



Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC)
12 February 2019

Reasons to 'Put Libs/Nats Last' at the NSW March Election

SOCC is non-party political and will support candidates, parties and independents in the State election that have policies that are in keeping with SOCC's aims (see below).

A review of the NSW Liberal/National Party coalition's performance over the last 8 years has revealed policies and actions that are in total conflict with the aims of SOCC as follows:

1. Pursued a policy of forced council mergers.
2. Put before local communities misleading proposals for mergers.
3. Failed to produce the full KPMG Report that was used to justify the proposals.
4. Used a defective process which did not allow for a poll or referendum.
5. Have failed to establish any real benefits from forced mergers, including financially.
6. Have failed to withdraw their policy of forced mergers as to the future.
7. Still maintain a policy for mega councils, while now admitting they got the process wrong.
8. Oppose the holding of referendums to allow demergers.
9. Failed to act on petitions for demergers.
10. Have taken away local planning powers from local councils.

As other parties and candidates support our aims and our Five Point Plan for demergers, SOCC recommends that communities across NSW Put Libs/Nats Last in this State Election on 23 March 2019.

SOCC's Aims

1. Keep local councils local.
2. No forced council mergers.
3. Strong local communities.
4. Support for local democracy.
5. Referendums to determine demergers.

SOCC's Five Point Plan for Demergers

The Five Point Plan requires a petition of 10% of enrolled voters in the former council area, a binding referendum, a majority of those voting to be in favour, funding by the Government and appropriate enabling legislation – see [here](#).

SOCC Final v2 dated 12 February 2019

<https://www.facebook.com/saveourcouncils>



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12 February 2019

Reasons to 'Number Every Box' at the NSW March Election

PREFERENCING IS IMPORTANT

1. Preferences may well determine the results in many Lower House (Legislative Assembly) seats, and the actual election result.
2. The NSW electoral system prescribes 'Optional Preferential' voting. This means for the Lower House you may vote for one candidate, or more effectively you can vote for as many as you wish in the order of your choice – both are a legal vote.
3. However, to make your vote really count you should number every box, for that means your vote does not die but can continue on by way of your preferences to the end of the count. This may help determine the result. In short, if you give preferences – your vote really does count.
4. SOCC recommends that you place '1' in the box next to a candidate of integrity who has, and their party if there is one has, demonstrated strong support for SOCC's aims and for the Five Point Plan. In continuing to put preferences thereafter, SOCC recommends that you number every box and put the Libs/Nats Last.

SOCC is non-party political and will support candidates, parties and independents in the State election that have policies that are in keeping with SOCC's aims (see below).

Many parties and candidates support SOCC's aims and our Five Point Plan for demergers, except for the Liberal/National coalition.

SOCC recommends that communities across NSW Put Libs/Nats Last – see document 'Reasons to Put Libs/Nats Last at the NSW March Election'.

SOCC's Aims

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Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC)

12 November 2018

FIVE POINT PLAN

TO DEMERGE COUNCIL AREAS FORCED TO MERGE IN 2016

1. PETITION

A community group or association formed to collect a petition from 10% of enrolled electors within the former local government area who want to demerge and get their former council back (Petition attached).

2. REFERENDUM

A referendum run by the NSW Electoral Commission then to be held on the demerger, the result to be decided by a majority of enrolled electors from the former area who vote.

3. RESULT

The result of the referendum is to be binding. Where the majority of enrolled electors who vote are in favour of a demerger, a new local council must be proclaimed for the former area within 6 months.

4. FUNDING

The NSW Government to meet the reasonable costs of the demerger, including the costs of the referendum.

5. LEGISLATION

The above to be contained in new legislation. The NSW Government's policy and process of forced council mergers was flawed. Communities forced to merge in 2016 against their will are entitled to get their councils back if that is their choice.

12 November 2018 Final v2



Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC)

12 November 2018

NEW LEGISLATION REQUIRED TO DEMERGE COUNCIL AREAS FORCED TO MERGE IN 2016 AND FOR ANY FUTURE COUNCIL MERGER PROPOSAL

1. NO FORCED AMALGAMATIONS

Local communities seek new legislation that guarantees their democratic right to a binding referendum on any proposed boundary change or merger of their local council area, together with fair and just provisions in the legislation supportive of local communities.

2. NSW GOVERNMENTS FLAWED POLICY AND PROCESS

The NSW Government policy that forced council mergers in 2016, was and remains deeply flawed and strongly opposed by communities. The process used, with no referendum and no transparency on financial information, has been admitted by the Government as defective and has been so found by the courts. Communities who have had their elected councils forcibly taken from them are entitled to get them back if they wish.

3. FORCED COUNCIL MERGERS HAVE FAILED

Those local communities whose councils were forcibly merged into larger bureaucratic entities in 2016 have suffered a significant loss in their representation and in their identity, local services have deteriorated, and financially the Government still refuses to release the full KPMG report that it said was the basis of its case.

4. FIVE POINT PLAN RE 2016 FORCED MERGERS

The Five Point Plan to allow local communities to get their council back requires a petition of 10% of enrolled voters in the former council area, a binding referendum, a majority of those voting to be in favour, funding by the Government and appropriate legislation (See attached Five Point Plan to Demerge and the Petition).

5. FUTURE BOUNDARY CHANGES OR MERGERS

Legislation for any proposed future boundary change or merger of a local council area requires an examination and an approval by a qualified body truly independent of government. This body to consider relevant matters for each affected area, including level of representation, identity and sense of belonging, community wishes and concerns, and financial and sustainability issues. In addition, for the proposal to succeed it must legally have majority support of the local community by way of a binding referendum for each affected area.

Bring Back Council

PETITION to NSW Government from electors within the former council area, dated

We, as enrolled electors in the area that was the former Petition the NSW Government that:

1. The boundaries of be altered so that the area that was the former prior to be excised, and
2. The former be reconstituted within the boundaries it held before its forced amalgamation on

We sign this Petition to the NSW Government because we believe that:

- A majority of electors within the former council area want their local government area back, and wish to elect their own council and run their own local affairs
- This community values its local identity, sense of belonging and an effective level of representation
- The forced amalgamation with was undemocratic and no poll of electors was held

Full Name – Residential Address – Email Address – Telephone – Signature