



2 March 2023

Mr Chris Minns MP
Leader of the Opposition

By Email: kogarah@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Minns

NSW 2022-23 Half-Year Review Fiscal Position and Outlook – Infrastructure Contributions Reform

I write on behalf of Southern Sydney Regional Organisations to express our 12 member Councils' continuing opposition to the proposed reform of Infrastructure Contributions. Our submission of 10 December 2021 to the consultation on the draft Bill clearly stated this position, primarily because the reforms as drafted would leave councils worse off. However, the submission also noted our willingness to participate further in the development of reforms.

It is therefore extremely disappointing to learn of the current NSW Government's apparent decision to proceed with the proposed reforms without further input from Councils. This information has only been gleaned by reading a section embedded in the detail of the Fiscal Position and Outlook (p39):

“The NSW Government will introduce an amended package into the Parliament to implement these changes in 2023, taking into consideration the submissions received during the public consultation process. This is expected to increase revenue by \$924.2 million over three years to 2025-26. This revenue will be used to support the delivery of growth-enabling infrastructure projects in the regions where the revenue is collected, helping to put downward pressure on house prices by unlocking new housing supply.”

SSROC is more alarmed than ever about the lack of broad consultation on these reforms: it appears that reform has progressed in the complete absence of even information for councils or citizens, let alone the opportunity for meaningful dialogue. This package of reforms will only increase revenue to NSW State Government by diverting that revenue from Local Government to the detriment of local communities.

SSROC and its member Councils would welcome your support in calling for the release the proposed legislation and policy settings for the reforms as a matter of urgency. Effective government demands openness, and Councils need adequate revenue to fulfill their own obligations: this reform threatens their ability to do so. Local Governments are willing and asking to partner constructively with NSW Government to deliver infrastructure for our communities.

SSROC will be pleased to facilitate a conversation with our member Councils and with our colleagues throughout metropolitan Sydney. Please contact SSROC CEO, Helen Sloan at ssroc@ssroc.nsw.gov.au or 02 8396 3800.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Faker'.

John Faker, Burwood Mayor
President, Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils