

# FAQ

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER CONTACT RESPONSE
<b>How was the new Council formed?</b>	The merger of Wyong Shire and Gosford Councils was proclaimed by the NSW Governor on Thursday 12 May 2016. You can read the proclamation in full at <a href="http://www.strongercouncils.nsw.gov.au">www.strongercouncils.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>Who's in charge?</b>	Mr Rob Noble is Council's Chief Executive Officer and Ian Reynolds is the Administrator.
<b>What about Mayor and Councillors?</b>	<p>When the Central Coast Council was formed all former Mayors and Councillors were removed from their positions and an Administrator (Ian Reynolds) was appointed in their place.</p> <p>Former Councillors were invited to join a Local Representative Committee (LRC), and 18 have taken up this opportunity. This is an advisory committee only - it has no decision making role. Every newly merged council was required to set-up an LRC (a direction from the State Government) so former Councillors could be given an opportunity to serve on this committee to enable the continuation of local representation but in a different way to the normal role of a Councillor. Committee members are being remunerated at the rate of former Councillors.</p> <p>Due to the strong interest from former Councillors to serve on the LRC, the Administrator has established three working groups – Economic, Environment and with six members in each.</p>
<b>So who makes decisions then?</b>	Ian Reynolds has been appointed as Administrator by the NSW Government. Mr Reynolds replaces the role and function of the former Mayor and Councillors, and will make decisions on behalf of the community at regular Central Coast Council meetings.
<b>When will a new Mayor and Council be elected?</b>	The next Local Government elections will be held on 9 September 2017. The new Local Government Area (LGA) will have 15 elected Councillors and five wards. Detail of ward boundaries and names can be found at <a href="http://www.strongercouncils.nsw.gov.au">www.strongercouncils.nsw.gov.au</a> The Mayor of Council will then be elected by a majority vote of the new Councillors.
<b>What happens with Council meetings?</b>	Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. The second Wednesday will be held in the Gosford Council Chambers, with the fourth at the Wyong Council Chambers.

# FAQ

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER CONTACT RESPONSE
<b>How do I contact Council and where do I find information?</b>	<p>Continue to contact us as you always have. If you were part of the former Wyong LGA continue to call <b>4350 5555</b> and if you were part of the former Gosford LGA continue to call <b>4325 8222</b>.</p> <p>You can also email any enquiry to <a href="mailto:ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au">ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au</a> A website landing page has been established – <a href="http://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au">www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au</a> so look there for answers to frequently asked questions and the latest news.</p> <p>Make sure to like us on our new Central Coast Council Facebook page, or follow us on Twitter to keep up to date with what's happening across the Coast.</p>
<b>What do I do if I need after-hours assistance?</b>	<p>Continue to contact us as you always have. If you were part of the former Wyong LGA call 4350 5555 and if you were part of the former Gosford LGA call 4325 8222.</p>
<b>Are you changing all the signs in the new LGA?</b>	<p>Not immediately. We have adopted an interim brand and this branding will help us promote and identify our new Council. However, we don't intend to spend a large amount of money updating all signage and uniforms right now. We have other priorities.</p>
<b>Will my property rates increase?</b>	<p>Rates will continue to be charged using current calculation procedures, including normal annual increases. For residents living within the former Wyong LGA, this includes charges that relate to the final year of the current Special Rate Variation. While the State Government has frozen rate paths, this only means councils are required to continue calculating rates using current processes. It does not equate to a rates pricing freeze.</p>
<b>What about water rates?</b>	<p>Both councils were due to make a pricing submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) this year for pricing from 1 July 2017. However, given the proposed amalgamation, IPART agreed to defer the scheduled price review for 12 months.</p> <p>This means the previous approved increase in water, sewerage and drainage prices will go ahead for the 2016/17 financial year and remain in place until IPART makes a determination for prices for the Central Coast Council for the 2018/19 financial year.</p>
<b>Where can I pay my rates and other fees and charges?</b>	<p>Continue to pay them as you always have. Information on how to pay your rates, debtors and invoices can be found on your rates notice – the next one is due out in the middle of July.</p>
<b>What are the changes to fees and charges?</b>	<p>Council has adopted an Operational Plan which details the latest fees and charges. It is available for viewing on Council's website.</p>
<b>Will services change?</b>	<p>It is business as usual. Your bin needs to be put out as it always has, libraries will continue to offer the same services, roads will still be upgraded and construction on new recreational facilities for the region will continue.</p>

