



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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Candidate questionnaire – Sunshine Coast Regional Council Election 2020

Surname:	Etheridge	Given name:	Sue
Position contesting:	Division 10		

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? The primary role of a councillor is to represent their division and the people who live in it. I will operate in an ethical and transparent manner, and will make my decisions and vote in accordance with the wishes/accepted consensus of the residents.
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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: Local Government Act 2009, and Local Government Regulations 2012

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

Response: I will operate in an ethical and transparent manner, and will make my decisions and vote in accordance with the wishes/accepted consensus of the residents.
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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: These aspects (if/when they do occur) need to be addressed and dealt with immediately.

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?
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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

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?
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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: Sustainable development is socially, environmentally, and economically responsible development that meets the present needs of the community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Development activity needs to progress at a consistent and steady pace.

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

YES/NO Yes

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:

The largest impacts from climate change will be felt from rising sea levels, but there will be other impacts as well. Our summers will be longer and hotter, and our winters will be shorter and hotter. We will suffer from more frequent and intense cyclonic weather events and more frequent bush fires as our climate extremes intensify.

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

Response:

I will put forward a motion to declare a climate emergency, and ensure emergency action is a part of Council's strategy across all areas, including an amended target of 2030 for net zero CO2 emissions. Flood mitigation on new developments must also consider existing developments, otherwise the direction of overland flow will be intensified in to low lying areas, exacerbating problems for current residents. Sunshine Coast Council must also properly fund and allocate resources to emergency services in support of existing State funding arrangements, and allow QRFS to manage our fire risks with input from our traditional custodians. We should also fast-track/update the Sunshine Coast Council Environment and Liveability Strategy.

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:

Explanation Q17 A). Sometimes the Planning Scheme may fail to account for new technology, or new ways of building/living, and there needs to be allowance for approvals that would otherwise be considered in conflict; however, these applications would be in the minority. The major reason there are conflicts with large developments is that developers buy cheap, inappropriately zoned land and try to have the Council approve development that is not allowed. These applications are often 'disguised' as something else with a housing estate/component attached, and are not appropriate to be overridden.

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:

Yes, I would certainly advocate to stop any structural development on flood plains. However; you can still site

sporting fields and other non-structural development on flood plains without impacting existing structures, or altering the overland flow of water.

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 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:

All MCU applications on land in excess of 4000m² or where the MCU seeks to add more than 10 dwellings, should be impact assessable. Given the ease at which electronic communications can be sent out, it should also immediately trigger community notification within a defined radius, and not just to those sharing a boundary. Any change that restores community rights is going to be better in the long run.

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:

The simple rule in coastal regions had always been “no development past the first dune” but since we have removed all the dunes in the ever increasing desire to live and work closer to the beach, that understanding has long since passed as we no longer have a “first dune” in many of the areas in question. The current demand for beachside residence has resulted in applications being made for much higher densities closer to the beaches, and this needs to be put to an end. Allowing small transgressions leads to greater transgressions and before we know it, there will be an application for a 12 floor high-rise with private beach access.

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 budget needs a complete overhaul. I don't know where all the council funds are being expended and the lack of transparency doesn't help. If we opened up the books, I'm sure there would be lots of community requests asking why money was being spent on particular activities or services, and why. Armed with those queries, Council could set about removing excess spending and start looking at ways to reduce our rates.

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 No

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

Response:

An open, permanent office, and pop-up stalls in the major population areas on a routine basis. I'll host a web based forum to get community input and feedback, along with committing to attending regular community meetings across the division. I'll also provide regular updates via websites and social media platforms, as well as letterbox notices where necessary.

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

Response:

I would like to implement a system that shows where all resident/community projects are at. This would allow all projects to be monitored, but it would also allow urgent/worthwhile projects to be prioritised if necessary. I will consult regularly with the community and advance and ultimately deliver projects that benefit our area.

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

Response:

The Sunshine Coast Hinterland has been my home for over 37 years and where I raised my daughter and son. I reside on rural acreage, and understand first hand the needs of a hinterland division.

I started working for the Commonwealth Bank after completing my Junior Certificate, resigning after 23 years service to pursue self employment. I am a small business owner (I part own and help run both a building company and an aviation theory school), and have extensive experience in banking, finance and business management.

I have over 20 years experience on Management Committees, and have extremely good listening, speaking, negotiation and consensus decision making skills. I will be able to work with other elected Councillors and the Mayor to deliver the best outcome for my Division 10 community. I am a strong woman, and I will make sure my voice is heard and my opinion as your Division 10 Councillor is listened to and respected.

Primarily, being a Councillor is being a leader. Good leaders listen, delegate and listen.

#1 - Being a leader is NOT a reward, it is a responsibility.

#2 - Leadership is not a position, it is about influence.

#3 - Leadership is setting an example, leading by example, and being the change I want to see in others.

#4 - Leadership is not an individual sport, it requires a team, and if I were your Councillor, you would be my team.

#5 - Leadership is not an idea, it is an ACTION.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Diploma of Accounting
- Certificate in Financial Planning
- Junior Certificate - High Distinction – Advanced Math, Science

For further information, please visit: <https://scgreens.org/people/sue-etheridge/>