has taken forced regional mergers off the table – this means no mergers unless both Councils agree
- **Maitland Council is not offering to merge with Dungog Council**
- Port Stephens Council is offering to merge with Dungog Council
- As a stand alone Council, the NSW Government will not give Dungog Council any extra money or support a large rate rise
- Every report shows that Dungog Council is not viable as a stand alone council
- Dungog Council's only alternative to merging with Port Stephens Council is to stand alone without Government assistance

### Dungog Council's stand alone proposal, as put to IPART, and reported in the Mayor's column in December 2015, includes:

- 108% rate rise over 6 years and
- A reduction in services

### A merger with Port Stephens Council means:

- Rate Rises far less than the 108% proposed by Dungog Council
- \$15m from the state government to assist with merger costs and infrastructure backlog
- Assistance for our Tourism Industry

### Consultation and residents views:

Port Stephens Council first proposed a merger with Dungog Council in March 2016. At no time has Dungog Council responded to that offer, attempted to inform the community about it or ascertain their views.

IF THE PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL OFFER IS NOT ACCEPTED BY OUR COUNCIL, THERE WILL BE NO ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE OTHER THAN STANDING ALONE OR APPOINTING AN ADMINISTRATOR AND SPLITTING THE SHIRE

The Dungog Shire Residents Group comprises the Clarence Town Progress Association, the Gresford Community Group, and a diverse group of Paterson and Dungog township residents. Its goal is to keep residents informed about and involved in the merger process.

**PLEASE, EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU, MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN TO:**

**Our local member Michael Johnsen MP at:**

[upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

**AND**

**Our councillors at:**

[shirecouncil@dungog.nsw.gov.au](mailto:shirecouncil@dungog.nsw.gov.au)

Any person wanting more factual information may contact Brian Farmer 0419 299 751 Graham Murphy 0416 116 009 or Lisa Connors 0408 272 197.