

Trust and integrity drive Webb back

Upper House vote as Nelson backs independent with a clear mandate



Labor MLC Luke Edmunds has been re-elected.

Amelia Swan and Sue Bailey

Re-elected independent MLC Meg Webb says her strong showing in Nelson is a clear mandate from voters for greater integrity, transparency and accountability in Tasmania's upper house.

Ms Webb said the issues that came up during the campaign revolved around "trust in the government".

"On the result we've seen so far, Nelson has delivered a resounding vote in support of an independent upper house and greater integrity, transparency and accountability being put forward on their behalf," she said.

"Whether that's the stadi-

um, whether it's the UTAS campus sale, whether it's the crisis in our health system, in affordable housing, in our education system, underpinning it all was people's scepticism that this government has the community's best interests at heart."

Ms Webb said the strength of the Legislative Council lay in a "broad spectrum of voices", welcoming the growth of independent representation.

"We know that major parties in the upper house will do exactly what their party did in the lower house," she said.

"Independents bring fresh review, fresh scrutiny and a fresh opportunity for Tasmanians to be represented."

Liberal candidate Marcus

Vermey said he was disappointed with the result in Nelson because he wanted to "give back to the community".

"I still think I did reasonably well taking on an incumbent, which is always a hard thing to do," he said.

"I knew it would be very hard and obviously I would have liked it a little closer."

Mr Vermey said he believed there was support for the Macquarie Point stadium in the electorate and it was important it went ahead to show interstate investors the state was open for business opportunities.

"I think it is the younger people who are definitely, unequivocally for it," he said.

Meanwhile, sitting Labor

“On the result we’ve seen so far, Nelson has delivered a resounding vote in support of an independent upper house ...”

Meg Webb

Re-elected independent MLC

MLC Luke Edmunds said his re-election was an "endorsement" for both himself and Labor leader Dean Winter.

"I'm still sort of absorbing everything that has happened but just so rapt to get this endorsement for not only myself

but also for Dean, it's his first test at the ballot box and we've smashed it," he said.

"I think what we've showed is ... we are back, we are the party of the middle in Tasmania and we're getting ringing endorsements federally.

"This community has Labor values and they've endorsed a Labor candidate."

Mr Winter said Labor was looking forward to working with independents, saying people felt like the government had "given up".

"We've got an agenda where we want to hold the government to account but also in government we want to make sure we've got good solid relationships where we can make sure we get a good, strong Labor agenda through the Legislative Council," he said.

The Tasmanian Electoral Commission says checking of polling place and pre-poll first preferences will start on Monday.



Former Senate president Stephen Parry is the Liberal candidate for Montgomery. Picture: Elise Kaine

Parry down but not out

Sue Bailey

Former Liberal president of the Senate, Stephen Parry, admits it is "highly unlikely" he will win the seat of Montgomery in the Legislative Council – but he hasn't conceded yet.

Casey Hiscutt, who leads Mr Parry by just 542 votes, is also not claiming victory.

The final result will come down to preferences to decide who replaces Mr Hiscutt's mother retiring Liberal MLC Leonie Hiscutt.

Mr Hiscutt, who ran as an independent, is hoping to follow his mother and great uncles Des and Hugh Hiscutt, who both served in the upper house.

He's pleased he topped the poll with 7056 votes or 31.89 per cent ahead of Mr Parry with 6514 votes or 29.44 per cent.

Mr Hiscutt, a Central Coast councillor, is hopeful preferences will go his way.

"To get the most primaries is always a pleasing situation to be in but you can't claim a victory until you know a little bit more about where the pref-



Independent candidate for Montgomery Casey Hiscutt.

erences are going to flow but I think I'm happy with the position that I'm in," he said.

"I think it likely (to get preferences) but I've been avoiding the word 'confident' for the entire campaign so I'm not going to say (I am) confident."

"I definitely stand on the shoulders of giants. But I have been a councillor in Central Coast Council for the last six years and I've done many things to stand on my own two feet as well."

"I think being present in the community and getting to events and being there with the people is very important."

"I'd like to think I've done my fair share of that, but also

recognising the fact that the Hiscutts have been doing that for 150 years as well."

Mr Parry was disappointed. "It's highly unlikely that I can win from here, but there's still a lot of counting to be done and we've got no idea where the preferences are going to go," he said.

"Until there's some more counting done, and until we start to see a bit of a preference flow, there's still a lot of postal and phone votes that still come in, so look, I think it's unlikely from here, but there's still a chance."

Mr Parry said the Hiscutt name was strong in the North-West and he "was always fighting the name".

He did not blame the poor performance of the federal Liberal Party at the recent federal election for his likely loss.

"There's no doubt there are many, many factors and I still believe that voters are discerning enough to work out the difference between federal and state politics."

"There might have been a percentage unhappy but how do you measure it?"