

Ansett flies for Noosa

James O'Loan

BOB Ansett will fight to reinstall Noosa's own council until he draws his last breath.

The former Budget Rent-a-Car doyen fronts the Friends of Noosa campaign, which did not flinch when the pro-amalgamation Labor Government was returned to power on Saturday.

"I've got form and as long as I'm drawing breath we're going to fight this," the 12-year Noosa resident said.

"Noosa is what it is today because generations of Noosans made sure it wasn't raped and pillaged like many other coastal communities.

"Noosa, and surveys indicate about 95 per cent of people here are in favour, will fight until it regains its right to self-govern."

The business consultant cited

the example of Mansfield, Victoria, as proof a formerly amalgamated town with little in common with its neighbours can win back independence.

Benalla and Mansfield morphed in 1994 into the Delatite Shire, but were separated in 2001 after community protests for separation.

Port Douglas, Stanthorpe and towns in the southern Darling Downs and west Queensland have also continued to push for their councils to be reinstated.

Mr Ansett said those outside Noosa might have trouble understanding Friends of Noosa's campaign, but FON would present Premier Anna Bligh by mid-year with financial, cultural and social reasons for independence.

From the ex-Noosa and current Sunshine Coast Regional



UNITED on sand ... Bob Ansett, backed by Friends of Noosa members, vows to fight on for a Noosa council. Picture: Megan Slade

Council staff who wore black armbands on Monday to symbolise grief at the election result, to the man on the street, FON appears to have unanimous support.

Local Government Association of Queensland executive director Greg Hallam yesterday

said the LNP, which would have polled Noosa residents and reinstated their council if they wanted it, lost the election and the issue was now "dead and buried".

"People had the chance to resolve the issue through the ballot box and they chose not to

(via the overall result)," he said. "There is no (current) legal mechanism to de-amalgamate. They've got to let it go."

Sunshine Coast Council Mayor Bob Abbott, who stopped his anti-amalgamation campaign when elected the region's new mayor, said he could no

longer comment on the issue.

Re-elected Member for Noosa Glen Elmes (LNP) enjoyed an 18 per cent swing last weekend and said he owed a lot of it to his party's push to give Noosa residents a chance to vote out of the new council.

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