

# Fit for the Future

## Summary of Community Response

An information package about the merger proposal was distributed to every household and absentee ratepayer in the Cootamundra and Harden local government areas from 11 May 2015.

The package contained a tear-off reply paid section for feedback to Council, and the community responses are contained in this report.

Survey Results	Cootamundra	Harden	Total
<b>In Favour</b>	161 88%	302 90%	463 90%
<b>Against</b>	20 11%	31 9%	51 10%
<b>Undecided</b>	1 1%	2 1%	3 1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>517</b>

Survey Results, by Theme	In Favour	Against	Total
Capacity	11	10	21
Communities	18	-	18
Compatibility	22	2	24
Forced Amalgamation	9	-	9
Hilltops Proposal	53	15	68
Improved Services	11	-	11
Jobs	7	2	9
Name suggestion	30	1	31
Other comment or Nil comment	268	15	283
Other merger options	15	5	20
Rates	5	1	6
Council representation	8	-	8
Villages	6	-	6
	<b>463</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>514</b>

# Fit for the Future

## Community meetings

Community meetings	Cootamundra	Harden	Total
Cootamundra	71 55%	- 0%	71 19%
Wallendbeen	9 7%	- 0%	9 2%
Stockinbingal	29 22%	- 0%	29 8%
Library drop-in	20 16%	- 0%	20 5%
Harden	- 0%	156 64%	156 42%
Galong	- 0%	20 8%	20 5%
Wombat	- 0%	40 16%	40 11%
Jugiong	- 0%	29 12%	29 8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>374</b>

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<b>Do you support</b>	
		Yes	No
No Comment	Harden	1	
No Comment	Harden	1	
No Comment	Harden	1	
Name Suggestion of Golden Harvest Golden Pastures	Harden	1	
As a community owned and operated business, the Harden Murrumburrah Community Bank is very much aware of its responsibility to act in the best interests of our community and see many advantages for us all in the proposed merger. The Board and staff fully support the proposed amalgamation with Cootamundra Shire and would like to add our voice to the community consensus. In addition, we would like to commend you personally, on the excellence of your presentation of the proposal at the Community Meeting at the Harden Country Club.	Harden	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
The Greater Cootamundra Shire Council	Cootamundra	1	
The presentation at the Public Meetings was really well prepared and presented. It seems very logical for Cootamundra and Harden to amalgamate for reasons given in the presentation. Suggested name for new Council: Cootamundra/ Harden Shire or Harden/ Cootamundra Shire. I believe it should have the names of both towns - Not just an area name eg Jindalee	Cootamundra	1	
I think this merger is the most logical for the area of Cootamundra and Harden. I would suggest the name of the Shire be either Cootamundra/Harden Shire or Harden/ Cootamundra Shire.	Cootamundra	1	
It has some good points but the merger as I see it if you don't amalgamate you will be forced to by the state government as the 2 Councils at the table for now are on the same management, RE equipment as Young Council have always contracted our ther equipment for road use with my 25 years experience.	Cootamundra		1
A broader perspective would be very welcome. New blood, more diverse ideas and not so much cronyism.	Cootamundra	1	
Support in view of advantages gained through economies of scale. It seems as though extensive research has gone into recommending the merger - therefore we support the proposal.	Cootamundra	1	
I thank you for the opportunity to offer my favorable comment. Cost wise and efficiency will be the outcome, even in the short term, congratulations to wise Councillors.	Cootamundra	1	
Absentee landlord looking towards sustainability for the residents, amenities and affordable lifestyle.	Cootamundra	1	

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<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
This proposal can not work with two administration offices remaining open. Cohens Corner is vacant and could be rented or purchased to house the Engineering Department. If this amalgamation is to happen, several sacrifices have to happen as well. Works Depots should remain as is and rates can be paid at post office etc. Council should look long and hard at this before we finish up with a Claytons: 'the amalgamation you have when you are not having an amalgamation'. My preference is to remain as we are.	Cootamundra		1
I believe there are advantages to both Harden and Cootamundra. Both Councils have good plant and equipment that would put replacement a few years down the track and a credit balance which alternatives // a large debt. If we were to go towards other eg. Young I see our credit balance would quickly to that Council. should be forced to that possibility i would be one to oppose it. perhaps riding best be used to the smaller twns to get site and hearing of the people.	Harden	1	
We support the merger proposal of Harden and Cootamundra Shires. It will make for a stronger shire unit which will benefit all the residents of both shires. The economies of scale that will be achieved should see more money available for community projects, tourism etc. The merging of assets should help in keeping costs down and community services up. many thanks to all who were involved in putting this deal together. The greatest thing to happen here in 50 years. It will be a boom for business.	Harden	1	
I believe the merger between Harden and Cootamundra will be more beneficial to us both! Sharing resources but remaining relatively independent communities!	Harden	1	
This is a fantastic achievement for both councils and will see no small business having to compete with large business of Young more than they do now. I believe we can benefit from the Cootamundra Shire's forward thinking approach as Harden has become stale in the past few years.	Harden	1	
In all mergers there should be a saving in staff and salaries due to current duplications [executive staff, 7 Councillors]. Is this a job for the unions? If there are no significant savings in manpower & assets, could the reason for the amalgamation be a quick grab at \$5million?	Harden	1	
Cootamundra and Harden communities have always enjoyed a close and enjoyable relationship. The amalgamation will be a great move for both towns. Sooner the better.	Cootamundra	1	
The two councils seem very similar and seem to be able to work together well.	Cootamundra	1	
The two shires are well suited in demographics, lifestyle and area.	Cootamundra	1	
Cootamundra and Harden communities enjoy very similar lifestyles. Both are community minded and this is evident by the number of significant events held in both the sporting and arts fields. Our rural communities are very similar. I believe that both Councils will work well together to the betterment of the entire new Council. Neither Council is likely to try and dominate one another. I believe that the Councils can see the added advantage of a stronger body working together.	Cootamundra	1	

