



Candidate questionnaire – Sunshine Coast Regional Council Election 2020

Surname:	Porter	Given name:	Julian
Position contesting:	Division 4		

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 Yes	How do you see them influencing your decision-making? I will apply them to every aspect of the position.
------------	---

Q 2a What are the relevant legislation and regulations that govern the conduct of councillors and the activities of council?

Response: Local Government Act 2009, Local Government Regulation 2012
--

Q 2b How will these impact your decision-making?

Response: I will be particularly careful to always have front of mind the 'Responsibilities of Councillors' set down at section 12(1), 12(2) and 12(3) of the Act. 'Representing the current and future interests of the residents' and 'being accountable to the community for the local government's performance' stand out to me as key concepts.

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?
-----------	---------------------------------------

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: If the issue was one which was suggestive of Inappropriate Conduct, Misconduct or Corrupt Conduct by a Councillor I would make the relevant referral to the Independent Assessor or Crime and Misconduct Commission. If the issue was one which was suggestive of misconduct or corrupt conduct by staff I would raise my concerns in the first instance with the CEO, who has a duty to report any suspected corrupt conduct by staff with the Crime and Misconduct Commission.
--

If it was not a matter requiring the above action, but still one of significance to the current and future interest of Sunshine Coast residents, I would make my views known through appropriate channels in the interests of transparency and accountability, but within the confines of the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland which requires:

3.1 When expressing an opinion dissenting with the majority decision of Council, respect the democratic process by acknowledging that the Council decision represents the majority view of the Council

3.2 When making public comment, clearly state whether they are speaking on behalf of Council or expressing their personal views

3.3 Avoid making unnecessary or irrelevant comments or accusations about Councillors or Council employees in order to undermine them or their position

3.4 Ensure behaviour and presentation is appropriate to maintain the dignity of the office of the Councillor.

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? True commercial in-confidence situations, where a contract is still being negotiated and the other party would be advantaged by knowing the detail of discussions.
-----------	--

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

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

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?
------------	-----------------

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?
------------	-----------------

Q 10 What do you mean by, and how would you measure, sustainable development?

Response:

The simplest expression of the concept I could find, and one that really resonates with me is from the UK's Sustainable Development Commission - "Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

It's interesting how neatly this fits with the responsibility of Councillors in the Local Government Act 2009 to represent the current and future interests of the residents.

My campaign theme "what we're all here for" encourages people to think about what's important to them about the way we live on the Sunshine Coast. There is a surprisingly high uniformity in responses to the theme. People are here for the beach, the environment, the community values, the laid-back lifestyle. They accept that in terms of extracting the maximum financial return from their labour and capital they would do better in the big cities, but they know that by living here they have already won the lottery. I believe that this approach, which pervades the Sunshine Coast Community is also an expression of sustainability.

I believe progress is development that actually, on balance, improves the way we live. Clearly population growth is not going to suddenly stop and we have to meet the needs of the people who are coming, the people who are already here and maintain their amenity, without ruining it future generations. As trite as it may sound, the idea of not killing the goose that lays the golden eggs is apt today as ever.

Q 11 Are you endorsed or supported by any registered political party?

YES/NO No

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 Yes
(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:

Likely floodplain inundation. Likely erosion of coastal properties.

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

Response:

See Planning section re Regional Planning Scheme Review

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

YES/NO No

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 No

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?

<p>Response:</p> <p>I think it might be acceptable to override the planning scheme where proper community consultation showed that it did not reflect community expectation. But never to simply allow approval of a non-compliant development on the basis of ill-defined, short-lived 'economic benefit'.</p>

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?

<p>Response:</p> <p>I believe the next Regional Plan review process, set to begin in the next two years, must take on board the latest and best science and attempt to predict what the consequences of climate change are likely to be in our region. Nobody will thank us if we allow them to build in a vulnerable place which subsequently becomes ininsurable and</p>
--

is hugely devalued. The Council also needs to consider how much infrastructure it intends to place in vulnerable areas and whether any short-term benefits outweigh the longer term risks.

