

# Six councillors from Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove are said to have been chosen for an interim council

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*Hunters Hill Cr Zac Miles, the only one the council's six members to apply for the interim council.*

The State Government is said to have “chosen” the six councillors it wants to sit on an interim council while Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove local government areas are merged.

The councillors may have been short-listed by advisers to the Minister for Local Government Paul Toole even before last Friday’s deadline for sitting councillors to express their interest in joining the advisory group, which could be called together as early as July 1.

Observers close to discussions on how the government will implement its amalgamation of the three councils said those most likely to be invited to join the interim council were: from Ryde, Liberal councillors Bill Picking and Artin Etmekdjian; from Hunters Hill, Mayor Richard Quinn and Zac Miles; and, from Lane Cove, Mayor Deborah Hutchens and Liberal Scott Bennison.

Among the six are two mayors and three former mayors.



*Chosen six (From top left) Bill Pickering, Artin Etmekdjian, Deborah Hutchens, Scott Bennison, Richard Quinn and Zac Miles.*

Friday was the deadline for existing councillors to indicate whether they would join an interim council to work with a chief executive and an interim general manager until the merger was complete and an election was held in March next year.

When the appointed chief executive, acting general manager and interim council will take over from the three existing councils is unclear, but there is speculation this could coincide with the proclamation of the new city's boundaries on July 1 or soon afterwards.

However, there was also the option for the government to allow the councils being merged to continue until their current term expires in September.

While the list has been widely discussed, not all of these councillors had indicated by the deadline that they were willing to join the interim council.

Cr Miles was the only one of Hunters Hill's six councillors to lodge an application.

Mayor Richard Quinn said on Monday that he had not lodged an application, but said he would serve on the interim council if the people of Hunters Hill indicated that they wanted him to.

He and four others – Peter Astridge, Meredith Sheil, Justine McLaughlin and Mark Bennett – declared at an extraordinary council meeting last Tuesday that they would not reapply.

Cr Miles and councillor Gary Bird did not state their position at the meeting but Cr Bird did not lodge a form by the deadline.

Cr Miles said he believed it was every elected councillor's duty to offer themselves to serve the community.

“I will not let myself be swayed by a vocal and out-of-touch minority to the detriment of our future,” Cr Miles said.

“We cannot bury our heads in the sand. I will continue to fight for Hunters Hill and I look forward to serving the community as best I can over the coming months, whatever that may hold.”

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/news/six-councillors-from-ryde-hunters-hill-and-lane-cove-are-said-to-have-been-chosen-for-an-interim-council/news-story/21cf2109bbef651f3e08973b3a122065>