

The Implementation Steering Committee welcomes your feedback.

■ Please provide comments, as appropriate.

Name: Penny Holloway, General Manager, North Sydney Council, on behalf of North Sydney Council

Postal or Email Address: [REDACTED]

1. What do you like about the draft Action Plan?

The Action Plan is clear, easy to understand and does pick up on many of the issues that were identified through the Destination 2036 process.

This includes in particular a focus on strengthening regional collaboration and building on the ROCs for regional service delivery and support.

2. In what ways could the Action Plan be improved?

The Action Plan should have a much stronger focus on the key issues for local government:

- Financial sustainability - Actions should be about removing the barriers and enabling councils to raise their own revenue through rates and other means.
- Structure Reform - Reliance on ROCs as the major (or sole) means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Councils is too limited. There needs to be the opportunity to look at other models of “joined-up” local government, including structural reform of Councils
- Delineation of state and local government responsibilities – Need for a clearer delineation to ensure a real commitment to stopping cost-shifting

There is too much emphasis on undertaking further research and reviews in areas where there is already a very considerable body of existing work and a very good understanding of the issues.

Actions need to be included which are about making positive change

3. Are there other key activities you believe should be included under any of the initiatives?

A positive action about changing the financing of local government, to include but not limited to the removal of rate pegging.

A positive action about linking structural reform (bigger Councils) to removal of rate-pegging and improved remuneration of Councillors.

The Implementation Steering Committee welcomes your feedback.

4. Do you have any suggestions regarding the proposed process for advancing the Action Plan?

The proposed process for advancing the Action Plan is supported.

5. Are you aware of any activities (e.g. research) currently underway that could directly contribute to the achievement of any of the initiatives or key activities?

The Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government has undertaken several pieces of work which are relevant:

- In conjunction with NSROC, a co-funded research paper, “ *A Comparative Analysis of ROCs in NSW and Western Australia*”, January 2012. This paper looks at the diversity of ROC structures, their finances, resourcing and capabilities.
- ACELG, “*Unfinished Business, A Decade of Inquiries into Australian Local Government*”, September 2011. This paper reviews the many inquiries over the past decade and identifies what change has happened as a result and what has not been implemented despite strong recommendations.
- ACELG, LGASA, LGNZ, a co-funded research paper, “*Consolidation in Local Government: A Fresh Look*”, May 2011. This paper looks at local government reform, in Australia, New Zealand and overseas, particularly council amalgamations and evaluates the post-reform experience.

Thank you for your feedback.