



John Barilaro
Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional NSW

Gabrielle Upton
Minister for Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 23 November 2017

JOINT ORGANISATION LEGISLATION PASSES PARLIAMENT

The Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro, and Minister for Local Government Gabrielle Upton today announced local councils across regional NSW will now be able to form voluntary Joint Organisations following the successful passage of new laws through NSW Parliament.

Mr Barilaro said the new legislation would deliver a brand new model of collaboration between local councils, improving their ability to deliver projects for their local communities.

“The passing of legislation today is a great milestone for people living in regional and remote towns across NSW,” Mr Barilaro said.

“Today’s decision followed a comprehensive trial of Joint Organisations involving 43 councils across five regional areas, which proved to be highly successful in delivering for local people.

“We listened to the feedback from that trial, and we’re confident this new legislation is exactly what local councils and local people want.

“Before I entered State Parliament, I worked in local government, so I know how important it is to have strong local councils delivering services for people in country areas.

“Essentially Joint Organisations lead to better collaboration, greater clarity on local priorities, improved economic strength, and in turn better service delivery for local people,” he said.

The *Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Act 2017* will now make way for eighty-six regional councils to voluntarily join a Joint Organisation.

Each Joint Organisation will comprise of a minimum of three councils and be established within an existing NSW planning region.

Ms Upton said councils had the flexibility to design a Joint Organisation that would work for their region.

“I encourage councils to start talking to their neighbouring councils and choose the membership of their Joint Organisation as the first step towards reaping the benefits of this exciting initiative,” she said.

“The Government is providing \$3.3 million in seed funding to roll out Joint Organisations to give them the financial support they need to get going.”

The final allocation of funds will depend on the number of Joint Organisations to be formed and the extent of council membership within those regions.

The Office of Local Government is providing a comprehensive program of support to help councils facilitate discussions, design an effective Joint Organisation and form new partnerships to work on projects that cross their geographical borders.

Councils have until the end of February to nominate to become a member of a Joint Organisation. The network of Joint Organisations and seed funding allocations will be determined in March, with the new regional bodies to start operating from July 1.

MEDIA: James Jooste | Deputy Premier | 0429 978 036
Michael Cox | Minister Upton | 0429 465 227