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<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Please ask the Minister to approve this proposal as it is the best interest for our community.	Harden	1	
Congratulations on all your efforts and time in creating a great community option.	Harden	1	
Yes. I don't see any benefits to Jugiong by joining Young and Boorowa. Jugiong residents mainly shop and use medical facilities in Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
I am very impressed with the proactive approach taken by Harden Shire Council and grateful for the work that has been put into investigating all possible merging options. I am delighted by the fact that the preferred merging option is with Cootamundra. I fully support this option as I feel that it will be the best cultural fit for Harden Murrumburrah. The idea of a possible merger with Young would have filled me with horror! Young is all about Young - there is no room for anyone else there and the culture is too different to our own. I would have been happy to join also with Boorowa but the current proposal is excellent.	Harden	1	
I believe the Harden & Cootamundra ratepayers are more likeminded in terms of community.	Harden	1	
Support with continued Council/Community Communication	Cootamundra	1	
But I think this situation has been cut and dried to suit the General Manager and his agenda. This survey is a total waste of ratepayers' money. The roll up at the meetings is testament to what the town people think of the whole thing.	Cootamundra	1	
When naming the new area please use sense and if necessary put it to the constituents. The presentation at the Country Club was quite well organised.	Harden	1	
Council has consulted & informed the community well. We support Council's decision.	Harden	1	
We both feel that to merge with Cootamundra is a much better option than Young and Boorowa, as we are both in the same catchment area, also rural pursuits are common. Each Shire of Coota and Harden does not have a large debt as Young or Boorowa. Above all it would be easier to work together enabling each town to have its own identity. Identity is very important and these we may lose with a merger with Young & Boorowa.	Harden	1	
I encourage you to make sure nearby Councils not included in this merger do not try to stop this merger by any means. It is to be fair the best solution for both Harden and Cootamundra, economically, strategically and socially. It is extremely important that regional areas keep their identities and this proposal will fit this as well with our towns being similar both with rich heritages that can be maintained in this format.	Harden	1	
All information points to this being the right way to go. Young takes enough out of our Shire, we don't need to lose our identity which we feel would happen if we went with Young.	Harden	1	
Go with Cootamundra. But will we lose our ID?	Harden	1	

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<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
However, I believe that the State Government needs to come clean on the real agenda behind the 'Fit for the Future' project as there appears to be no economic or social benefits for rural NSW. It is interesting that no MP's have come forward to justify any benefits from Council merger. The big loss is communities identities.	Harden	1	
Cultural Fit, Agricultural Fit, Common Interests, Commercial Fit, Tourism Fit, Geographic Fit, Retain Identity. Junee does not meet any of the above criteria and is a new suburb of Wagga. Young would 'swamp' Boorowa and Harden (+ us). Standing alone In Riverina Joint organisation sounds like code for a cultural emasculation. Who comprised the independent LGR panel?.	Cootamundra	1	
I'd like to congratulate the Council on this decision t merge with Cootamundra. They both are similar with business and wealth so you could expect them to get on well.]	Harden	1	
I think the best option is to go with Cootamundra because the towns are of similar size and we don't have to help pay Young's debt.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra and Harden are entirely compatable and we could even include Boorowa. Both Shires are similar and belong together.	Harden	1	
I believe merger with some other Council is inevitable due to State Government Policy. Prefer amalgamation with Cootamundra Council rather than Young. Have always been impressed by the cleanliness and intelligent use of Cootamundra township by that Council and that this will compliment our own Council's record on these matters.	Harden	1	
We believe that a Harden/Cootamundra Shire merger is a great fit. Both Councils have very community baded direction and vision which makes our towns wonderful places to live.	Harden	1	
Young is and always has been 'all for self' if we merge with them that will be the end of Harden. Whereas Cootamundra will be a more willing partner & as both towns have the railway hopefully more will be made of that in the way of trips, festivals etc. Congratulations to all concerned & the Harden Streetscape.	Harden	1	
I support the Harden Cootamundra merger proposal on amalgamation and the fact that both localities have similar land activities, town areas that would compliment each other if managed appropriately and the cost savings on working on a larger scale of operations.	Harden	1	
The synergies that exist between the two councils are why I believe it will work - both councils wish to work for mutual benefit for all comminities as pooposed to a 'takeover' mentality expressed by other councils in other proposals. The fact that both councils are in the same water catchment area & are both in the southern rail/Hume Highway corridor will aide efficiencies in the new proposed councils interface with State Government Departments, providing benefit to the proposed council as well as the State.	Harden	1	
With both the leaflet and the speakers at the information night I feel our shire is making the best move. Cootamundra seems very compatible to our expectations.	Harden	1	

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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
The amalgamation of Harden & Cootamundra Shires would be the best solution by far - the Shires are very similar in their rural backgrounds and the towns would marry together very well. I think they would work together in a beneficial arrangement for all the ratepayers and others living in the districts.	Harden	1	
We would rather a Shire similar to our size and same ideas.	Harden	1	
This proposal has more benefits than the proposal with Young and Boorowa. Young has always thought because of their size and population their inclined to ride roughshod over other people. Coota & Harden are similar in many ways with the least disruption to present levels of service.	Harden	1	
I can see a great possibility for prosperity and growth with the two Councils united as one with a right duty and in the same spirit with no self indulgence only to be honored as Councillors to serve the people of Cootamundra and Harden now equally as one Council and to manage business for the people who elect Councils in hope and trust for the future.	Cootamundra	1	
I am agreeing with your proposal for the simple reason that if Harden Murrumburrah joined with a larger town such as Young, particularly when that town is carrying large debts, we would no longer have the upper hand on our progress. Towns the size of Harden-Cootamundra have a greater chance of gaining small industry by going out and bringing them in. I like your ideas.	Harden	1	
Hopefully bring more trade hence employment to both communities.	Harden	1	
I am in favour of this combination as long as the council works to get more industries for our shire and our rate payers are not forgotten, otherwise we may as well just go along as we have done and trust the future is good to the township and rural community.	Harden	1	
I support this proposal. I believe it to be a fair and equitable amalgamation for both shires which will result in a strong and viable future for all stakeholders.	Cootamundra	1	
Larger Council areas need a greater administration overhead and can become unweildy. Comparing Harden as Cootamundra: Harden is a struggling country town and its join with Cootamundra would be derogatory for Cootamundra better to keep Cootamundra within itself - more efficient to be within itself.	Cootamundra		1
A well balanced proposal with equal benefits for both Harden and Cootamundra ratepayers.	Harden	1	
We hope all Harden ratepayers don't lose anything with this proposal and are looked after.	Harden	1	
This is just stupid, Harden Shire has a poor financial history, ailing essential infrastructure and relies heavily on the Kruger Trust for handouts.	Cootamundra		1
It is better to amalgamate voluntarily than later on to be forced.	Cootamundra	1	
I think its better to plan ahead and join a Council of similar outlook, than being forced into a merger that doesn't suit us.	Cootamundra	1	

