



Rob Stokes MP

Member for Pittwater

MEDIA RELEASE

28 May 2013

Council Amalgamations Are The Prerogative Of Local Councils

Member for Pittwater Rob Stokes today said it is important for local councils not to create unnecessary fear over the consideration of voluntary council amalgamations.

The *NSW Independent Local Government Review* was established following a direct request from the Local Government and Shires Association to assist with recommendations on how the effectiveness of local government in NSW could be improved.

In response, the Independent Review has developed a number of suggestions, including options for amalgamations, and local councils have been invited to provide feedback.

The NSW Government has repeatedly said there will be no forced amalgamations and that it will be up to individual local councils to decide if they wish to explore this option.

"Councils appear to be gearing up for an epic battle which doesn't actually exist," Rob Stokes said today.

"Local councils were the ones who asked for reform options to be developed and it's their decision if they wish to pursue them or not.

"If councils aren't interested then that's the end of the matter - there's no need for local residents and council staff to be frightened into thinking we're all under threat.

"Whilst it's admirable that some councils have pledged to "fight" amalgamations - the reality is the entire process is voluntary and completely their decision," Rob Stokes said.

ENDS