

Mayor votes himself in

by BELINDA TASKER

LEICHHARDT mayor Larry Hand has won a battle to hold on to his position as chairman of the town plan committee.

Mr Hand was voted off the committee by council in favor of councillor Neil Macindoe at a meeting on May 24. He immediately lodged a rescission motion.

But, when council met last Wednesday to debate the rescission motion, votes were tied at five-all with Mr Hand forced to use his casting vote in order to keep the chairmanship.

Before the vote, Mr Hand asked any councillors who were against him continuing as chairman to "come out and say so".

"The simple fact is I have done my best to chair the committee," he said.

"Every resident voted that I continue on as chairman at the last [town plan committee] meeting.

"The simple fact is that there is an element on the council that, for reasons best known to them, want to do me in. It is nothing to do with my ability to chair the town plan committee."

Councillor Macindoe said while Mr Hand had done his best, his own wide experience in town planning issues could benefit the committee.

"We don't want to see backstabbing and character assassination," he said. "We want to see progress and community involvement in the plan.

"It is appropriate at this stage that councillors try another option and I offer myself as an option."

The committee meets Monday.

Heliport meeting scheduled

DEBATE over the proposed Pymont heliport site will continue at a public meeting at Balmain Town Hall on Monday.

Guest speakers for the evening will be representatives from Leighton Properties, holders of the Sydney Casino license.

Inner City and Foreshores Action Group spokeswoman Von Barry said hundreds of residents were determined to maintain their fight against the heliport.

"It will be an airport for helicopters," she said.

Meeting starts 7.30pm.



Opposition Alexander Downer and Lena Morelli at the APIA Club

Alex meets Mamma

IT was a big day at Leichhardt's APIA Club on Sunday with a tribute to "Mamma" Lena Morelli on her 80th birthday and the club itself marking 34 years since foundation.

Opposition Leader Alexander Downer was guest of honour at the dual celebrations, somewhat appropriately since his father, then Immigration Minister Alexander Downer Senior, laid the foundation stone.

The club today boasts more than 5000 members.

Since migrating to Australia with hus-

band Dino and family in 1956, Mamma Lena has helped many members of the Italian community adapt and thrive in their new country through a column in La Fiamma newspaper and radio programs.

Dino produced the programs which have been broadcast on 2SM, 2CH, 2KY and 2SER.

Prime Minister Paul Keating and Premier John Fahey were among dignitaries who sent messages of praise for Mamma Lena, published in a commemorative booklet.