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

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 think the man in the street would expect that if something is 'code assessable' and it didn't meet all the Acceptable Outcomes it would not be approved. So yes, I think it's reasonable, where an application doesn't just sail through with full marks, that the impact assessment process be invoked so that the community's feedback is gained in terms of conditions that might be applied.

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:

By ensuring the Regional Plan Review process pays more heed to this guidance than has obviously been paid in the past. By ensuring that the latest and best science is gathered and considered as part of the Regional Plan Review process. By calling in for consideration by the full Council any code assessable high-density development which is clearly outside of this guidance.

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:

No more big projects until the current crop have stopped effecting our budget. Choosing projects that meet current needs in our community rather than simply driving population growth and increasing need. Attempting fiscal repair over the period to get back to a point where we can tie rates to regional CPI.

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 Yes

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 think its important to speak with and attend meetings of community groups and business associations, but my experience in campaigning is that speaking to individuals in their street is perhaps an even a better guage of things. I would be keen to keep up a door-knocking and street-stall routine throughout the period, so that all those people who do think about things but don't have the time or the personality to be outspoken in public can be heard. I would be active on social media, not just promoting myself, but hearing and considering a diversity of views. I would prefer not to spend too much time in an office in Nambour, but instead be out and about in Division 4, listening, observing and taking part in the community.

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

Response:

Division 4 enjoys unquestionably the best position on the Sunshine Coast. Central and close to beaches and business, it's the busiest part and the subject of the most development. I know that Division 4 residents don't mind a bit of excitement in their lives, but at the end of the day they still like to go home to the peace and quiet. We need to ensure that even while we're maximising the potential of Division 4 as the Coast's centre, we don't destroy the amenity for people fortunate to have been here 20, 30 or 40 years, or for those who only arrived last week.

I want the people who live in Divison 4 to be Council's priority, not those who visit for work and play. Of course the residents get some benefit from the money spent on facilities for visitors along the foreshore and increasingly the CBD. But the big spend in these popular locations seems to translate to less money available for fundamental infrastructure when you go one kilometre back. Footpaths, road crossings, street lights. We can't keep putting off these simple needs in suburbs that ate fifty years old. Not with population growth like we have now and will continue to have.

We talk a lot about traffic and parking. I am against paid street parking, particulalry at the beach. We talk about modern public transport as a solution, and it has to come certainly. But in the meantime lets focus on getting

people making more local journeys on foot, by bike, scooter and skateboard. Division 4 is flat enough, we just need to bit the bullet and make it safe, pleasant and convenient alternative.

I think we need to acknowledge that the healthy scene around outdoor recreation is already the Sunshine Coast's strongest culture and that Division 4 is at the centre of that. I want to boost support to all forms of outdoor recreation and push our claim as Australia's outdoor recreation capital. Getting the Coastal Pathway finished should be an absolute priority.

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

Response:

In twenty-five years as a lawyer, in a variety of roles but most recently at Suncoast Community Legal Service, I have gained a handy skill-set which is very translatable to the role of Councillor. Listening, analysing, advocating, persuading, resolving disputes. I am not afraid of delving into the detail of legislation, regulations, policy or complex legal documents. I never take anything at face value and enjoy reading things closely.

My time at the Legal Service has also demonstrated my ability to motivate others to work for the common good, with over 100 lawyers presently volunteering their time, and to manage a group with disparate needs, skills and aspirations.

I am very comfortable dealing with people from all walks of life and treat everyone with the respect they are due.

I am a people person and a problem noticer. I love good ideas and running with them, even when they are not my own.

I am the father of three children and my wife and I are committed to the Sunshine Coast as the ideal place to bring up kids. I want them to be able to live and live on the Coast, should they wish to. My goal as a Councillor would be to make sure its still a place that they would want to work and live.