

15 April 2015

Cr Mark Liebich
Mayor
Weddin Shire Council
PO Box 125
GRENFELL NSW 2810

Dear Cr Liebich

Re: Fit for the Future: Local Government Reform

I write in relation to the State Government's release in 2014 of the proposed Local Government Reform.

In keeping with the Independent Panel's recommendations for the future of our Councils, and the clear indication from the Government that these matters need to be at least considered, may I suggest that we at least meet to discuss the recommendations.

I take this opportunity to point out that at this stage Cowra Council is pursuing the standalone option.

I ask that your office contact my Personal Executive Assistant Tracey Robinson to confirm the details of the meeting.

Yours faithfully

Cr Bill West
Mayor

MINUTES OF THE MEETING BETWEEN COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL AND WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL HELD AT THE WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GRENFELL ON WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2015 COMMENCING AT 12:15 PM (C2.10.9/C2.9.5)

1. **PRESENT:** Clr Mark Liebich (WSC Mayor), Clr Bill West (Cowra Shire Mayor), Mr Paul Devery (Cowra Shire General Manager), Glenn Carroll (WSC General Manager)
2. **GENERAL BUSINESS:**
 - Each Council's position and future direction in regards to Local Government Reform – Fit for the Future:
 - **Weddin Shire Council** – pursuing the Rural Council – Template 3 option. Plan to work as part of the Central West Joint Organisation (JO) and also work collaboratively outside the JO with the other ten (10) proposed Rural Councils.
 - **Cowra Shire Council** – pursuing the stand alone – Template 2 option.
 - Amalgamation option – possibility needs to be fully discussed:-
 - Cowra Shire Council was not recommended for amalgamation by the IRP - meets the IPART criteria and has therefore not considered amalgamation as an option.
 - Benefits – it was agreed that there is likely to be minimal benefit for both communities. Consequently, there was no merit in conducting a full scale investigation into possible amalgamations.
 - Loss of identity – it was agreed Councils could lose their identity in the event of an amalgamation which is a major concern for both communities.
 - Effect on employment – it is envisaged that there could be jobs lost in an amalgamation which would be detrimental to both the Cowra and Weddin communities.
 - Effects on services – services could be lost as population declines. This would then destroy the social fabric of our societies.
 - Effects on rates – rates would be likely to increase dramatically.
 - Stand alone option or Rural Council option – possibilities for both Councils as part of the Central West Regional Joint Organisation (JO) were considered:-
 - Resource sharing – staff i.e. town planner, plant
 - Bulk purchasing – such as bitumen contracts, plant and IT equipment could be undertaken resulting in massive savings.
 - Training – could be undertaken jointly i.e. RMS, procurement and IT training.
 - RMS Contract – joint approach possible in the future.
3. **CLOSURE:** There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 1:39 pm.