

Frank Carbone and Dai Le could team up to thwart Kristina Keneally in Fowler

Two popular local councillors look set to join forces to spoil former NSW premier Kristina Keneally's attempts to parachute into a safe Western Sydney seat.



James O'Doherty

Kristina Keneally's bid to parachute into a safe Western Sydney seat is set to face a major hurdle, with two popular Fairfield councillors tipped to run for Fowler in a move which could stymie Labor's vote.

Sources have told The Daily Telegraph that Fairfield Mayor Frank Carbone and Deputy Mayor Dai Le are not happy that neither major party has given the area the attention it deserves by running a local candidate.

The dissatisfaction has led to speculation the pair will work together in a bid to block former NSW premier [Ms Keneally's move to the Western Sydney electorate](#) following a factional deal in the ALP to avoid a Senate preselection stoush.

Deputy Labor Leader Kristina Keneally could have a fight on her hands to win Fowler. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Flavio Brancalone

Both councillors may run and preference each other, or Ms Le could run with Mr Carbone's support, sources said.

Between them, the pair's teams took 10 of 13 spots on Fairfield City Council at last year's local government election — including seven independents running on Mr Carbone's team.

Mr Carbone secured almost 75 per cent of the mayoral vote.

It is understood that the pair's consideration for running is based on the twin beliefs that Ms Keneally won't prioritise local issues if she is elected, and that the Liberal Party has not yet selected a candidate.

The Daily Telegraph

Labor powerbrokers moved to parachute Ms Keneally into Fowler — held by Labor on a margin of 14 per cent — after incumbent Chris Hayes announced his retirement.

The decision created a rift in the party after Ms Keneally ousted [local Vietnamese-Australian lawyer Tu Le](#), who had the support of the retiring Member.

Party insiders have acknowledged that [Ms Keneally will “go backwards” in Fowler](#) but believe she will win, with a reduced margin.



Mayor Frank Carbone



Deputy Mayor Dai Le

Some insiders believe that if Mr Carbone runs in the seat he could put a Labor win in doubt.

Mr Carbone was first elected as Fairfield mayor as a Labor candidate before he was dumped by the party. He has been an independent since.

“I just want someone that knows us, cares for us, and will make sure they will do the right thing by our people,” Mr Carbone said.

“I haven’t decided at this point if I should run, but if the interests of our community are not served by those putting their hands up, I think we have

a responsibility to fight for our people and make sure we get a fair go when it comes to federal funding,” he said.

Labor insiders were less concerned about Ms Le — a former Liberal — running against their candidate.

Ms Le unsuccessfully ran for the state seat of Cabramatta in 2019 against Labor’s Nick Lalich. She secured 26 per cent of the primary vote against Mr Lalich, whose 49.9 per cent primary vote was almost enough to elect him before preferences were distributed.