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<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1) I think it is better to merge now when there is the possibility of choosing your partner, than to be told with whom to merge in the future. 2) I am not aware of major problems within the Harden Shire so if that is the case, the transition period of the merger should be relatively straight forward. I wish the two Councils all the best in the future of this matter.	Cootamundra	1	
A voluntary merger is a proactive approach to change that is inevitably going to be a directive from NSW government. It will be far more beneficial to the community to have a situation where the merging organisations can work co-operatively so that they can get on with serving the community.	Cootamundra	1	
Sooner stand alone. Having worked on the shire for 35yrs when Jindalee and Municipally merge good but down the track if we have to merge Harden Shire the best way to go better to be voluntary merger than forced.	Cootamundra	1	
I hope that the State Government's panel comply to what the residents preference is to merge with Cootamundra. - Not the bureaucrats making the decision which does not comply to our wishes. If this occurs, then it becomes a forced amalgamation [this is the most concerning part] Rest of Harden.	Harden	1	
If we need to change then best to go with a choice than not.	Harden	1	
I look forward to the outcome - insofar as decision is voluntary - Harden & Cootamundra merge.	Harden	1	
I was unable to attend the meeting at Harden and so I went to the one at Galong. I was impressed with the presentation and with Mr Drowley's clear explanation of the various options and the reasons for the one chosen. I congratulate Council staff on their excellent research and the production of the presentation. I hope the Panel is amenable to the wishes of the residents of Harden and Cootamundra and does not force us into a different merger that we do not want.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra and Harden need to keep well clear of Young, their Council and General Manager appear to be trying to stand over Cootamundra - Harden by pushing ahead with their ideas. Rumours say both Young and Boorowa has big debts which we don't want any part of. Drive in Young town or shire and see the poor state of their roads and streets, they are more interested in building grand monuments to themselves. No Sports Stadium, Medical Centre, heated indoor pool, railway, wheat terminal, no pedestrain street crossings.	Cootamundra	1	
I don't want to merge with Young as I see they are only interested in the dollar signs.	Cootamundra	1	
Merge with Harden not Young. Young has a 44 Million dollar debt and a dogmatic attitude towards neighbouring shires.	Cootamundra	1	
We would have preferred option involving Young/Harden/Boorowa. This would hardly be a move out of the riverina region but a strong theming of a S W Slopes - Riverina region we accept - re proposed merger with Harden is the second best alternative.	Cootamundra	1	



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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
I am in full agreement with the merging of Cootamundra and Harden Shire Councils. Keep away from Young and Boorowa Councils with their apparent problems. I like the suggested plan for Council election with a gradual reduction of Councillors now at 16 down to 9 in the combined Council.	Cootamundra	1	
If we must merge, we support the proposal, but with reservations, the levels of service we currently enjoy could be reduced because we find we have to carry Harden. We should strenuously resist any attempt to impose the merge with Young, which appears to see a merge even opportunity to dominate, and develop steep era itself as a regional centre. This would be to the detriment of Cootamundra and any other partners, Young is not in the riverina, it does not appear to share our values and objectives and our two shires do not have the strong links and community of interest that we have with Harden, Temora and perhaps Gundagai.	Cootamundra	1	
I feel if we have to merge with another Council Harden is probably the best option. I feel that both councils will blend well. I would say no to merge with Young or Junee.	Cootamundra	1	
Definitely a better option than merging with Young and I'm glad Junee are standing alone too. Disappointing about Temora, but this seems to be a good merge for both Cootamundra and Harden.	Cootamundra	1	
If cannot stand alone we would be a much more equal partner with Cootamundra. If pushed into a merger with Young & Boorowa both of whom we have little historical connection, we would soon be the one stripped of all advantage to the benefit of Young.	Harden	1	
Would prefer to stand alone but if we can't, go with Cootamundra. Definitely NOT Young!!	Harden	1	
I support the merger and would oppose any moves to amalgamate with Young. It is to be hoped Paul Toole and the State Governmentt don't break their promise and try to force us to amalgamate with Young and Boorowa.	Harden	1	
Definitely do not want to go with Young.	Harden	1	
I have read the information attached to this envelope and conclude that a merger with Cootamundra is the right and only way to go for Harden Shire Council. We do not want to have anything to do with Young Shire!!!	Harden	1	
We think the merge with Cootamundra is a great proposal and fully support it. We don't think merging with Young and Boorowa is in our best interest. [Ratepayers for 40 years]	Harden	1	
You have not given reasons why the Council has gone against the Panel's recommended option. The horticulture industry has joint interest to stay with Young. eg fruit fly joint committee's, Hilltop region promotion. I believe that Harden community and business sector does financially benefit from existing ties with Young and Boorowa Shires.	Harden		1
If we can't stand alone we would much rather Cootamundra than Young.	Harden	1	
Strongly agree Cootamundra merger. Strongly oppose Young merger.	Harden	1	
The Harden/Cootamundra idea is very sound and very practicable. Boorowa would be a good addition but NOT Young. It appears to be of good benefit to both Harden and Cootamundra.	Harden	1	

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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
Please don't consider amalgamating with Young. Unfortunately I won't be able to attend any of your meetings, but please accept my approval of the Harden-Cootamundra amalgamation.	Harden	1	
Definitely Cootamundra - Young is too greedy and we would lose too much of our identity.	Harden	1	
Fully support the proposed merge with Cootamundra Shire. Hope that Young is not considered again.	Harden	1	
I was born in Harden 86 years ago I have seen Harden grow now going down. Go with Young we will die with it.	Harden	1	
So glad its Cootamundra. Congratulations on a well presented case. Pleased to be voting against Young. Harden people have given too much to them over the years.	Harden	1	
Good idea. Young thought they were going to get it all and take all from Harden.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra is a good way to go. Please don't go with Young.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra Shire, good choice! If we went with Young I don't think we'd get our potholes filled.	Harden	1	
I just hope we're not going to lose our town's name and there is no way I would go with Young.	Harden	1	
Best merger decision. Don't let Young bully our electorate.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra is the best option for Harden - 1. Harden would lose identity if paired with Young. 2. Boorowa is in a different State Electorate. 3. Gundagai should always be considered as a partner. 4. Young has just renovated their office so it is very likely that all senior positions would work out of Young, leaving Harden and Boorowa as outpost offices.	Harden	1	
I think it is a good idea. Young is too big and I feel they would dominate Harden. Boorowa is about the same size as Harden. Cootamundra would be stronger than Boorowa.	Harden	1	
Don't go to Young.	Harden	1	
As a resident of 80 years and a ratepayer for 59 years I think my opinion should be considered. I am sick and tired of all these people blowing into town thinking they know best or real locals. Do not make the same mistake as you did with the main street which is a disgrace no room for anyone to move. Young, Boorowa and Harden. Thank you.	Harden		1
I feel amalgamating with the Cootamundra Shire would be more beneficial to Harden. At least we might maintain our individuality with this Shire and not be 'swallowed up'.	Harden	1	
I agree to a merger with another Council, but not Young Shire Council, preferably Cootamundra Council.	Harden	1	

