

# Bass Coast Ratepayers and Residents Association Inc. 2020 BCSC Election Candidate Questionnaire

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22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

Dear Candidate,

In the current restricted environment, Bass Coast Ratepayers and Residents Association (BCRRA) appreciates that you may face challenges connecting with voters. As a service to our community, we have made a page available for you on our website ([www.basscrra.org](http://www.basscrra.org)) to publish your profile and candidate statement.

We also want to publish your responses to a number of questions which are shown below. BCRRA has 15 questions for you (Section A below). We also invited ratepayers and residents from across the shire to let us know what questions they would like to put to candidates. A large number were received, and in consultation with our committee and members we compiled a further 19 questions (Section B below). We're asking you to respond to each question in these two sections, and your replies will be posted on our website.

Section C contains all the unedited questions as we received them from the community. There may be some repetition, but we do ask that you read through them, and whilst we don't expect you to answer them all, please feel free to reply directly to as many as you desire.

Thank you for helping the community understand how you feel about their concerns.

The BCRRA Committee

## SECTION A

### Questions from BCRRRA

1. Why do you believe the community should vote for you?
2. What are your strengths in working with people?
3. If elected, how will you demonstrate that you stand at the front of the community rather than standing beside the bureaucracy?
4. What considerations, inclusions or deletions will you take when forming your new Council Plan?
5. How will you demonstrate that you remain focused on financial discipline at Council?
6. Is Council's 4 year Strategic Resource Plan together with the 10 year financial plan appropriate to meet the future needs of The Bass Coast Shire Council and its Ratepayers?
7. Will you be prepared to challenge the system (council officers and fellow councillors) to keep your constituents well informed?
8. Will you take action to investigate the 10 year Waste Contract details in the first 12 months of your term as a councillor? Will you review the contract model settings and make findings publicly available?
9. Will you support continued live streaming of open Council Meetings and availability of a publicly available video archive?
10. Will you take action to review the Governance Rules Policy in the first 12 months of your term as a councillor including community consultation?
11. Will you take action to Review the Media Engagement Policy in the first 12 months of your term as a councillor including community consultation?
12. If elected, what commitment will you make to improve Council engagement with the wider community and build community engagement with your local ward?
13. How will you ensure that the CEO and officers genuinely and respectfully answer all public questions with a sincere response that address the core of each question?
14. Do you believe that keeping any increases to rates, fees and charges within the State Government Rate Cap or below the CPI increase is paramount for Council?
15. Would you be in favour of regular virtual community connection sessions in lieu of the previous model used by Council?

## SECTION B

### Questions from the Bass Coast Community

We invited the community to tell us what they would like to ask candidates hoping to be their Council representatives for the next four years. Questions 16 thru 34 below have been compiled from the larger number received.

16. Why are you standing as a Councillor?
17. Do you live in the ward you seek to represent, and why should we vote for you?

### Community Engagement

18. Council recently commenced Live Streaming meetings (for a trial period). They also recently adopted policies defining Council engagement with social and other media. How do you feel about these?
19. How would you improve Council engagement with the wider community and build community engagement with your local ward?

### Transparency

20. Public Transparency and good Governance are at the core of BCRRA's purpose. Council has recently adopted new policies covering Governance Rules and Public Transparency.
21. Do you feel there is a need to review these policies, and if so when should this be done?
22. What role do you feel community consultation has in reviewing these policies?
23. What measures would you put in place to demonstrate honesty and transparency in your decisions and spending of ratepayers' money?

### Financial Integrity and Discipline

24. Do you think 'The Fair Go' rate cap is better or worse than limiting rate rises to CPI?
25. Bass Coast Shire has budgeted for a significant amount of Capital Works in the coming years. How do you feel about the level of borrowing necessary to deliver these?
26. What is your opinion of Council's current financial position? And of the outlook projected in the Long Term Financial Plan?
27. What is your opinion of the 10-year waste contract agreed by the last Council late in 2016?
28. And what do you think of the (uncapped) charge for waste services being separate to the general rate charge?

### Community

29. What is important for you about township boundaries and character within the shire?
30. What is your feeling about the condition of council owned roads and footpaths and bike paths?
31. What are your views on the level of importance of art, culture, and indigenous recognition in the Council framework?
32. Statistically, one in four Bass Coast Residences has a dog. How do you feel about existing restrictions in place? What, if anything would you change?
33. What would you like to see BCSC do to address Climate Change?
34. How do you rank the importance of tourism against local amenity?

## SECTION C (Optional)

### Questions as received from the Bass Coast Community

Questions 35 thru 88 are the full list of questions as we received them from the community.

35. What topics or subjects do you consider very important for the Councillor Induction Training workshop?
36. Do you live in the ward to which you seek to be elected?
37. I would like to know what you are standing for.
38. I would like to know who will stand up for the local people of this area
39. On what matters are you standing for council?
40. What is your number 1 priority for the council?
41. Are you now, or have you ever been, affiliated to a political party? If so, which one?
42. Will your loyalty be to the Ratepayers first and foremost as it is the Ratepayers who will be voting for you to represent them?

