

## **LIBERAL/NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TRASHES LOCAL DEMOCRACY**

Julie Lyford, Greens candidate for the seat of Lyne, has slammed the announcement that Gloucester, Taree and Great Lakes Councils have been forcibly merged from today against the clear wishes of their communities and their residents.

Julie says:

*“The State Liberal/National Government’s announcement today shows that it has a callous disregard for democracy and due process in forcing this amalgamation and it demonstrates that it has no idea of the strength of local feelings on this issue. In making this decision the Government has been prepared to ignore the fact that local Councils are more than businesses. They are organisations that are there to represent local people and their interests.”*

The State Liberal/National Government made a solemn promise that there would be no forced mergers. This announcement demonstrates that such a promise was made only for cynical political purposes. It was always a lie. This Government cannot be trusted.

The fact that the process was undemocratic is reinforced by the unbelievable decision that, until September 2017, each of the Councils will be run by administrators, hand-picked by the Government. From today Gloucester, Taree and Great Lakes residents do not have any local representation democratically chosen by them. Adding insult to injury the person foisted on the merged Council area as Administrator is a former Deputy Leader of the NSW National Party.

Julie Says:

*“Today we mourn the death of local democracy in the Gloucester, Taree and Great Lakes areas. People living in those area can be rightly outraged that their wishes and interests have been ignored. It is a very sad day. From my 17 years experience in Local Government, I am truly shocked.*

*The appointment of a former National Party Deputy Leader as Council Administrator shows that the whole exercise is a National/Liberal Party ploy to destroy participatory democracy in this region. The government is now so blatant in its disregard for true, transparent process across the board it actually sees no issue with a ‘job for the boys’ appointment in what should be the peoples’ process.”*

Julie Lyford OAM

m. 0424 269 784  
[www.barringtontopsgreens.org.au/julie-lyford-for-lyne](http://www.barringtontopsgreens.org.au/julie-lyford-for-lyne)  
[lyne@nsw.greens.org.au](mailto:lyne@nsw.greens.org.au)  
[facebook.com/julielyfordgreens](https://www.facebook.com/julielyfordgreens)  
Twitter: @JulieLyford