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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
Big businesses such as Carruthers Machinery Co, Aldi, Big W, McDonalds etc have shown Young is a better choice for investment than Cootamundra - so should we. This brochure does not give enough facts on Harden,Young and Boorowa merger. We accept independent Review Panel recommendation for Young, Harden and Boorowa merger.	Harden		1
Council's previous record on financial management [eg. level of debt? Harden's - Cootamundra's financial position V Young's]?? Go with the team offering the best possible future [without becoming a back street of a larger Council] Maybe Boorowa a smaller Council could merge to - for future 'Tourism/industry' attraction - Young has had the upper hand previously - but with changes that could favour Harden-Cootamundra areas - here is hoping.	Harden	1	
Definitely not with Young. Know from experience how selfish and greedy they are. NO! NO! NO!. Go with Cootamundra	Harden	1	
Prefer a Harden, Boorowa, Young merger. 1. the State Gov have stated they would prefer a merger of Harden, Boorowa and Young, based on population and economic performance with both Boorowa & Young Council's making submissions to this effect, Harden could result in an unwanted position. 2. the Hilltops region brand has worked and is something we can be proud of. the Harden-Cootamundra merger does little to recognise this. 3. the community engagement of Harden Council has been poor. If you were interested in community input, this process would have occurred before the decision was made!. Boorowa did.	Harden		1
as long as it remains Harden and Cootamundra. Definitely have NOTHING to do with Young.	Harden	1	
Please don't amalgamate with Young.	Harden	1	
Big yes - not Young thankyou.	Harden	1	
Dear Sir, my opinion would be to go with Cootamundra as they are not the take over attitude that Young has and money wise Cootamundra would be the way to go. Thankyou	Harden	1	
Harden will die if we end up with Young. They have poached a lot of industry and business from here.	Harden	1	
No way should we join with Young or Boorowa. If we cannot stand alone then Cootamundra is the most sensible option and we fully suport this.	Harden	1	
Very much against joining Young.	Harden	1	

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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
<p>The Wombat amalgamation meeting clearly showed the way of population                      [opt 1] Cootamundra &amp; Harden - 11,700                      [opt 2] Harden, Young &amp; Boorowa Shires - 18,500                      [opt 3] Harden, Boorowa &amp; Cootamundra - 25,000+.</p> <p>To achieve real efficiency associated with economies of scale it is obvious that option 2 or 3 has best potential. Ratepayers demand better services and facilities, improved roads etc. they are willing to accept only moderate rate increases to achieve the above results. I encourage Harden Shire Council to reconsider their decision and negotiate option 2 or 3.</p>	Harden		1
<p>As a cherry grower the original option of Harden, Young &amp; Boorowa Shires merging would achieve a far better outcome. The eradication of fruit-fly is crucial to any market access into China - working with one Shire not two would guarantee a better result. The success of the hilltops area promotion which covers the very diversified products produced eg cherries, wine, eggs, pork, beef, lamb, grain etc has brought thousands of tourists into the area. The other area of promotion which has flourished is the combined efforts of Young &amp; Harden Shires in pushing the public interest in the historic gold trail and bushrangers. One super Shire even including Cootamundra Shire would result in a united area promoting the most important food production district in NSW - Hilltops.</p>	Harden		1
<p>As a resident of Wombat I listened with interest to the amalgamation proposal &amp; the reasons why Harden should merge with Cootamundra. More obvious was the lack of reasons why Harden should not merge with Young &amp; Boorowa Shires. Only Harden would lose its identity, a lot of rot, Harden would still be an important town in the new Hilltips Shire. Wombat residents are tied to the community facilities of Young - eg. medical, aged care, schools, childcare, sporting facilities etc. Our rates should be contributing to these facilities.</p>	Harden		1
<p>As the Local Government review panel recommended Harden to merge with Young and Boorowa. This would be better for the long term greater good of our community.</p>	Harden		1
<p>Would rather go with a Young merger. I feel that Young will be the better option as they are going ahead in leaps and bounds and also the close proximity to Harden and I feel the towns already work well together as a Hilltops region.</p>	Harden		1
<p>I'm not in favour of forced amalgamation. I don't see any benefits other than a few small cost savings which I doubt will actually materialise. But on the basis if we don't make this move with Cootamundra Shire then it will be forced upon us by State Government to amalgamate with someone. eg. Young/Boorowa which I am not in favour of. It seems the lesser of 2 evils.</p>	Harden	1	
<p>Prefer Cootamundra to Young as I think it is more compatible than Young just worry Young could takeover everything.</p>	Harden	1	

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## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<p>I support the Young, Harden Boorowa amalgamation. Based on how most people shop for goods &amp; services in Harden Shire</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harden/Murrumburrah people shop Young not Cootamundra</li> <li>2. Wombat people shop Young and Cootamundra</li> <li>3. Jugiong people shop Cootamundra, Gundagai and Yass</li> <li>4. Galong people shop Harden, Young and Boorowa.</li> </ol> <p>Most shoppers are affiliated with Young not Cootamundra. That shopping trend will not stop even if you amalgamate with Cootamundra. You are flogging a dead horse.</p>	Harden		1
<p>I can't believe that you would expect that ratepayers in the Harden Shire would accept this proposal based on the 'merged Council Budget Income Statement' the purpose of amalgamation was to ensure that Shire Councils became sustainable, however what is proposed in this statement is net deficits over the forthcoming years, after the \$5m grant is no longer forthcoming. The FAQ answers provide the reason for this anomaly with the council perceiving that they will be able to maintain the 'scale and capacity' to provide the current level of service. This assumption is unrealistic. consequently, it could be extrapolated from the statement figures, that the council will increase income by increased annual rates and charges, which from my estimation is not sustainable in the long term unless the council have a further plan to increase the number of ratepayers, or adjustment of current rate charges for rural properties without increases to residential property. Unrealistic decisions made in the past by the Harden Shire Council, have resulted in lack of progress in the Harden Shire, and now the council is asking for the community to accept a further impost. There is no option other than amalgamation for Harden Shire Council, however I hope a holistic assessment of impacts on all members of the Harden community have been taken into account in making this unsustainable current plan of amalgamation with Cootamundra Shire. Based on the survey statement I do not agree with amalgamation with Cootamundra. I would prefer amalgamatin with Young/Boorowa, a more progressive Shire outcome.</p>	Harden		1
I think this proposal is far better than the Young, Harden, Boorowa merger.	Harden	1	
It seems to be a sensible and practical proposal.	Harden	1	
Lets hope the government agrees with this proposal and not a merger with Young and Boorowa.	Harden	1	
Not Hilltops. We do not want Young.	Harden	1	
Harden should negotiate a deal with Young and Boorowa Shires to form the new Hilltops Shire - a lot of money, time and effort has gone into promoting this area across NSW. To throw this away would be ridiculous.	Harden		1

