

NSW council elections: Swings against Liberals blamed on Mike Baird

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PHOTO: [Re-elected Sydney Mayor Clover Moore says her win is a "real victory for democracy"](#). (ABC News: Dom Vukovic)

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NSW Premier Mike Baird has been blamed for a poor showing by Liberal councillors in local elections held across the state.

There were large swings towards Labor in the western Sydney council areas of Liverpool, Penrith, the Blue Mountains, Blacktown, Campbelltown and Camden.

In Sydney, independent councillor [Clover Moore was elected Mayor for a record fourth term](#), with more than 60 per cent of the formal vote. Her main rival, Liberal candidate Christine Forster, who is the sister of former prime minister Tony Abbott, ran a distant second with about 15 per cent of the vote.

Cr Moore had been expected to suffer after new rules made voting compulsory for 23,000 businesses, with most entitled to two votes, while 117,000 residents were allowed just one.

"This is a real victory for democracy. It's a victory for good government," Cr Moore said.

The state's Labor leader, Luke Foley, said the results showed what people thought about Mr Baird's style of leadership.

"Two and a half million people went to the polls and they sent a big message to Mr Baird," he told the ABC.

"What we saw in very large councils with big populations in the outer suburbs of Sydney were huge swings to Labor," he said.

Labor won "booths that it hasn't won for 20 years in western Sydney," Mr Foley added.

After undergoing controversial forced amalgamations, many councils did not hold elections.

Speaking to the ABC's Insiders program, Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce said the State Government's [ban on greyhound racing also played a big role.](#)



PHOTO: [Mike Baird's banning of greyhound racing has been singled out as a factor in the results.](#) (AAP: Nikki Short, file photo)

"I just think that the greyhound decision has not been accepted in many areas," he said. "Be careful of your core constituency - they bite.

"It's probably good that the local government election is out of the way; it's a cathartic mechanism to deal with it in some form."

Mr Foley, whose party has opposed the Liberals' greyhound racing ban, was more scathing.

"If these results from were replicated as a state election the Coalition would be wiped from office," he said

"This is a message to Mr Baird people are telling him that he has stopped listening and he needs to change."

ABC/AAP

From other news sites:

- **The Daily Telegraph:** Council elections: Clover Moore wins huge majority, puts chokehold on Baird government
- **Yahoo!7 News:** Elections to be held for some NSW councils - Yahoo7
- **The Guardian:** Clover Moore re-elected as Sydney lord mayor after apparent backlash against Baird
- **News.com.au:** Millions vote in NSW local elections amid backdrop of controversial council mergers
- **The Australian:** Clover Moore returned as Sydney mayor

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-11/nsw-council-elections-swings-against-liberals-baird-blamed/7834208>