



*"Comfortable Country Living"*

25 June 2015

Dr Peter Boxall AO  
Chairman  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory  
Tribunal of NSW  
PO Box K35  
HAYMARKET POST SHOP, NSW, 1240

Dear Dr Boxall

### **Bogan Shire Council – Fit for the Future**

Bogan Shire Council services a thriving community located around Nyngan in central New South Wales, approximately 2 hour's drive from Dubbo, our recognised regional centre. Bogan Shire amalgamated with Nyngan Municipal Council to become Bogan Shire Council in 1974. Nyngan people made an incredible recovery from their town being completely inundated by floodwater in 1990, and we now have a 13km levee bank around the township to a metre higher than the 1990 level to protect it from a one in 200 year flood. Bogan Shire is typical of the resilience and determination shown by small rural centres in adversity, and continues to be a safe, caring and industrious community to live in. Nyngan is widely seen as an attractive and safe small rural town with a functioning, supportive, community that has access to a range of local services including schools and medical facilities

Council supports a number of aspects of the reform process that the Independent Panel has recommended. Our Fit for the Future submission demonstrates how we can continue to improve our current viability, built on sound financial management. Our future performance will be helped by the Government's intention to review the Local Government Act, reduce red tape and provide a Financial Authority. Our aim is to become more a service provider than service regulator.

We have a sound, transparent accountable Council well aware of community needs and aspirations, supported by a well-led conscientious staff of over 80 people. Council has a sound financial record of credit cash budgets, low debt levels and considerable savings. Our budget for next year retains consistent service delivery and ongoing road maintenance and improvement. We intend to establish a long day

care centre, build a new medical centre, provide retirement accommodation and construct a new waste management facility.

One of the options for this Council presented in the Revitalising Local Government report was a merger with Warren Shire Council. As mentioned in our submission this option was canvassed with our community who overwhelmingly rejected it. This was consistent with Council's view that this merger would merely serve to weaken local representation, service provision and identity. In a small rural community "The Shire" is an important and integral part of the community which generally interacts with Councillors and staff more often, more personally and on different levels to larger communities. Residents, rightly so, have a sense of ownership in "The Shire".

Council's Fit for the Future submission demonstrates that we are able to retain our autonomy, maintain our independence and meet the challenges ahead with strong community support. We consistently overcome the ongoing burdens of cost shifting, long term rate pegging and uncertainty about the level of future FA Grants. With future Joint Organisations providing improved Regional planning and close collaboration with other Orana Councils, we are confident we can continue to "stand alone" into the future representing our ratepayers with honesty, integrity and sound financial management.

Yours sincerely



**Ray Donald OAM**  
Mayor



**Derek Francis**  
General Manager