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
As a resident of the Kingsvale/Wombat area we are opposed to the amalgamation of the Harden/Cootamundra shires. We travel into Young for business, shopping and social life. Our children attend school and sporting events in Young - it is logical that the rates we pay support facilities and community we use. The meeting did not tell us why negotiations with Young and Boorowa shires broke down. The paper reported a clash of Councillors - surely there were more relevant reasons than that.	Harden		1
Our area needs to grow to attract big and small businesses. To promote the area as Hilltops Region ie. Hunter Valley, Barossa and sell the brand nationally and every town to benefit from a united front this would be a positive step.	Harden		1
The original proposal of the Hilltops Region is a better long term option. To go a step further and incorporate Cootamundra would be a significant step to grow our region and promote the area to the business community as the Hilltops Region.	Harden		1
We think that the amalgamation of Harden & Cootamundra will be a positive one. Combination of Young & Harden would be to the detriment of Harden.	Harden	1	
Not Young.	Harden	1	
Not Young.	Harden	1	
We don't want to go with Young.	Harden	1	
I support the proposal that Harden Shire merge with Cootamundra Shire. Not Young, reason - Young and Boorowa refusal to show their financial position.	Harden	1	
Young Shire has no machinery or plant compared to Harden because of Young's Councillors mismanagement.	Harden	1	
I Support the proposal. Young attempted to steal our Rural Fire Service Office. Young demanding majority of Councillors. Young's distance from Jugiong. Jugiong people prefer Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
If our town still gets things done and not miss out because machinery etc is not held up by use in Harden or elsewhere, and rates do not go sky high.	Cootamundra	1	
Its to be hoped that the quality of finish of plumber repairs, road works, also the repairs done by the tar repairs truck are improved. The road sweeper sweeping where there is nothing, the bike lanes kept free of sticks, gravel and grass.	Cootamundra	1	
I really think it's a good idea we might get some work done now.	Cootamundra	1	
Great especially for the Library (RRL great Service)	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
I look at Harden as a great place to come to relax from the city. The only problem is the services. The water service to households is sometimes third world. Will the services improve? Can funding be got from State or Federal governments to fix the services issue. No water to households is really a third world problem not a first world problem surely it can be fixed.	Harden	?	?
I would support this proposal conditionally in that some new ideas from the amalgamation may lead to more sensible administration of the shire's governance. Any change from the complete shambles created by the idiotic changes the main street in the shopping precinct could only be for the better. I will reserve judgement until it may be more clearly seen.	Harden	1	
Reopen the racecourse as a recreation area.	Harden	1	
This is a good proposal as a rural ratepayer our main concerns were the state of our dirt roads being able to have regular access to grading is of major concern. Hopefully there will be the same level of access to Council.	Harden	1	
Thankyou for the diligence demonstrated. Please give consideration to the library situation where Cootamundra is in the Wagga Wagga zone, but Harden is in the Yoong/Boorowa zone. Will Harden residents and library become part of Wagga zone?	Harden	1	
The Cootamundra proposal is clearly the best option for Harden. However it will be critical that the new councillors take ownership over its success. Any efficiency gains within the Council office must result in improved services for the Shire's ratepayers. It will be easy for efficiency gains in staff to result in more red tape/pen pushers within council office and no actual improvement in council function. The example of reducing the amount of Council graders post merger is a poor example. Instead of rationalising equipment the shire needs to increase productivity, or even allow more private works etc.	Harden	1	
The Harden Shire seems to have an attitude that they don't want people to live here. We have made numerous applications for a building permit on my son's block and it keeps getting rejected. The block had a house on it and remains are still there. Maybe when we join Cootamundra Shire the attitude will change.	Harden	1	
Redundancies in admin are inevitable, we will not need 2 GM's, 2 pay masters, 2 engineering managers etc. get jobs sorted before merger, avoid excessive redundancy costs further down the track.	Cootamundra	1	
I thought I supported it but the answer 'Staffing levels increase because of co-ordination of workers' makes me wonder and it seems to me that an answer like this invites the Government to implement a larger FFTF option 1 probably with the 'stroke of a pen' especially since several surrounding Councils want to 'go it alone'.	Cootamundra	1	
As long as there are no job losses.	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
The Council is doing the practical thing, this round will be good experience for when the next round comes along eventually. I'm impressed by the efforts at negotiation the council has made, heads in the sand and a failure to negotiate would have helped no one. As long as jobs are protected and services don't decline this is a good opportunity, thank you for being open to inevitable change.	Cootamundra	1	
A win win situation with savings sharing plant etc and no job losses. Very important for country areas. Community visions appear similar. Strongly in favour of merger with Harden.	Cootamundra	1	
My concerns lie with reason for these mergers. To save money! How will this option Cootamundra/Harden save money. Job cuts! If jobs are lost in our small communities will this undermine your proposal. G.M. Dowley admits our combined population 11,500 is on 'lower end of benchmark', Minister Toole states 'shouldn't be an issue as long as it is longterm sustainable. Can we be assured our population can be long term sustainable? What happens if we drop below the benchmark?	Harden	1	
No job loss in either town who merge. Each town still has their own identity.	Harden	1	
Strongly opposed to the amalgamation of Harden Shire with any other Shire as a reduction of jobs and a reduction of services to residents will result. An amalgamation will promote the slow death of Harden Murrumburrah.	Harden		1
it is better for Harden Shire to stand alone. This will save jobs in Harden.	Harden		1
Should give Cootamundra Council better access to Canberra and access to the Murrumbidgee river as well as more money to do things around the area.	Cootamundra	1	
I consider it will lead to long term benefit to a merged Harden & Cootamundra Council - with both towns being on the main Sydney to Melbourne rail line. Also two major highways run through both areas.	Harden	1	
I am aware that the Kruger Medical Centre in Harden has considerable conditions associated with it - if a merger between Cootamundra and Harden Shires proceed as intended, what effect, if any, will these conditions place on Cootamundra residents?.	Cootamundra	?	?
New name: Cootamundra Harden Council.	Cootamundra	1	
Continue to pursue Gundagai. Name Suggestion: Shire of Burrinjuck. The Governement deleted electorate of Burrinjuck. Cootamundra and Harden have always been integral parts of Burrinjuck area. Lets use it again.	Cootamundra	1	
Riverina Council	Cootamundra	1	
As we are the gateway to the Riverina we should call the new Council the Riverina Council	Cootamundra	1	
New name for the Council should be Riverina Council as we have signage saying we are the Gateway to the Riverina.	Cootamundra	1	
The Council should be called the South West Slopes Council that's our region.	Cootamundra	1	
Call the new Council South West Slopes Council - Because that's where we are.	Cootamundra	1	



# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Choose a name that would be still be suitable if Gundagai later joined us - eg Slopes, maybe Coohargun, if all three joined. Could more emphasis be put on the extra positions that would be able to be created - eg Tourist officer, Heritage Consultant, Town Planner, Development Officer etc etc?	Cootamundra	1	
As the Aboriginal elder for Cootamundra and area I have been approached by several people to make some suggestions to Council to consider an Aboriginal word or phrase being implemented in the wording of the amalgamation between Cootamundra and Harden Shire Councils. I suggest one of the two words that the Council may appropriate Bulabul = Together or Two acting together. Mudyi = Friends or Comrades	Cootamundra	1	
Name could be CootaHarden Shire. I think this a move in the right direction.	Cootamundra	1	
Suggestion for the new Councils name: "Baileyana", which is the botanical name for the Cootamundra Wattle.	Cootamundra	1	
Thanks to all Council Staff for all information on merger with Harden Council. I am in agreement with the merger. Good luck to you all. I suggest name Cootamundra Harden Shire.	Cootamundra	1	
Whilst my wife and I do not agree that amalgamation is a good thing, we believe that if we were not to amalgamate and stay as a rural Council, we might find that the NSW Government could withhold financial support. So we now add our agreement to those who are for the amalgamation. As for a name for the amalgamated shires, we would like to suggest the following names, South East Wiradjuri Shire. Both Harden and Cootamundra are within the South Eastern confines of the Wirajuri People Territory as also is Gundagai should they join us at a later date. This would be a great opportunity to recognise and show respect to the Wiradjuri people.	Cootamundra	1	
What would the merger be called? I.e Cootamundra Harden Shire Council or Harden Cootamundra Shire Council?	Cootamundra	1	
Suggested new name: Cootamundra Regional Council	Cootamundra	1	
Good idea will benefit both towns so things can only be better for people in towns and villages. We need to make our own choices not let the Government do it for us. We should just be called Cootamundra/Harden Shire. Too difficult to change everything and people know where the towns are. Its an easy choice well done to all involved.	Cootamundra	1	
Having attended the merger meeting, read the flyer and tried to muddle through the business plan I feel we have made our own decision so the Governement won't do what we don't want. I must congratulate our Council and Ken, they have done a great job. New Name: I feel to change too much people won't know where we are, stick with Cootamundra/ Harden Shire, People know the area and where it is. Cootamundra first as we are the biggest Council to start with but also because it comes first alphabetically. Job well done by everyone.	Cootamundra	1	
Better to amalgamate peacefully than to be forced to. I like the name Jindalee Shire.	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
More control of existing policies by joining a smaller Council. May not make operation more complicated. May not have many advantages, but satisfies State Government best call it Cootamundra - same Government electroate. Its time we had our name up in a few places.	Cootamundra	1	
I feel an excellent name for a new merged Council (I hope it doesn't succeed) Wiradjuri Shire Council in honour of the original people who own this land.	Cootamundra		1
New shire name - Murrumbidgee Shire - attended meeting Harden.	Harden	1	
Name: Wattle Shire or Wallenbeen Shire [halfway in between] Trans Shire.	Harden	1	
Not to be owned by Young. They are trying to stand over us already, by not accepting us going with Cootamundra. Perfect example RFS trying to cheat us with that, nothing would get done in Harden everything would be done in Young. Do not want to lose our name, got to be Harden & Cootamundra Council or Coota-Harden Council, nothing fancy or CHM Shire.	Harden	1	
New name for the Council - Riverina Council	Harden	1	
Possible name of new shire - Murrumbidgee Valley Shire.	Harden	1	
I support a merger with Cootamundra in preference to the Hilltops alternative. As a name for the new Council I suggest 'Demonjinda' or 'Jindaril' a combination of the original shires.	Harden	1	
Suggestion for name for the new Shire ' South West Slopes Shire'. Congratulations to all concerned on the quality of the merged Council Business Plan.	Harden	1	
Can't see how this will benefit either town but bow to the inevitable.	Cootamundra	1	
The merge with Harden will increase efficiency if there is no full office admin staff at both Cootamundra and Harden. If the plan is not to reduce the admin staff then it will be of little benefit either shire to merge.	Cootamundra	1	
I (We) really don't see any advantage.	Cootamundra		1
No if a small town can stand by itself (example) Junee, Narrandera, and Tumut so can we. We have everything going for Cootamundra don't drag in Harden.	Cootamundra		1
Stay as a stand alone as a Council in the riverina joint organisation.	Cootamundra		1
I don't agree with the amalgamation. Our town should be able to stand alone. If other towns can stand alone so can we. I here in towns in VIC who tried it, didn't work and went back to what they were. Cost them a certain amount we don't have to do it. Let the majority of the people decide not the Council.	Cootamundra		1
I think the Cootamundra Council does a great job in and around the town so why change it.	Cootamundra		1

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
We have not yet seen the real savings in amalgamating, given that while savings will be made in some areas, but additional costs in theirs. If we have to amalgamate, then Cootamundra seems an option that fits, provided the total population fits the Governmentt criteria [11,500 is not a large population.] We must also consider local businesses that currently do business with the Harden Shire. They will lose if the admin is taken out of town.	Harden	?	?
Never worked in Queensland and will never work here. No mention of what would happen to Kruger "Trust funds after the amalgamation.	Harden		1
We would be better off by going it on our own [not with any other Council].	Harden		1
Since your statement says it will be needed to have extra staff to combine the two Council and extra staff [indoor[ will be needed to continue, it means noe of the following to keep costs down - lower wages [ha ha], less outdoor staff [the ones that actually do the work] or increased costs [most likely] also it will mean the compete loss of the Harden Murrumburrah identity. Very sad but unavoidable.[plus extra pages]	Harden		1
I would prefer to go it alone. If the Government will allow us. Other than that Cootamundra for sure.	Harden	1	
You have not convinced me that bigger is better. If our Council is in good shape now why would it not be in the future? I can not see any great improvement to my life by this proposal. We will still have to go to Young for nearly everything. Staff will live in Young anyway. I would like to see this town get going.	Harden		1
Yes, great move.	Cootamundra	1	
Keep all staff, retrain if necessary, keep rates at a level people can afford, keep all roads etc in a proper condtion.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Simple - do your best and what's best for the rate payers.	Cootamundra	1	
<i>(comments ripped, cant see all of it so it doesn't make sence)</i>	Cootamundra	1	
By all means go ahead and become bigger. Your Mayor and Councillors do a great job. A few more Councillors like Wight and Stewie with balls might help.	Cootamundra	1	



# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<b>Do you support</b>	
		Yes	No
I attended the Wallendbeen meeting - it was very informative. I strongly support the merger. Good luck with coming up with a name.	Cootamundra	1	
Good decision.	Cootamundra	1	
Very good move.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment.	Cootamundra	1	
I have read the reports and the business plan. The council is being responsible about what the government has said and give a fair picture of what might happen. The council should continue.	Cootamundra	1	
Happy with proposal.	Cootamundra	1	
Congratulations on making this decision and for the way all events were investigated. I am sure both Councils can only benefit from the merger by combining expertise and use of machinery etc. thus saving money.	Cootamundra	1	
Attended the information evening at Wallendbeen May 19th, which was very well presented. We appreciated all the Council support, but so disappointed with the community not taking interest in the merger. Well done, we fully support the merger with Harden Council and wish you all well.	Cootamundra	1	
We are both in favour of this amalgamation hope it is most successful for both shires. The booklet of information was very informative.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Good move. All being equal I would have been most happy with Harden as a partner.	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
We are aware of the climate changes and the inconsistencies of governments, their inaptitude in the amalgamation of Councils. We were impressed at the consultation meeting of the presentation by the local Council's spokesperson Mr Trethewey. Every aspect of a joint operation with Harden had been deeply investigated both in the initial and future operations. Both my wife and I concur wholeheartedly with the Harden amalgamation.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Good idea	Cootamundra	1	
Cootamundra and Harden	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Good idea	Cootamundra	1	
It is a must do!	Cootamundra	1	
If we have to merge with anyone Harden would be my choice	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Should be the best for all concerned	Cootamundra	1	
It will be a good thing	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
Having heard the explanation and read the Council business plan I think the merger will work; providing all concerned work diligently for the benefit of all and are ever mindful of spending wisely when it comes to the financial aspect; that monies received be it taxpayers or ratepayers is spent with the upmost thought and care. Thank you to all who have worked hard to put all the information together and made it assessable to all the community.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
Good luck and we hope you know what you are doing. Thank you	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra	1	
My mother was born in Harden and we have lived in Cootamundra for 20 years plus, we don't understand everything involved but will trust the Council members to do the best on our behalf.	Cootamundra	1	
I think this will be a good move for Cootamundra Council to pursue for the better of the community and staff. Ultimately this would put us as a stronger Council with better opportunities to grow and develop a good sustainable community. Hopefully coming out the other side will be a benefit for all.	Cootamundra	1	
We certainly go along with whatever is good for our town and we do think this merge with Harden will benefit both towns.	Cootamundra	1	
No Comment	Cootamundra		1
No Comment	Cootamundra		1
No Comment	Cootamundra		1
No No No stand alone.	Cootamundra		1
No Comment	Cootamundra		1
No Comment	Cootamundra		1
Best option - Cootamundra. Yes definitely	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
No to merger with Cootamundra Council	Harden		1
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
and good luck	Harden	1	
Merging with Cootamundra will be the best outcome.	Harden	1	
Full steam ahead	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Pleased to amalgamate with Cootamundra, with the positive attitude put forward.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I do agree	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Yes about time	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I support the proposed merger between Harden and Cootamundra Councils.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I believe going with Cootamundra would be the best for Harden.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Very much in favour of this proposal.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I strongly support this proposal.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Harden and Cootamundra would be the best way to go.	Harden	1	



# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
	Harden	1	
Harden and Cootamundra merger. Household of 2 adults for vote counting.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Yes with Cootamundra that is the only best option.	Harden	1	
The best option seems to have been selected.	Harden	1	
Support the proposal to merge with Cootamundra as it is a strong and vibrant council.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I am in favour of amalgamation if it will benefit Harden, if not we may as well stand alone.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
A sensible outcome, albeit from a seriously flawed State Government process. Hopefully the State Government will heed the wishes of ratepayers.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra is the best match.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Harden/Cootamundra is my preferred option	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Looks the way to go	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Merge with Cootamundra	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden		1
	Harden		1
I have been here for 55 years. I do not want to join Cootamundra Shire.	Harden		1
Yes fantastic Cootamundra Harden great idea we support in full.	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<b>Do you support</b>	
		Yes	No
Absolutely our best option.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
No comment needed!	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Good luck	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Wishing both Shires every success in this very important venture.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I would have thought that it would be sensible to ensure that amalgamated councils should always be within State Electoral boundaries.	Harden	1	
All the best for the merger.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Yes merger proposal to Cootamundra Council not Young.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<b>Do you support</b>	
		Yes	No
	Harden		1
Definitely not!!	Harden		1
	Harden	1	
Great presentation - well done Harden Shire employees - only hope all are rewarded with amagamation with Cootamundra	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Well presented presentation - would much prefer to be in Cootamundra Shire.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
It will be better than going with Young. They will take over everything.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
It is a good idea to go with Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Amalgamation is long overdue. Cootamundra-Harden 'Go for it'.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Very well presented and explained meeting we think that the decision to merge with Cootamundra is a very good decision made by the Harden Shire Council.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Based on agreement of representation going through or being submitted to NSW Gov	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Hope this helps and we actually do have a say.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Fully support a merger with Cootamundra. Would also support Boorowa joining with Harden and Cootamundra. DO NOT support in anyway joining with Young.	Harden	1	
We sincerely hope the merger is a success but it will need a very alert council to carry it off.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Combining with Cootamundra is an excellent idea.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
The decision to merge with Cootamundra makes a lot of sense.	Harden	1	
I think it will be good thing to merge with Cootamundra.	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
We agree with your proposal to amalgamate with Cootamundra Council - an excellent idea. Let's hope the local governemnt agrees. Thanks to Mayor John Horton and General Manager Trevor Drowley for all the time and effort they spent to prepare the proposal on behalf of the residents of Harden, Murrumburrah, Galong, Wombat and Jugiong.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Thankyou for all the work the Council staff and our elected Councillors have put into this proposal. Well done!	Harden	1	
100% support of your AGM & Councillors for the work that they have done in this matter and I believe that Cootamundra has done the same. Thankyou for taking this action.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Yes we feel this is a way forward if we are unable to remian as we are working at present.	Harden	1	
If you mean the proposal to merge with Cootamundra, YES	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I support the proposal to go with Cootamundra	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Thankyou for your brochure outlining the merger - though I don't live in Harden I will in the future and appreciate being involved in the decision of merging. I believe Cootamundra would be the best to merge with. Thankyou.	Harden	1	
Job well done - to date.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Merging with Cootamundra is the only sensible option for Harden Shire if we have to merge at all. Kind regards.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
	Harden	1	
We think it would be a good move. Good Luck.	Harden	1	
Young need to see the big picture not go with another dying Shire.	Harden		1
	Harden	1	
Please go with Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Harden to join with Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra & Harden join.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra & Harden.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Harden and Cootamundra merger	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden		1
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
We believe that the Council has set out their case for a merger with Cootamundra extremely well.	Harden	1	
Harden + Cootamundra	Harden	1	
Harden/Cootamundra.	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
I would support this if it has to happen. I can not see that it will be much different. I now pay many thousands of dollars every year in rates and each and everytime I ask for something to be done the answer is NO. there is too much government - Local, State, Federal and L.L.S.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Great idea	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
Good synergy of two Councils. Well done.	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
	Harden	1	
I would like to congratulate Council on making a very good decision.	Harden	1	
Whilst ideally amalgamation of Cootamundra, Harden and Gundagai would have made the most sense geographically, socially and culturally, Cootamundra/ Harden remains the best option for the future for both shires	Cootamundra	1	
We believe this is a good proposal for both Councils. It would be good to have a river in our shire not sure on this, but I think money for Olympic Way and Hume Highway comes from Feds, so we would have more money for local needs. I think Gundagai should also be part of equation.	Cootamundra	1	
Best way to go. Best of luck with Gundagai	Cootamundra	1	
We believe Cootamundra and Harden Shires should amalgamate. We believe both Shires should approach Gundagai Shire again. If the three unite we would have a much central location that we could promote ie a river, three highways, four caravan parks.	Cootamundra	1	
This needs to be a long term merger - not just in short term fix for the 2 Shires. The State Government may intervene and stop this proposal or make another decision that sees more Councils merge into a bigger Shire eg Cootamundra, Harden, Young and Boorowa. Providing services are maintained (and hopefully improved) and rates do not increase dramatically, it should be a beneficial move for all residents.	Cootamundra	1	
I would have liked to see both the shires of Junee and Gundagai included in this process as I feel that an increase in combined population of 11,500 will not satisfy Government departments hell bent on reducing the number of local Government areas for long. for over many years various state Governments have wanted to reduce the numbers of local governments and Coota Council has done the right thing in being proactive.	Cootamundra	1	

# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		Yes	No
I am pleased to see Cootamundra Shire Council has the vision to look beyond the next elected term and is ready to position itself in a state of preparedness for the long term. I personally would have preferred the merger or amalgamation proposal to have included at least one more LGA (eg Temora or Gundagai or both) but understand why this was not possible.	Cootamundra	1	
This is the procedure governments use prior to the privatisation of all government organisations which will result in higher rates and less services. Take a look at the mess created in Victoria by Geoff Kennett. Cootamundra would be better suited increasing the Councils standards of other Councils like Temora.	Cootamundra		1
I feel that this proposal is very short sighted. The whole idea of amalgamation is to put 3 or 4 even 5 council areas together to drive efficiency via the same admin costs spread over a much larger area with a higher rate income. What's to say that in 5 or 10 years time the State Government of the day goes through the same process again. Lets put in place a Council area that serves us well for the next 50 years. My preference is to join with Temora and Junee Councils and let Harden join with Young and Boorowa.	Cootamundra		1
The best interests of the people of Jugiong would be best served by Jugiong coming under the jurisdiction of the Gundagai Shire ASAP.	Cootamundra		1
Well set out document. I agree this is the best merger proposal to grow and sustain Harden/Cootamundra. I would like to see a change of boundary to include Binalong in the future.	Harden	1	
Merge with Cootamundra/Gundagai also if possible. If the merge with 'Young' they will dominate this has appened with 'sport/health/rural fire/electrical supply authority, just to name a few.	Harden	1	
Cootamundra is best fit for Harden. Boorowa is a very similar community - a shame they cannot join the merger	Harden	1	
I am afraid that by the 3rd election Cootamundra will have all the say over Harden in my opinion the better amalgamation would either be Cootamundra, Harden, Boorowa or Harden & Boorowa.	Harden		1
If IPART does not accept option, the next option I prefer is Cootamundra/Harden/Young/Boorowa.	Harden	1	
My second preference would be the amalgamation of 4 shires - Boorowa/Cootamundra, Harden and Young.	Harden	1	
We feel that to benefit the whole of the South West Slopes . That for the future Young, Harden, Boorowa and Cootamundra should combine this would benefit our tourist, food, wine, farming lifestyle and community services.	Harden		1
I think Boorowa should also be included in proposed merger with Cootamundra but definitely Young should not be included in the merger with Cootamundra.	Harden	1	
We would probably be stronger with one more shire like Gundagai. But I fully support this merger.	Harden	1	



# Fit for the Future

## Response from Residents

<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
If we have to merge to get a bigger scale to be viable. Why only merge with one Council? I have heard your argument for this BUT why not go bigger and you won't have to do it again in the future? How about Harden, Cootamundra, Boorowa, Young, Grenfell, Yass, Gundagai and Cowra. Let's get fair dinkum about about it.	Harden	1	
On the provison that rates and charges no not (R) do not escalate and bureaucrats are kept under control. If the above conditions apply, there is every possibility that such a merger will work. But it will take disipline and self control, an understanding of what rate payers need, no want, and it will work. We shall see!	Cootamundra	1	
I think the merger was a foregone conclusion but I agree with Harden as the chosen Council to merge with, as our regions share so much in common. My concern with the merger is; will Council use this as an excuse to increase rates? In back pooling resources, it should be the opposite. 1. Once Councils merge who will be heading the new merged Council? Will it be put to the ratepayers to vote? 2. Once merged , I would like to see a Councillor elected to represent each village. 3. The elected Mayor to represent the merged Council must be a dynamic and outgoing person who relates well with the constituents.	Cootamundra	1	
Speaking from personal experience rates increased greatly with very little to show. In fact the area of amalgamation slipped backwards. I strongly oppose it as a result we left the area as did many others.	Cootamundra		1
I really hope we don't get a rise in our rates We seem to pay a lot more than some councils even in Sydney. I can't see why we have to pay for mulch from green waste. We pay for that already in our rates.	Harden	1	
As long as rates are pegged and services maintained.	Harden	1	
I agree to the proposed amalgamation with the understanding that rates will NOT rise and that extra services [such as an unwanted, costly garbage waste service] will NOT be imposed on GALONG residents.	Harden	1	
The Villagers should eventually only have one Councillor not 3. Cootamundra and Harden should have the larger proportion of Councillors due to population of the towns and rural areas.	Cootamundra	1	
Would like to see Councillor numbers based on the population of each existing shire - Say 6 from Cootamundra and 4 from Harden or 7 and 3. possible names could be - Cullinga Shire Council, Eastern Riverina Shire Council, South West Slopes Shire Council, Wiradjuri Shire Council.	Cootamundra	1	
It should help to have Councillors who are proactive, and hopefully Councillors that think outside the square, by combining will enhance tourism and above all employment.	Cootamundra	1	
We want positive responses as well as negative. Both Councils to vote for 5/5 Councillor for first 4 years.	Harden	1	
1. endorse and agree with proposal. 2. re. electoral process: why not consider 'wards' [ridings?]. These make it more likely ratepayers will get to know their representatives. Also makes it more difficult to run 'party' tickets at election time.	Harden	1	

# Fit for the Future

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<u>Comments:</u>	<u>Council</u>	<u>Do you support</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Only with Cootamundra, not otherwise. Equal representation v.important 1st 4yrs - but will likely lose frameline in later years. Doubt economies will be any better. This designed for densely populated areas on the coast. West of the Dividing Range should have different criteria for merging vis coast.	Harden	1	
The new mayor is very proactive - I feel we have a leader that cares.	Harden	1	
I support amalgamation provided Harden has an equal number of councillors from day one ie. when the crucial decisions are made not after and continuing till approx 2024 ie. 2 terms from amalgamation.	Harden	1	
This looks great. It looks like there has been a lot of thoughts about who to join up with. It makes sense. I'm in favour. Its great to have Jugiong as part of Cootamundra, it gives us a point of contact with the highway.	Cootamundra	1	
It won't affect the people very much, except for the increases which are bound to come. As long as Councillors are truthful which sometimes they are not. With a change of Council in the future maybe things will get better especially for the Villages what ever the new shire is called should incorporate the word wattle, because that is what Cootamundra is named for.	Cootamundra	1	
Hoping with the new Council that it does not get too big as it will take a long time to get things through Council. Hoping with the new Council we out in the villages get a maintenance person to keep the Villages tidy.	Cootamundra	1	
It sound a very sound proposal and a satisfactory outcome for Harden Shire and its villages.	Harden	1	
I would prefer no change but I guess that is not an option. So in saying that I think the Cootamundra/Harden merger is the way to go. I still have concerns about villages being ignored.	Harden	1	
This sounds like a good option both Harden and Cootamundra have villages to be maintained. The panel should accept this as both these Councils have worked together on this - when so many other Councils are in dispute.	Harden	1	