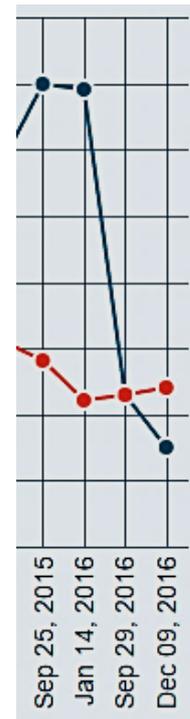
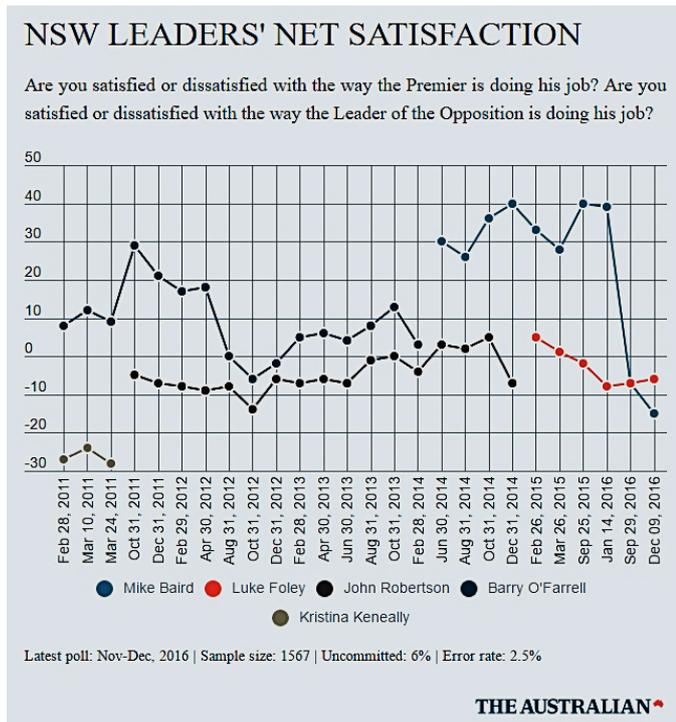


SOCC UPDATE 17 DECEMBER 2016

BAIRD'S POPULARITY CONTINUES TO FALL

The Premier's and the Government's fortunes fell dramatically after the announcement in early January 2016 of his forced merger proposals designed to destroy over 60 councils and create huge mega bureaucracies. In May 2016, 42 councils were forcibly merged and a number of city and country councils commenced legal challenges.



By September 2016 Baird had suffered the biggest fall in net satisfaction of any State Premier in the history of Newspoll - [SOCC Report](#) 10 Oct 16. That fall has continued as shown in the most recent poll in [The Australian](#) 9 Dec 16. His satisfaction rating has now fallen from 61% to 35% over the last year.

Local government elections in September saw big swings against the Government and the State Orange By-election held 12 November 2016 saw a massive 34% swing - [SOCC Report](#) 29 Nov 16.

The major reason for these massive swings and Baird's loss of popularity is his hated and ill-conceived forced council amalgamation agenda. He has already lost a Deputy Premier, the leader of the NSW Nationals and his Deputy over this issue. Baird is next to go unless he genuinely listens and withdraws now.

While the Liberal/National Party Government is blindly pursuing its forced council amalgamations agenda, all other political parties are strongly against it and are supportive of SOCCs aims – see SOCC [Rally](#) outside Parliament House 8 Nov 2016 and commitments to de-amalgamate.



Some of the SOCC supporters who stood at polling booths in the Orange By-election.

Recently Hunters Hill Mayor Richard Quinn and Clr Meredith Sheil met with the Premier and put forward the case for independent local councils and regional cooperation – see [Mayoral Minute](#) 12 Dec 2016, [TWT article](#) 14 Dec 16, and [TWT article](#) and [letter](#) 7 Dec 16. Clr Sheil has written a wonderful [article](#) that is also on [facebook](#) about this meeting – a must read.

Shellharbour Council met recently with the Premier and they await a response to a number of proposals they made.

The Woollahra Council court appeal which was reserved in August is unlikely to see a decision before February 2017. Other cases have been listed for hearing in the Court of Appeal in February and April and some have yet to get a date. There are other challenges being considered to the Land and Environment Court. These court cases are likely to drag on to well into next year and possibly beyond.

As set out in the recent 'SOCC' Report 13 December we are calling upon every Liberal Party and National Party member of the NSW Parliament to stand up and oppose forced council amalgamations both within the Party and in the public arena – see [email](#) dated 7 Dec 16 sent to all MPs and [letter](#) posted to all Liberal/National Party members of Parliament.

SOCC is asking all our members and supporters to make contact with local [MPs](#) by email or phone or in person, and let the member know exactly how you feel. Forced amalgamations, merger proposals before the courts and the hated policy – must all be withdrawn now.

We will win this battle.

Kind regards,

Carolyn Corrigan President
Phil Jenkyn OAM Spokesman

Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC)

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

