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**GREENS ANNOUNCE CANDIDATES FOR 2020 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION**

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**Transparency and habitat protection are the key issues in Greens' run for Sunshine Coast Council 2020 elections**

TRANSPARENCY in decision-making, meaningful community consultation and environmental sustainability are the key issues in the Sunshine Coast Greens' campaign for the 2020 Sunshine Coast local government elections with three strong candidates determined to make a difference in regional politics.

The Sunshine Coast Greens' are running three of their most experienced candidates in the 2020 elections: Tracy Burton (Division 5), Daniel Bryar (Division 9) and Sue Etheridge (Division 10).

The Greens' Sunshine Coast council campaign will also advocate more respect for the town plan, curbing inappropriate development, addressing loss of habitat and protecting the environment. The burgeoning Climate Crisis is of great concern and if elected, The Greens will immediately propose that Council declares a Climate Emergency.

Improving public transport and local services are also high on the Greens' agenda.

Ms. Burton is a high-school English and Arts teacher and an active participant in environmental projects locally and internationally. Mr. Bryar works in two roles – assisting to run a building company, and working with new business startups to build their digital applications and better harness technology for growth and job creation. Ms. Etheridge has more than 40 years' experience in banking and finance, and is an active community member having served on several local committees in many roles.

Division 5 candidate Ms. Burton said the Sunshine Coast Greens' team will compete strongly in the 2020 elections.

“Transparency in decision-making and in declaring political party interests up front is something that has been severely lacking in our Council to date,” she said.

“There is an urgent need for stronger local environmental laws to combat the overdevelopment and habitat loss the Coast is experiencing. The Sunshine Coast is a rapidly growing region and it concerns me greatly that our environment and the concerns of the community aren’t given more priority,” she said.

Division 10 candidate Sue Etheridge said voters deserved to know the allegiances of council candidates before they cast their ballot. This is the reason the Greens have again decided to run openly on the Greens’ party platform as a necessary step in increasing transparency in local government.

“On the Sunshine Coast many candidates (past and present) have been, or were members of the National, Liberal and Labor parties, accepting party assistance since the 1980s.

“With grassroots democracy being one of the principals of the Greens, the suggestion of interference from Canberra or Brisbane on local issues is not a concern for our party,” she said.

“Our Greens’ team has been developing policies that are specific to local issues that need to be urgently addressed by local government representatives on the Sunshine Coast,” she said.

The Green’s values of ecological sustainability, grassroots democracy, peace and non-violence and social justice clearly differentiate the party from the other parties and many independents.

“The Greens are being upfront and leading with values that help improve the democratic process, as people know who they are voting for in the 2020 council elections,” Ms. Burton said.

Division 9 candidate Daniel Bryar said it was important to bring transparency back to the Council and respect the town plan as it relates to sustainable development.

“I will ensure the town plan is respected, and any new draft enhanced to protect our lifestyle, ensuring the Sunshine Coast retains the nuances that define who we are in contrast to Brisbane and the Gold Coast,” he said.

“I will ensure businesses on the Coast are supported and have every opportunity for job creation. In tomorrow’s agile economy, Council will need to foster growth in emerging industries and capitalise on advances in health care, education, transport and public service delivery, all while remaining transparent and inclusive.”

*To follow The Greens campaign for the 2020 Local Council election, ‘like’ their Facebook page: ‘Queensland Greens – Sunshine Coast’*

**ENDS**

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