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## **2016 Annual Report**

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### **La Perouse Precinct AGM 7th November 2016 Chairperson's Report**

Category: Message from the Chair

Posted by: Site Administrator

The past year saw three issues dominate the precinct landscape.

#### **1. CBD and South East Light Rail**

Although construction of the Light Rail was between CBD and Kingsford/Randwick, the prospect of its extension to La Perouse was a concern. With the Light Rail came proposals for high rise development along the entire rail corridor from CBD to La Perouse.

The proposal to launch a ferry service across Botany Bay between La Perouse and Kurnell, the proposed development of Kurnell side of Botany Bay National Park and proposed Light Rail to La Perouse spell out the government's agenda for La Perouse -- to turn La Perouse into a train/bus/ferry interchange and parking station for commuters between CBD and Kurnell.

This would destroy the unique historical, indigenous, geographical, geological and environmental character of the La Perouse peninsula that the Precinct is committed to protect and preserve..

#### **2. Council Amalgamations**

While the majority of merger proposals by the state government have come to pass, merger of Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra is still on the balance. Randwick and Waverley councils went against the will of its residents and willingly surrendered to the merger proposals even before it was imposed on them.

Woollahra Council on the other hand stood up for its residents and held the government and minister to task through court proceedings. The outcome of the court challenge is still not known and it is rumoured that it will not be known at least until about February next year. Meanwhile Council has been operating in 'transition' mode since the other mergers went ahead, managing on a day by day basis and putting all medium and long term decisions on hold much to the detriment of residents.

Council-precinct relationship is at an all-time low. Of the three South Ward councillors, one has always been with us, another always against us, and the third has not been seen or heard. It remains to be seen what the new merged super council will bring, if and when it comes to pass.

### 3. Council's Code of Conduct

The efforts by Council to micromanage precincts failed. We rejected Council's Code of Conduct in its entirety not once, not twice, but three times. Council appears to not accept unanimous resolutions. Other precincts have similarly refused to submit to Council's attempt to control them. Council appears to have lost sight of the objectives of precinct system, that precincts must be run by residents to be effective and to provide feedback on issues affecting the local community. Having aligned itself to state government policies, Council has distanced itself from the community that it should serve.

Council does not appear to recognise that precincts fail when they are deployed as an extension of its public relations arm. In its zest to control precincts, Council does not appear to recognise intellectual property ownership rights applicable to emails and the consequences, for example, in relation to the GIPA Act. Council appears to take the view that emails sent by councillors from their personal email addresses constitute **official Council correspondence**.

### 4. Precinct Activities

The last year saw three precinct meetings without quorum. It perhaps reflects the changing trends in how the community sees and interacts with Council, government in general. On the other hand, there was a period of inactivity when no new issues dominated the precinct scene coupled with unavailability of executives and regular members for reasons not related to precinct activities.

It is perhaps time consider bringing together the different entities, interest groups and communities in the La Perouse peninsula to work in a framework beyond Council's Precinct Rules and Procedures charter.

### 4. Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heart thanks to the faithfuls who attend our precinct meetings rain or shine, and contribute to formulating precinct positions and policies that is inclusive of all interested parties, and for your understanding and support when I had been caught up with other priorities that resulted in my paying less attention that I probably should have to putting up precinct minutes and updating the precinct website. Our website has come a long way since its inception over a year ago and I hope it will continue to be the portal that represents the views of the La Perouse community in an objective and non-partisan manner..

Jayasooriah  
Chairperson