

Leu reduced to tears

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REBEL councillor Julia Leu was reduced to tears after being accused of disloyalty during a heated grilling by her fellow Cairns councillors.

The Division 10 representative was subjected to an "old fashioned inquisition" at the meeting of all councillors and Mayor Val Schier last Friday to address her support of a controversial de-amalgamation.

Cr Robert Pyne yesterday revealed details of the meeting to The Cairns Post, saying it was called in response to Cr Leu's support for the undoing of the forced merger between the old Cairns City Council and Douglas Shire.

Cr Pyne said Cr Leu was accused of disloyalty to the new council and "inciting an environment of hatred to Cairns Regional Council in the former Douglas Shire".

"It was an inquisition," he said.

"They took turns paying out on the poor woman.

"Julia ended up crying, I thought it was like bullying in school."

"I do not think it was right."

Cr Leu yesterday declined to discuss the meeting except to confirm Cr Pyne's version of events.

She vowed to continue defending the wishes of residents of her division.

"I am a big girl, I can deal with it," she said.

"I would not be doing my job as a councillor if I ignored the community's concerns."

Cr Leu said if there were concerns or complaints from the community she would not remain silent in raising or attempting to solve those issues.

"It would be ridiculous for me not to do so," she said.

Cr Schier would not discuss the meeting yesterday.

But she told The Cairns Post she had never been critical of Cr Leu and described her as a strong and capable person.

"All I will say is that Julia is working incredibly hard to represent her constituents and needs the full support of other councillors and council staff."

In a move to help build a stronger relationship with the former Douglas Shire, Cr Schier said it had been suggested council set up an advisory board made up of Douglas residents "to provide feedback, information and positive suggestions".

"It is an idea that has been floated but it really needs the support of Douglas residents," Cr Schier said.

Also yesterday, the State Government was slammed by the Opposition after Local Government Minister Warren Pitt lashed out at the old Douglas Shire.

"The arrogance of this Labor Government is becoming more evident each day that passes," Opposition spokesman for local government Howard Hobbs said.