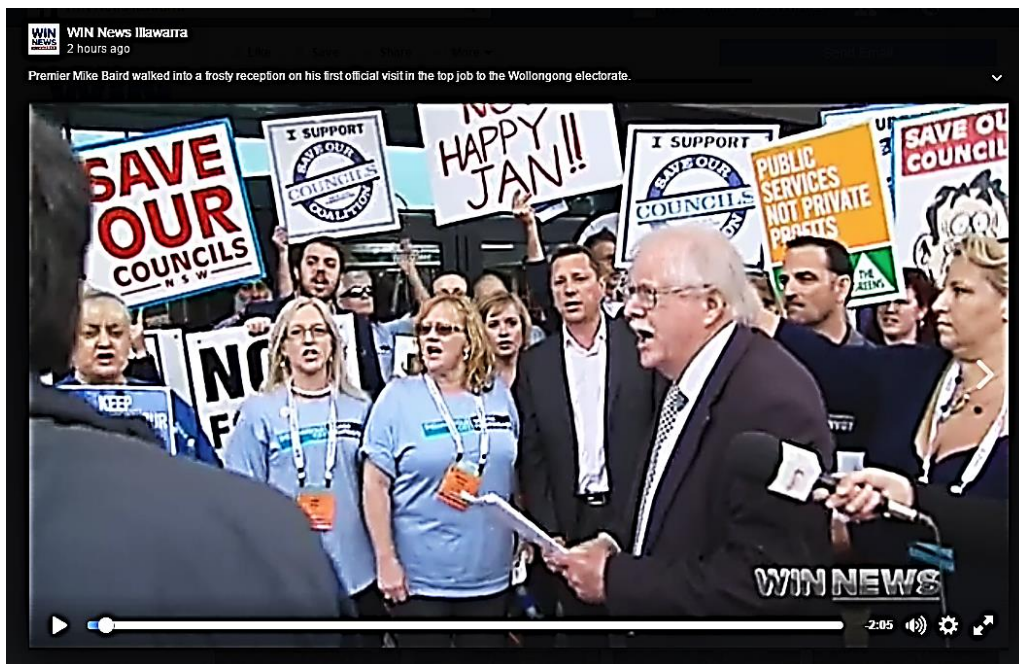


BAIRD AND TOOLE TOLD AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE - WITHDRAW FORCED AMALGAMATIONS

NSW Premier Mike Baird and Local Government Minister Paul Toole addressed the Local Government Conference in Wollongong on 17 and 18 October 2016. Their speeches were not well received by the majority of councillors - they were heckled and told to withdraw forced amalgamations.



[WINN News](#) 17 Oct 2016 Premier Mike Baird walked into a frosty reception.

Baird was met outside the Conference by a large protest rally that included community members from Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC) and locals, with cries of 'No forced amalgamations', 'Listen to the People', 'You got it wrong' and 'Shame Baird, Shame'.

A number of speakers including the Mayor of Shellharbour Cr Marianne Saliba and the Mayor of Cabonne Clr Ian Gosper spoke of the strong opposition across NSW to forced mergers.

The Premier agreed to meet with the Mayor of Shellharbour and with Hunters Hill and other Councils fighting merger proposals. Previous attempts by Councils for such meetings have been ignored.

The policy of the NSW Local Government Association remains – no forced council amalgamations.

The hostile nature of the reception is recorded in the Illawarra Mercury – for Baird [here](#) and Toole [here](#).

Videos were taken outside the Conference of the protest rally and two of the speakers. A video inside the Conference shows Baird promising to meet with councils.



[Mayor of Shellharbour](#)



[Mayor of Cabonne](#)



[Phil Jenkyn SOCC with media](#)



[Baird to meet councils](#)



[Toole being heckled at the Conference over forced amalgamations](#)

[Save Our Councils Coalition \(SOCC\)](#)

24 October 2016