



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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## Candidate questionnaire – Sunshine Coast Regional Council Election 2020

Surname:	Dickson	Given name:	Christian
Position contesting:	Division 6		

### Governance, Transparency and Ethical Behaviour

**Q 1 Are you aware of the Principles listed at the beginning of the Local Government Act 2009 and will you commit to abiding by these principles?**

YES/NO	How do you see them influencing your decision-making? Be honest, transparent, represent the entire region, don't take developer donations and always put the interests of the community ahead of my own personal reward or political career.
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**Q 2a What are the relevant legislation and regulations that govern the conduct of councillors and the activities of council?**

Response: I believe this is well documented and covered by the Local Government Act 2009. Council also has its own code of conduct and standards that councillors must follow.
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**Q 2b How will these impact your decision-making?**

Response: I always follow the local government act and have not been in breach of my responsibilities. Do the right thing and you have nothing to worry about.
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**Q 3 Do you or your immediate family have assets, interests or affiliations which might be likely to present you with potential conflicts of interest in carrying out your tasks as a councillor?**

YES/NO No	If YES, how will you deal with these?
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**Q 4 As councillor/mayor you will regularly meet to vote on various matters. Some of these votes may be passed by a majority decision, yet there exists aspects which indicate some or all of the following: improper due process, breaches around what might be deemed 'reasonable action' according to duty of care, statutory instruments, local government legislative provisions, by-laws, policies, procedures and responsibilities. What action would you take?**

Response: I have a track record for supporting council officers professional reports and recommendations. Where I disagree with officers I outline my position publicly on the record for the community. If an item is passed by the majority and I believe it breaches the local government act I will not support it and will report the matter for a review.
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**Q 5 Do you believe that all Council meetings should be open to the public?**

YES/NO No	If NO, then what circumstances might justify a closed meeting? All meetings are publicly advertised and therefore there are no secret meetings. What we do have from time to time is confidential matters on the agenda. There may be circumstances where confidential items are discussed, however I support the opportunity to reduce these numbers of items and ensure the details are released to the public in a more expedient manner.
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**Q 6 Do you support providing requested information to the community without the need for individuals and organisations having to resort to Right to Information applications?**

YES/NO Yes
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**Q 7 Will you commit to voting to implement the live streaming and video recording of council meetings at Caloundra, Nambour and subsequently Maroochydore by 30 June 2020?**

YES/NO Yes
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**Q 8 Do you support that, once the previously published reasons for confidentiality have passed, the live recording, related documentation and information of the confidential meeting should immediately be made public?**

YES/NO Yes	If NO, why not?
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**Q 9 Do you support all financial dealings of Council in relation to major projects such as, but not limited to, the Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion, The Maroochy CBD, the Broadband Cable, the City Hall and the Solar Farm being made fully available to ratepayers once a decision to proceed has been made?**

YES/NO Yes	If NO, why not?
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**Q 10 What do you mean by, and how would you measure, sustainable development?**

Response: I don't mention motherhood statements such as "sustainable development". Therefore I won't try and justify this overused term. The key here is to focus on carrying capacity of the region without losing the lifestyle of the Sunshine Coast. I believe council should work alongside the community in partnership to push back the State Government for its mandated population targets and lack of infrastructure delivery.
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**Q 11 Are you endorsed or supported by any registered political party?**

YES/NO No
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## Climate change

### Q 12 Do you accept that:

(a) as the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases the proportion of the sun's radiant energy that is retained by the earth increases?	YES/NO Yes
(b) consequences of the increase in the retained energy include rising average temperatures and major changes in weather patterns that can result in drought and heavy rain in areas where such weather events had not previously occurred?	YES/NO Yes
(c) the combustion of fossil carboniferous fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas has been a major contributor to the increase in the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that has occurred since industrialisation began?	YES/NO Yes
(d) clearing of forest for agriculture and housing has also contributed to the increase in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere?	YES/NO Yes
(e) the major source of greenhouse gas emissions for local government comes from the decomposition of organic residues in landfill?	YES/NO No
(f) maintenance of biodiversity as close as possible to what it was before human intervention is essential for the healthy survival of the human species?	YES/NO Yes

### Q 13 What do you see as the key impacts of Climate Change on the Sunshine Coast?

Response:

Rising sea levels and low lying flood areas that impact habitat and residential living areas. Flooding and stormwater are growing areas of concern, especially on the coast in our urban areas.

### Q 14 How should the Sunshine Coast Regional Council deal with this now and into the future?

Response:

Ensure new development does not impact existing habitat or dwellings. Limit development from coastal erosion areas that are backed by science. Develop stormwater and drainage plans to establish capacity. Purchase land to prevent development in low lying areas, especially in the Maroochy River Catchment.

### Q 15 Do you support the SCRC in joining other councils in signing a Declaration of Climate Emergency?

YES/NO Yes

### Q 16 Will you advocate for the SCRC to have a moratorium on any development proposed in areas vulnerable to the impact of climate change such as in flood-prone areas and coastal zones until such time as the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy is completed?

