



Tuesday 20 October

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Hard work pays off

Penrith was today named in the one third of NSW Councils deemed Fit for the Future by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

In metropolitan Sydney, IPART only considered seven of 36 Councils as Fit – notably Penrith was the only Western Sydney Regional City declared fit and some large Councils including City of Sydney, Parramatta and Blacktown did not meet the 'Fit' criteria set. To be assessed as fit, councils must have demonstrated they have sufficient scale and capacity and are financially sustainable.

Penrith Mayor Karen McKeown welcomed the Tribunal's confirmation that Penrith was in a strong position and had a clear vision of how to manage the challenges of future growth while maintaining the high levels our community is accustomed to.

"This is vindication of the support and faith the community has shown Council over the past 10 years," Councillor McKeown said.

"One of the things IPART was looking at was debt and liabilities around assets and maintenance. This Council saw the warning signs 10 years ago and was supported by the community to apply for a Special Rate Variation which enabled us to do more than just the 'bare minimum' to many of our roads and buildings and has paid off in the long run by avoiding major repairs and upgrades."

Councils considered Fit by IPART have access to a range of benefits including a streamlined rate variation process, a State Government borrowing facility, priority for other government funding and grants, and eligibility for additional devolved planning powers.