

Lane Cove activist is urging residents to ‘keep the faith’

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Long standing Lane Cove resident Don Murchison says he’s appalled by this week’s Land and Environment Court dismissal of Lane Cove and Hunters Hill Council’s case against their forced merger with Ryde – but has urged other residents to keep fighting for our municipalities.



Lane Cove’s Don Murchison at a rally in Lane Cove Plaza. TWT on-the-spot PHOTO

The Land and Environment Court dismissed the councils’ case last week and awarded costs against them.

Mr Murchison has been actively involved in Lane Cove rallies against the proposed forced merger and said that despite the court decision the fight isn’t over until the fat lady sings.

“There’s been too many important issues for Lane Cove that have been steamrolled in such a profound way they will be an adverse effect of Premier Mike Baird at the next election,” he said.

“There is still a good chance we’ll win an appeal and it is amazing the number of court cases that have been won on appeal.

“Like the majority of residents in Lane Cove, I’ll keep fighting and I know many other residents will.”

Mr Murchison described comments by the Liberal Mayor of Ryde, Clr Bill Pickering that a forced merger is ‘inevitable’ are insensitive and insulting to Lane Cove.

“It is the mentality of a big fish in a small pond that thinks it can swim wherever it wants too, its outrageous.” he said.

Mr Hutchison expressed disappointment that a recent council election result that devastated the Liberal Party in the City of Sydney and across Western Sydney hadn't sunk in to pro-amalgamation Liberals.

"Many voters actually liked things the way they were and in Lane Cove we like our municipality just the way it is," he said.

We've done all we can, says Mayor



Lane Cove Mayor Deborah Hutchens.

MAYOR of Lane Cove Deborah Hutchens was re-elected recently but fears she could be the riverside municipality's last Mayor.

Hunters Hill and Lane Cove had their case against a forced merger with Ryde dismissed in the Land and Environment Court last week.

Now Lane Cove and Hunters Hill face the threat of being forced to merge into a mega council with Ryde under a proposal from Dictator Premier Mike Baird who has ruled the three councils as unfit for the future.

Mayor Hutchens told The Weekly Times Lane Cove Council has done everything in its power to support the residents who want to save it.

"We have meetings with Local Government Minister Paul Toole, we've had rallies, we've had a legal challenge, I've been to parliament and I've had support from broadcaster Alan Jones and the media," Mayor Hutchens said.

"We've done everything we possibly can, absolutely everything.

"But the State Government isn't listening, its just hell bent on doing this and all our arguments are falling on deaf ears.

"I would love us to stand alone, as we deserve too, as part of a Joint Regional Authority and that remains our council's position."

Under Mayor Hutchens, Lane Cove Council has delivered on all its commitments, provided outstanding services and even posted a \$2.8 million surplus.

"If we're not fit for the future, who ever will be?" she asked.

“We’ve always been transparent and although we have had some robust council meetings it is because we have a team of councillors that want the best outcome for Lane Cove and that’s what local democracy is all about.”

Mayor Hutchens said the Council is especially proud to have provided new car parks, upgraded Lane Cove Plaza, landscaped Tambourine Bay and provided synthetic turf for local sports fields.

Mayor Hutchens responded to NSW Opposition Leader Luke Foley’s message of solidarity in this week’s edition.

“If Luke Foley wants to de-amalgamate there will, of course, be an enormous cost to it and I’m afraid that once again the cost will have to be met by our ratepayers,” she said.

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