# FAQ

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER CONTACT RESPONSE
<p><b>Where is the head office going to be located? Will any offices be closing?</b></p>	<p>Council will operate from both Gosford and Wyong locations in the foreseeable future. This includes a rotating roster for Council meetings (second Wednesday of the month at Gosford and fourth Wednesday at Wyong) to ensure Council meetings are as accessible as possible to the community.</p>
<p><b>How do I lodge any applications, including Development Applications, Tree Removal and Construction Certificates?</b></p>	<p>It is business as usual. Continue to lodge them as you would have prior to the merger announcement.</p>
<p><b>If something was previously permissible in Wyong Shire, but not Gosford City, or vice versa, does this mean it is now allowed across the whole Central Coast? e.g. mobile food vans, subdivisions, development</b></p>	<p>No. All plans, policies, rules and regulations that existed before amalgamation remain in force within the former LGAs, as directed by the Minister for Local Government.</p> <p>For example, if you are looking at making changes to your property you must still adhere to the Local Environment Plan of the former LGA your property is in.</p> <p>In due course, we will be reviewing and aligning all our plans, policies, rules and regulations and where required these will be placed on public exhibition for comment. We will endeavour to communicate any major changes as they occur.</p>
<p><b>Does the amalgamation affect the JRPP? Will there be still one?</b></p>	<p>Yes there is still a Central Coast Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP). Former Councillors Bob Ward and Ken Greenwald have been appointed as Council representatives on the panel, with Gabby Bowles and Lynne Webster as the alternate delegates.</p> <p>The JRPP provides independent, merit-based decision-making and advice to the NSW Minister for Planning on regionally significant development proposals (with a value over \$20 million). The JRPP is made up of five members, three independent experts appointed by the Minister, and two recommended by Council.</p>
<p><b>Will there be any changes to waste pick-ups?</b></p>	<p>No. All current waste collection days will remain the same. Details about waste services can be found at <a href="http://www.1coast.com.au">www.1coast.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>What about the tree policies?</b></p>	<p>There is currently no change to tree policies that exist for Wyong and Gosford. Tree Policies are attached to the relevant Local Environment Policy (LEP) and so remain unaffected by the merger of the LGAs. It is unlikely there will be any changes to the LEP until a new elected body is in place and relevant process exhibition and community engagement has been undertaken.</p>
<p><b>My family/friend works at Council. Will they lose their job?</b></p>	<p>All permanent employees have a three-year employment guarantee with the new Central Coast Council from 12 May 2016, the official date of amalgamation.</p>
<p><b>Are currently advertised employment opportunities within Council still available?</b></p>	<p>Yes. Advertised employment opportunities are still available and the new positions will be held within Central Coast Council.</p>

# FAQ

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER CONTACT RESPONSE
<p><b>How much is amalgamation going to cost ratepayers?</b></p>	<p>It is difficult to measure exactly how much the cost will be at this point, however we are currently undertaking detailed planning to determine how long it will take and how much it will cost to bring all parts of Council together. There will be costs and savings as a result of the merger – it will take time for us to estimate all of these.</p> <p><b>The State Government has given council the \$20 million</b> promised for all Councils that agreed to merger.</p> <p>Ten million has been allocated from the Stronger Communities Fund (SCF). \$1 million of this fund will be used to provide grants of up to \$50,000 to kick-start community projects that build more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive local communities. The other \$9 million dollars in the SCF will be used to fund larger scale priority infrastructure to deliver long term economic and social benefits.</p> <p>A further \$10 million has been provided under the New Council Implementation Fund (NCIF) to help fund the costs associated with merging two Councils.</p>

**Wyong Office** 2 Hely St / PO Box 20 Wyong NSW 2259 | **P** 02 4350 5555  
**Gosford Office** 49 Mann St / PO Box 21 Gosford NSW 2250 | **P** 02 4325 8222  
**E** [ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au) | **W** [www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au) | ABN 73 149 644 003