YES/NO Yes

## Planning issues

### Q 17 Do you agree that:

(a) development applications that conflict with the relevant Planning Scheme Acceptable Outcomes and other planning instruments should be refused?	YES/NO Yes
(b) genuine community consultation should be undertaken in the early stages of a Proposed Planning Scheme amendment and prior to being progressed to the state?	YES/NO Yes
(c) applicants wishing to lodge a Development application that substantially does not comply, or seeks to over-ride the Planning Scheme should be advised to await the formulation of the next planning scheme when they can lodge a submission on that new planning scheme during the public consultation period?	YES/NO Yes
(d) that development that is vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Change, flooding, and inundation be prohibited?	YES/NO Yes

### Q 18 Do you agree that:

(a) Planning Scheme provisions regarding density, site cover, height and parking requirements must comply with the Acceptable Outcomes in the Planning Scheme?	YES/NO Yes
(b) financial contributions in lieu of the provisions of onsite parking should not be allowed unless improvements are provided within 200 metres of the development?	YES/NO Yes
(c) greater enforcement is needed where a developer constructs (or private certifier signs off) other than what has been approved, particularly in relation to height and density of development?	YES/NO Yes

### Q 19 What is your understanding of when it is appropriate to override the Planning Scheme, when there are conflicts?

Response:  
Overriding community benefit for the Sunshine Coast region. Developments which are also supported by the local community.

### Q 20 Would you support extending submission timeframes from the statutory minimum in relation to Planning Scheme amendments?

YES/NO Yes

### Q 21 The floodplains of the Sunshine Coast have been extensively filled primarily for urban development. This has increased the risk to people, property, infrastructure and the environment from coastal inundation and flooding and contributes to greater exposure to extreme weather events associated with climate change. Planning instruments, State Planning regulation and various reports give regulatory and guidance material regarding floodplain management with land-use one of the key areas to avoid and manage risk. Will you act to prohibit further development on the floodplains?

Response:  
There are real examples in Sippy Downs where development proposals for community outcomes such as a community facility, sports oval and large dog park are being offered for the benefit of locals. If the local community sees the benefit of such improvements and the technical issues of hydrology can be overcome without causing a risk to the community, I believe such projects are worthwhile considering. There is nothing wrong with having the debate and representing your community.

**Q 22 With respect to the South East Queensland Regional Plan (Shaping SEQ) that was given effect on 11 August 2017, do you support the Plan in its current form relating to the Northern sub-region, including designation of the Urban footprint and population targets?**

YES/NO Yes

**Q 23 Do you support the proposed Coolum West intense residential/mixed use development and wave pool proposal on significantly constrained land, which is also outside the urban footprint?**

YES/NO No

If NO, will you, if elected to council, support SCRC advocating to the State Government against this proposal? YES/NO Yes

**Q 24 What is your view in relation to this statement:**

*“ALL mixed-use multi-residential buildings requiring a Material Change of Use (MCU) must be “impact assessed” except where compliance is achieved with all relevant SCPS “Acceptable Outcomes” in the codes applicable to each development application. Community notification and rights of appeal in the P&E Court will therefore be restored for all non-compliant applications simply by this change”*

Response:

I don't see a problem with this as long as it can meet the requirements of the act. Community engagement and transparency around development has significantly improved since the introduction of the DEVELOPMENTI application and website. The community now sit in the drivers seat to be better informed and access the latest information pertaining to their area.

**Q 25 The coastal hazard and “erosion prone area” is defined by the Queensland Government and State Planning Policy Guidance states redevelopment is to “avoid urban footprint expansion into erosion prone areas (3.2)”.**

**How will you participate in supporting a change to limit or avoid increases in the footprint and density of medium and high rise mixed use -residential buildings in these designated coastal hazard areas to reduce overall risk?**

Response:

I believe i have addressed this in the questions relating to climate change. Not placing people in harms way is the best approach.

## General

**Q 26 The Sunshine Coast Regional Council ratepayers have been consistently hit with annual rate increases much higher than the region's CPI. How would you address this?**

Response:

I believe council manages its finances extremely well and have taken a bold approach in delivering many major projects such as the international airport and the solar farm at valdora. These projects are vital and add benefit to the entire region. Getting the basics right and delivering local projects is something I have succeeded in achieving for my community in division 6. Let's not forget that council raises the smallest amount of taxes and has the least amount of money to carry out work for the region. That being said, we do the most work out of all the levels of government and achieve more for ratepayers than they do. If there are ways to save ratepayers money I am happy to consider any options put forward. Requests for new projects will always cost money and we are being asked to keep pace with infrastructure needs. Delivering projects and decreasing rates generally do not go hand in hand. If we take our foot off the accelerator and stop doing things we will go backwards very quickly. Residents in Division 6 can see where their money is being spent and a large majority feel they are getting value for money.

**Q 27 Would you support a proposal that all Statutory Community Engagement exercises either by Council or other parties (including developers) must be carried out by a demonstrably independent and professional third party organisation according to specific pre-determined parameters?**

YES/NO No

**Q 28 Do you support the Environment Levy and its policies, including continued acquisition of land for conservation, partnership funding for Land for Wildlife and other environment programs?**

YES/NO Yes

**Q 29 Do you live in the division for which you are standing as a Councillor?**

YES/NO/NA Yes

**Q 30 If elected, how do you intend to engage with your community?**

Response:

I intend to continue doing what I have done for many years and that's being accessible to the community and owning the decisions i make for total accountability and transparency. I am judged on a daily basis as a councillor and I hold my ethical and personal standards high.

**Q 31 If elected as a Divisional Councillor how will you advance the specific needs of your Division?**

Response:

Working as a team has always delivered good outcomes in Divison 6. Nothing is achieved on your own or in isolation. Much has been delivered and much more will come to pass with my track record in delivering outcomes for locals.

**Q 32 Why do you think that you are the best candidate for your Division or as Mayor?**

Response:

I believe I am the most experienced, dedicated, accessible, caring and compasionate councillor in the running for Divison 6. People want strong leadership and a person that isn't afraid to stand apart from the pack, even if that means standing on their own at times. Resident's need someone to be accountable and honest about why they do things. They need someone who has a proven track record and delivers on their promises. I am someone who never gives up and someone who will always find a way to get a good outcome for each and every person i meet.