



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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## Candidate questionnaire – Sunshine Coast Regional Council Election 2020

Surname:	Burgess	Given name:	Michael
Position contesting:	Mayor		

### 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	I believe they should be the abiding principle applied to how government is conducted
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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 should imagine it is all the 2009 Act
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**Q 2b How will these impact your decision-making?**

Response: To abide by them would be the requirement to be a mayor or councillor  Therefore they would be central to all my decision making
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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?**

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: Such should first be brought to the attention of the council & if no satisfactory action is taken there, it must be passed along to the relevant authority & even shared with the community should an individual councillor feel this would be appropriate
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**Q 5 Do you believe that all Council meetings should be open to the public?**

NO	There are some meetings in which confidential matters are spoken of & a confidential session is necessary to ensure nobody is disadvantaged  But often this “confidentially” disappears a short time after the meeting, it should then be “tabled” & made available to the community
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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
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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
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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	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	If NO, why not?
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**Q 10 What do you mean by, and how would you measure, sustainable development?**

<p>Response: First fundamental point of sustainability must be economic, if we are importing more goods &amp; services than we are exporting, we are simply unsustainable</p> <p>And if this is happening we are placed in the unenviable position of needing to sell off our environment in order to balance the deficit</p> <p>This process impairs the local lifestyle &amp; destroys the environment upon which our economic future will depend</p> <p>This same paradigm can be observed all around the world where at risk communities are exploited by a powerful few</p>
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**Q 11 Are you endorsed or supported by any registered political party?**

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
(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
(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
(d) clearing of forest for agriculture and housing has also contributed to the increase in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere?	YES
(e) the major source of greenhouse gas emissions for local government comes from the decomposition of organic residues in landfill?	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

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

Response: The impairment of the integrity of all the waterways

The rise in temperature has great impact on the native flora & fauna that has adapted to a particular set of climate factors over thousands of years, a change in any one of these factors can have a profound effect & the consequences of a combination of variations may be impossible to imagine

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

Response: Begin better programs of waste management & recycling

Convert vehicle fleet to electric

And there would be a huge range of micro measures that could be introduced to lessen the region's impact on the climate

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

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

## 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
(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
(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
(d) that development that is vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Change, flooding, and inundation be prohibited?	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
(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
(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

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

Response: This is difficult in the abstract, but I would say the only way established & accepted provisions of the Scheme should be overridden is only with extensive & authentic community consultation

This should also be “weighted” in such a way as those immediately impacted are given a great voice in the outcome

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

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: The paradigm of building up part of an area out of the “flood” zone simply pushes the water that would have been deposited & absorbed there into another space

The amount of water is not lessened it is increased in those areas not built up

Moreover, I look at the floodplains & can not view them as anything other than fragile

That we believe they are no longer necessary because our flood mitigation programs have made this so, does not necessary mean the way they developed over 10,000s of years does not make them a place that requires them to be open & spacious

So, no I don't think they should be open for development

And one criteria we should use is, what are the insurance companies doing

Their actuaries are busy calculating the likely future impact of lots of "climate change" phenomena, so may a consultation with them will give direction to not just what is predicted to happen, but also what we will be paying for anyway

**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

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

NO

If NO, will you, if elected to council, support SCRC advocating to the State Government against this proposal? 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: Impact assessment should apply to almost anything being built near any waterways & other fragile environments

There should also be extensive community engagement should be undertaken to lessen the likelihood that there is a perpetual round of avoidable court actions

There should be far better assessment of the cumulative effect of simultaneous developments, that puts this region in a different position to others with a smaller number happening

**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 would consider measures that would impose additional costs on any development within “erosion zones” commensurate with the likely future cost to the community of maintaining the integrity of the buildings

It is not equitable that the community should pay \$10s of millions in the future to reinforce shorelines from the erosion that will result in these buildings that shouldn’t be there collapsing into the sea

## 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: The “projects” must be dismantled, reconfigured & sold off

The ratepayers simply can not support the current \$400 million debt, certainly they can not afford the extra \$200 million of debt that will be entered onto the books in the first 6 months if the current council is re-elected

The problem is pretty basic, all the current rate income is absorbed into wages & materials needed for day-to-day operations, so there is no “spare” to service debt

The “allowable” 3% increase could not service & reduce even the “new” \$200 million, let alone the \$400 million or anything they plan on adding

So, the only way out of this bind is to sell off some of the “projects” & to do it quick, not like the council says sometime in the misty future

The only saleable ones are the CBD, the Tower of Power council chambers & stadium

The CBD has to be reconfigured as a low rise “campus” type place of about 2000-3000 dwellings, the TOP have to be redesigned to some other purpose & sold & the \$250 million stadium must be stopped

Little can be done about the Solar Farm or the Undersea Cable, since both are loss making businesses & it is doubtful they are saleable, so they are with us & will be subsidised by us for the next 25 years

This will return a pretty quick \$350 or \$400 million to pay down debt

Resulting in a manageable \$200 million

No further debt should be entered into without a lot more thought, planning & advice than went into the debacle of the last 8 years

**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

**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

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

NA

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

Response: I intend to lobby for a “Citizen Committee” which will sit once a month or more often if necessary & convenient

This will just not give a nod to transparency but imbed it, regardless of the complexation of each council

It will be able to request the presence councilors & council execs to engage in discusses with the community as well as useful exchanges of information

It can also ask representative of welfare groups, the police, charities & any other community stakeholders to become part of the assemblies

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

Response: As mayor I will work to develop the economy we must create that is sympathetic to the lifestyle that needs protection & to the environment that both must be regenerated as well as being the platform on which the prosperity of the future rests

We are at a tipping point in our development, we either begin the work to create the long term jobs in exporting industries compatible with the local ethos or we sink further into selling of the environment piece by piece to just keep a shrinking economy from disappearing altogether

Household income has shrunk 18% in the last 8 years, unemployment is rising, population is arriving without there being an attempt to create industry here to provide jobs for them

This is perhaps the first time in history there has been large population shifts not based on seeking work or other economic advantages

We certainly don't seem to be handling it well

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

Response: I believe I am the only one to understand the issues the region face & have practical solutions to them

I also know I won't be the "Smartest Man" in the room, but I will be the one who can get a roomful of the "Smartest People" to put together plans to make this the best place in the world to live