

Questions for Borough Candidates.

Prior to Webinar via email:

1. What skills do you bring to the role of Councillor – skills that would make you a good representative for the Borough of Queenscliffe?

Most of this is covered in my 300-word Candidate statement but to reiterate:

- **Tertiary qualification in Public Policy and management including Public Finance and the completion of the Australian Company Director Course.**
 - **3 decades of involvement on Boards/Committees of not-for-profit organisations most recently Kids Plus Foundation in Geelong and Point Lonsdale Civic Association.**
 - **Many years of voluntary work locally on various Committees/School Councils involvement including Queenscliff Kindergarten, Queenscliffe Toy Library, Point Lonsdale Play Group, Lonsdale Children’s Centre Inc, Point Lonsdale Primary School and Bellarine Secondary College including many years as President.**
 - **Currently Chair of the Bellarine Community Health – Community Advisory Group.**
 - **30+ years professional work managing complex projects including strategic planning, service review and development and financial management of projects worth millions of dollars.**
 - **20+ years of self-employment and therefore very experienced with contract management and deliverables and business acumen.**
 - **Strong networks within all levels of Government other Local, State and Federal Governments and peak bodies like G2.**
 - **I am currently studying my Diploma of Access Consulting which will be useful around ensuring our Borough is accessible.**
2. In your view, what are the key matters that the Bellarine community want addressed in the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) Statement of Planning Policy, and as a Councillor, how would you support the community in having these matters appropriately addressed?

Protect, Preserve and Enhance in all we do.

Adopting a damage avoidance approach, rather than a damage control approach is critical. We cannot continue to allow planning decisions that enable inappropriate development on the Bellarine to continue because we cannot reverse the damage once it occurs. Setting suitable town boundaries in concrete that no local government can ignore is essential. Maintaining green wedges between distinct seaside villages and the list goes on.

Questions for Borough Candidates.

Encouraging and supporting our community to have their say into the next Phase of consultation (Phase 3) which will probably commence in December 2020 is going to be critical.

3. The Borough is unique in terms of heritage, its current economic situation, and limits on its income. What do you see as its priorities in the next four years, and how would you work to address these?

Finalise and implement the current Heritage Strategy Review and ensure that appropriate recommendations from that are included in the Planning Scheme for the Borough

4. What do you see as the key actions which the Borough of Queenscliffe can take to prepare the community for the impacts of climate change and sea level rise?

Develop and implement the Climate Emergency Response Plan

5. Management of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve is especially significant to Borough residents. What do you see as the way forward?

Get on with it in partnership with the Community. The Community clearly told the Council what they wanted done at the PLLHR several years ago now so let's get it done!

6. My question is to all candidates and is for them to nominate their top priority climate emergency initiative for the Borough?

Just one is very tricky – however given our aging population the exploration of the introduction of a Community Cooling Centre that is open and available on days of extreme heat which are occurring more because of global warming would be beneficial. This enables people to congregate in one cool space and be supported to stay hydrated and safe and this will also reduce the number of people being home alone potentially trying to keep hundreds of individual houses cool. This could be a partnership project between the Borough and Bellarine Community Health.

7. We like councillors to provide an independent, locally based commitment to matters in the Borough. We also do not want our council to be used as a training opportunity for aspiring State and Federal party politicians. We seek assurance from you on these points and then ask: Are you or have you ever been a member of or are you in any way linked with any political party?

NO

8. How will you expedite action to implement the plans for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve?

Questions for Borough Candidates.

Refer question 5 and look at how we can resource the work in terms of people power and finances required

9. A number of candidates reference the importance of the ‘community’ and listening to the community. What specific ways or forums will you involve and actively engage the community in a participatory democracy setting that promotes good community interaction and decision making?

Start with the mandated legislative requirements in the new Local Government Act around Community Accountability and Community Engagement and work with the Community on what the Borough Community Engagement Policy should look like.

Explore the idea of introducing a youth council.

Examine ways to bring the voice of our older residents to our Council decision making.

10. What do candidates see as the important heritage issues in the Borough and what specific heritage support or programs will you provide in your role as councillor?

Refer question 3 and, we need to protect, preserve, enhance, and promote all Borough heritage:

Indigenous, Maritime, Military, Built structures.

11. In a rate capping environment where do see council making efficiencies and savings and in particular whether you have a set of financial skills or understandings of the budgetary processes?

Living within our means and remaining debt free as far as is possible is vital to the future financial sustainability of the Borough.

Where necessary and as required and in partnership with our community, consider borrowings to help fund critical projects that will have significant community benefits and outcomes. Any such debt needs to be carefully managed and able to be serviced.

The costs of all services the Borough provides as increasing and so we need to understand what those increased costs mean for our annual operating budget.

12. Planning is such an important element of the Borough work. What is your attitude to the current planning controls in the Borough?

Questions for Borough Candidates.

Have we got the correct controls and protections in our current planning scheme? Maybe this needs review?

13. Council seems to not have community consultation 'not quite right' - i.e. Destination Queenscliff, R.V Dump point. The result being much community angst and ultimately wasted finances that could have been put to better use. What actions can you commit to better Community Consultation?

Engaging with the community right from the start whenever a 'thought bubble' pops up so that we go on the journey around any ideas/projects together. We need to harness and utilise the myriad of skills and abilities that are in our community.

14. The Borough is unique - Australia wide - for Heritage attributes. Can you commit to a strengthening of Heritage Protections if you are elected?

Refer question 3 and 10

Questions from the Webinar (unanswered)

15. I would like to know if your focus as a councillor would be on global warming and climate change? Or on traditional council achievement targets such as management of rate spending, our beaches, roads, parks and gardens and delivery of community services?