### Community Engagement

43. Given the current inadequate four days notice for publication of the detail of items for decision at council meetings, would you vote to extend this to one week extra (as per the previous council)?
44. How will you focus on building community engagement?
45. If elected, will you work closely with the various Ratepayers and Residents associations, including attending their meetings (face-to-face or online)?
46. What capability and experience do you have to manage the CEO in order to bring improved transparency, financial discipline, and genuine community engagement to Bass Coast Shire?
47. Will you support all council meetings being fully open to all ratepayers and video cast all council meetings?
48. Will you support the continuance of live streaming of Council Meetings?
49. Being an Elder of the LGBTIQ community - what do you intend to do to you show your support to us [reminding everyone that we make up approx 15% of the community]?
50. Are you prepared to join in with and work with a local LGBTIQ group and help suggest and work through ideas and processes?

### Transparency

51. How will you demonstrate transparency in your decisions and spending of rate payers' money?
52. What measures would you put in place to ensure transparency to the ratepayers of council decisions
53. Will you take action to review the Governance Rules Policy before mid term of your councillor period and set a review period of 4 years and seek public comment?
54. Will you truly promote and conduct an open and honest council
55. What is your measure of Performance for the CEO and Mayor of council at this time?

### Financial Integrity and Discipline

56. Do you support maximum CPI increase in rates each year, including waste charges?
57. The Strategic Resource Financial Plan and the Budget are extremely important to Ratepayers and the operations of Council. What concerns have you with the current finances of council?
58. What steps and actions will you take to ensure Councils Capital Works Projects listed in the budget are achieved during the budget year and is councils Investments in the best interest of ratepayers?

### Community

59. Are there any plans to extend the cycle path networks in the Bass Coast area?
60. Do you believe that P.I is getting a fair share of council services
61. Do you support all Phillip Island beaches being dog friendly, on lead, all year round, and the 3 off lead beaches being off lead all year round?
62. Do you support giving responsible dog owners more opportunities to walk their on-leash dogs on Bass Coast beaches? Do you support having designated off-leash beach areas in each locality?
63. Do you support the duplication of the bridge from San Remo?
64. Do you support the introduction of more off lead beaches on the island?
65. Is there a focus on improving art & culture and indigenous recognition?
66. Question: Will you assist Phillip Island residents and business owners by doing everything you can to ensure there is an appropriate increase in rubbish collection (both red and yellow bins) during peak holiday seasons?  
Preamble: Phillip Island has an unacceptable problem with excessive rubbish during major tourist season as a small red bin, and large yellow bin pickup once/fortnight is far less than required for such an increase in population with excess rubbish demands during the festive season. Please note, this will not increase the amount of rubbish collected, it will just save residents trying to store rubbish or being required to pick up rubbish dumped around the island.
67. What emphasis will be put on maintaining the roads in the council? In particular the streets in residential towns
68. What is your policy regarding dogs and dog friendly areas, especially relating to beaches?
69. Why have you been against some of the developments that have been put forward, namely the United service station in Inverloch which would have without question resulted in cheaper fuel which would have ultimately been of benefit to the large number of retirees in the area?
70. Would you support adding more / adding to playground areas?
71. Do you believe that Business is getting full support of council
72. How do you propose that Council promotes community connections to facilitate the interaction of individuals and groups and to provide role models for healthy, active, and positive living?
73. How should Council support programs to counsel the community in general and individuals on mental health problems and the abuse of drugs and alcohol?
74. What would be your attitude to the coordinated development of the arts (particularly music, art, and dance), in the Shire?

## Environment

75. What do you propose to do about the erosion along Silverleaves foreshore area?
76. What will you do to reduce carbon emissions in Bass Coast?
77. Will you support (or possibly increase) the current council targets and community aspirations for greenhouse gas emission reductions?
78. What are the principles that guide you to ensure that the environment of Phillip Island and the entire Bass Coast Shire is adequately protected from industrial and residential development?
79. The Albert Ruttle wetlands is a 22 acre community reserve in Inverloch, which has been enjoyed by residents for more than 25 years. Via a planning loophole it is now in private ownership as two housing blocks. What action would you take to ensure the council applies the development plan overlay and returns this unique wetland to the community as a public reserve?

## Tourism

80. What is your priority on protecting local ratepayers' and residents' rights first and tourism second?
81. Will you ensure local By-Laws are applied to tourists in the same way they are applied to local residents?
82. Will you promote infrastructure needs e.g. footpaths etc. ahead of infrastructure for tourism.
83. What is your vision for Tourism development?

## Town Boundaries & Planning

84. How will you reduce increasing urbanisation on Phillip Island?
85. What is your view on the density of housing development on Phillip Island?
86. Do you agree that the proposed development at 92 Norsemens Road Coronet Bay is inappropriate in scale for the location and does not meet the requirements of land titled Rural Activity Zone?
87. Given the more than adequate supply of residential land within the shire, will you hold the town boundaries where they are (or reduce them where they are inappropriate)?
88. Will you fight and oppose foreign takeovers of land and environmentally damaging developments?