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ANGER AT COX PENINSULA

Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says a meeting held last night at Cox Peninsula shows that the Government has not done its homework when it comes to convincing the community that its programme of local government amalgamation is beneficial to their community.

Gerry says most of the about 60 people who attended the meeting said they didn’t want to amalgamate. The results of a recent survey put out by the Cox Peninsula Community Government Council showed that around 90% of those surveyed did not want to change. Many people were concerned that the amalgamation was a fait accompli and were very dissatisfied with what was happening. The process is so on the nose that the local council has decided to boycott the Shire Transition Committee Meetings.

Gerry says that the government has made a poor start to its plans to amalgamate councils, it should have first gone out to the community explaining what the plans were. It seems nobody knows what the changes mean, including possible rate increases, representation on a bigger council, core functions, road funding and many other issues.

Gerry says that the changes are being imposed from the top and the community is not involved leading to mistrust about the governments intentions. The government has adopted a stringent timetable to push the amalgamations through; unfortunately the community is being left behind. That was evident by the angry response of Cox Peninsula residents last night.