BOTH – the two are inextricably linked.

Getting waste management right impacts on Global Warming and Climate Change.

How we deliver our community service can be done in ways that reduce the carbon footprint the Council makes on our planet?

The products used to maintain our roads can be from recycled materials and on the list goes.

HOWEVER, I do recognise that the core business of council and getting the fundamentals right like maintaining our public facilities and environments in clean, well maintained condition is particularly important to residents and visitors alike

16. As COVID restrictions ease, hopefully in the coming weeks, we can expect many more Victorians visiting and holidaying our coastal areas. We expect the numbers to be far higher than past years as travel restrictions will continue for some time. This may create an opportunity for local businesses to recoup from the harsh economic year 2020 has delivered. The flip side of this is increased pressure on the environment and community, especially our beautiful beaches. Respect for by-laws by locals and visitors alike is essential to protect the fragile environment we all adore. Would candidates like to comment on how they would approach the balance between respecting and protecting local coming and environment while at the same time encouraging visitors to the area?

Questions for Borough Candidates.

The State Government will continue to provide us all with the roadmaps/guidelines/rules which will facilitate COVID safe tourism and business operations. We must all abide by these COVID safe guidelines to keep our aging and therefore potentially highly vulnerable community safe.

Promoting 3225 as a destination of choice to other regional areas of Victoria will be vitally important. Work with Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine to boost visitor numbers to the Borough.

Council may need to explore the need for additional law enforcement resources to help manage and monitor COVID safe behaviour if the extra influx of numbers is to occur.

If we are going to expand outdoor dining options on footpaths, we need to ensure that accessibility for parents with prams and those that utilise mobility aids like walkers and wheelchairs is maintained.

17. Non-resident ratepayers contribute a large proportion of rates. How will candidates improve communication and involvement with this important sector of our community?

Ensure that locally distributed information and communications distributed by the Borough is mailed to non-resident rate payers. Host weekend listening posts and focus groups to enable no-resident ratepayer scan more easily attend

18. The ONE3225 - a boundary change - has been discussed on and off for several council terms. It is not being mentioned tonight. Where will it come in the list of priorities?

This issue is significant and must be worked through to an agreed resolution by engaging with the community, City of Greater Geelong, and the State Government.

19. Given that the council has declared a Climate Emergency and have committed to developing a climate Emergency response plan in partnership with the community after receiving a petition signed by over 1000 residents, would you if elected fully support this process?

YES

20. We need a collaboration between the past and future _ we need a long-term vision to stimulate our local economy and engage the community. How do you plan to achieve this?
A robust and sustainable COVID recovery and rebuild plan is critical to the local economy. We also need to engage with the community about how we can do things differently that enable more jobs to be developed locally.

Questions for Borough Candidates.

Balancing the needs of residents, visitors and residents is essential in all we do.

21. Assuming that you are interested in the heritage issues in Queenscliffe, what are your thoughts on the recently published Heritage Review by Lovell Chen?

I am pleased that finally we will have a more recent Heritage document to guide our planning scheme, relying on an Urban Conservation report from 1984 is fraught.

22. Major strength of Queenscliffe is it's Heritage. The proposed Hub does not seem to feed into this objective. The site is such a pivotal opportunity to enhance Heritage. What are your views?

Refer Q 3 and 10 and 21.

Ensuring that 'new built structures' blend well with and preferably enhance our existing heritage structures is of vital importance. We can and must ensure that this blending of 'old' and 'new' is done well.

23. Would you consider using the talent in our community rather than spending money on consultants who are not actually familiar with our Borough?

ABSOLUTELY, this is essential as a way of bringing community and Council together.

24. You all talk communityour largest demo group, and pay the most rates, what then is there is a priority for our + 65-year-old rate payers?

25.

Talking with residents aged 65+ to gain an understanding of what is important to them and what they would like to see their Council do. Ensuring our community services supports are available as required by people to ensure they can remain living in their own homes if that is their choice.

Exploring partnering with Bellarine Community Health around services and supports for people aged 65+.

26. A solar park in Murray road? what is this? has our local community been consulted?

I am not aware of this; I will need to seek information.

27. What is the one project / cause you will champion if elected?

Questions for Borough Candidates.

I am not a one project/issue candidate. I would like to see the Borough complete the myriad of projects that have been hanging around for several years before they start on anything else.

28. What reporting mechanisms would you put in place to improve accountability and tracking of progress to the community on Council plans and commitments?

I would like to see regular, easy read ‘report cards’ produced that inform our community about how the Council is performing against the Council 4-year plan and the annual implementation plans. I would also like to see easier to understand reporting around how Council funds are being spent.

29. Regarding Swan Bay, what actions would you undertake to prevent it drying up in years to come?

We must work with our community and all levels of government to protect and preserve Swan Bay. Its international significance as a Ramsar site is vitally important and we must meet our obligations under this convention.

I am a little confused by this question and will be happy to learn more from the author of the question if I am missing something. I would have thoughts that, given that Swan Bay is tidal and sea levels are rising that Swan Bay would not be at risk of “drying up”, I would be more concerned that the area might become permanently inundated and that would change the entire ecology of the area. I need your help to further understand your question.

30. What would be your strategies to provide inclusiveness, and support, to the local LGBTQIA community?

Promote the Borough as a LGBTQIA friendly and safe place for residents and tourists alike.

Host events on IDAHO and other significant awareness raising days, weeks, and months.

Explore options such as Silver Rainbow *LGBTI Aged Care Awareness Training Project* for our community services staff

Thanks-you for attending the Webinar. The answers you provide will be posted on the relevant community Associations websites, and social media sites.

We would appreciate your answers by Friday the 16/10/20 – so we can post them up for voters.