

HUNTERS HILL

General manager to retire after 22 years

HUNTERS Hill Council's general manager of 22 years, Barry Smith, has announced he will retire in September.

The 64-year-old suffered a heart attack last year and for health and family reasons has decided not to renew his contract when it expires on September 26.

Mr Smith said he recovered from the attack, his second, but believed the time was right to step down.

"My cardiologist said you won't be so lucky with a third one," he said.

"I've also got two grandchildren coming and I want to make sure I'm around to be a grandfather."

Mr Smith lives at North Richmond and often endures a commute of more than two hours.

He steered the small organisation through attempts to merge or disband it, most recently the State Government's council amalgamations agenda.

"We won that war. I'm sure there will be another one," he said.

Mr Smith was most proud of the council's financial sustainability. He said maintaining the finances would remain a challenge while



Barry Smith is retiring.

the state and federal governments continued to shift costs.

Mayor Mark Bennett, former mayors Richard Quinn and Susan Hoopman and former councillor Phil Jenkyn all gave tributes.

Cr Bennett said he was particularly impressed by the general manager's work against amalgamation, while Mr Quinn said Mr Smith risked his professional standing by working against amalgamation.

Mrs Hoopman said Mr Smith had helped save army defence lands, Hunters Hill High school and Henley Bowling Club.

Mr Jenkyn, a vocal opponent of council amalgamations, said Mr Smith's support had been crucial.