



Candidate questionnaire – Sunshine Coast Regional Council Election 2020

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| Surname: | Ellis | Given name: | Raelene |
| Position contesting: | Division 1 | | |

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?

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| YES/NO Yes | How do you see them influencing your decision-making? As a lawyer I understand the importance of abiding by legislation and that it provides to us the framework under which we are to operate. All decisions made by council ought to be underpinned and be able to stand up to scrutiny based on those principles. Transparency, sustainability, democracy, social inclusion, good governance and ethical behaviour are all principles by which are of the essence to our society and our government at all levels. |
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Q 2a What are the relevant legislation and regulations that govern the conduct of councillors and the activities of council?

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| Response: Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulations 2012. |
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Q 2b How will these impact your decision-making?

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| Response: As outlined in Q1 I understand and appreciate the concept of decision making within a legislative framework - no decision should be made that falls outside that framework and all decisions need to be justified by reference to the legislation. |
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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?

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| 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?

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| Response: I would immediately address the issue in the open council meeting. I would also consider making public statements to that effect - people deserve to know when their councillors are not abiding by the law. I would also |
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consider making a complaint to the Ombudsman if it was of the appropriate character that fell within the Ombudsman's ambit. Of course I also recognise the importance of democracy and respecting the democratic vote - provided that the decision does NOT breach law/policy etc.

Q 5 Do you believe that all Council meetings should be open to the public?

YES/NO Yes

If NO, then what circumstances might justify a closed meeting?

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:

Sustainable development is development that can meet current and future needs. It takes into account principles of intergenerational equity and ensures that future generations have access to resources such as land/environment etc to also enjoy life.

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

YES/NO Yes

Climate change

Q 12 Do you accept that:

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| (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 |
| (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:

I am significantly concerned by the impact on rising sea levels. We have continued to develop land that is low lying and small increases in sea levels may have significant impact on portions of our population including for example many areas around the newly build SCUH district. I am also concerned about the impact of extreme weather events being sub-tropical in location, along with our underfunding of emergency services to deal with fire events.

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

Response:

We need to declare a climate emergency and take immediate steps to address the impacts of climate change. We need to reconsider planned developments in low-lying areas that are likely to be impacted by sea level rises. Most importantly we need to properly fund emergency services including taking on board the Greens Indigenous rangers policy to ensure we minimise the risk of fires and are able to deal appropriately with extreme weather events.

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:

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| (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:

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| (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?

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| <p>Response:</p> <p>In an emergency situation - when there is no time to go out and consult with the public. Otherwise why not consult with the community and amend the town plan after appropriate input and consultation and agreement of the local communities that are impacted by the change.</p> |
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Q 20 Would you support extending submission timeframes from the statutory minimum in relation to Planning Scheme amendments?

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| YES/NO Yes |
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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?

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| <p>Response:</p> <p>Largely yes. We need to ensure that anything that is built on flood plains is appropriate for that positioning such as sporting fields.</p> |
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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:

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 think it is very important that coastal areas remain publically accessible areas. The development along those coastal areas impacts on that accessibility. The beach then becomes less 'public' given it is difficult to access. Furthermore it is important to ensure that dunes and bush remain at the coastal edge to limit erosion impacts. Simply private building that impact public access and increase the risk of erosion of our natural coastline ought to be prohibited.

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:

We need open and transparency in relation to our expenditure for a start. We need to ensure that money is being spent for the public benefit. Lets take a good look, with the watchful eye of the public, on how we are currently spending our funds

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 intend on having a public talking posts at different areas of the community on a weekly basis.

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

Response:

As a start we need to ensure division 1 receives their fair share of the capital budget works. I will agitate for that. I will also agitate for better public transport for the hinterland region and including agitating with State and Federal counterparts for better access to Brisbane via public transport (duplication of the rail line).

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

Response:

I am a mother of a 5 year old who moved to the Sunshine Coast from Brisbane to have a better life - outdoor healthy living. I am focused on ensuring what I came here for remains here for my daughter's sake. As a lawyer I understand the law and the workings of government institutions. I am use to fighting for people's rights within the courts system. I am not afraid to stick up for what i believe in, even in a 'boys club' (think lawyer again). I am an advocate for change including for our elderly - i cared for my mother for many years and gave evidence in the Royal Commission for Aged Care.

We have only one female in council and she is retiring. We need to ensure that we have diversity in council and I would therefore encourage a vote for all female condidates but in particular me (obviously). It is not just a merits argument. Studies have shown that diversity is important in leadership decision making roles because different people sharing different lived experiences leads to a greater exploration of options and therefore better decision-making.