

WCC candidate Cassandra Prigg chats to The Terrier

CANDIDATE CASSANDRA PRIGG:

10 QUESTIONS FROM THE TERRIER:

What three main skills could you bring to the Warrnambool City Council as a councillor?

Advocacy: I have been an advocate for young people, the unemployed, homeless people, and people living with a disability with a variety of organisations including ACOSS, YACVic, YDAS, student organisations and the AUWU.

I have spoken to decision makers at all levels of government and the private sector about these and other important issues and have a good deal of experience interacting with politicians.

Consultation: Before advancing an agenda it's important to consult the community on what their needs, wants and priorities are. Throughout my campaign I have spoken to residents from different backgrounds and parts of Warrnambool about what they want from Council and if elected its something I would continue doing.

Local knowledge: I grew up in Warrnambool, attending Allansford kindergarten, Warrnambool East Primary School, Warrnambool College and now Deakin University. I have a strong connection to place and I understand what makes Warrnambool unique. However, I did move away for a number of years and so I also have an understanding of how things could be done differently and perhaps better.

Do you see any particular issues, projects or problems in

Warrnambool that you would like to work on as a councillor?

One of the main issues I want to see Council address is housing affordability. Housing prices have increased significantly in the past 20 years and wages are not keeping pace. The most serious manifestation of this issue is the significant number of homeless residents who are sleeping rough, couch-surfing or are in insecure or overcrowded housing.

I also want to ensure Warrnambool is a youth friendly city, and that we actively encourage our young people to remain and thrive in the region. Similarly I think we can do more to make our public spaces including parks and playgrounds accessible to people of all ages and all abilities.

I will also strongly advocate for Council to commit funding to the South of the Merri plan and to work with Deakin University to ensure safe cyclist and pedestrian access to our campus. Two other issues I'm concerned about are public transport and maternal and child health services.

Do you think the council could be more "open" with residents and if so, how?

I think there are some simple ways Council can be more open and transparent, including better use of existing social and traditional media channels, the reintroduction of general business to Council meeting agendas, and allowing observers at meetings to ask questions without notice.

The next 12 months are going to be challenging due to the impact of Covid-19 – do you have one or two key idea/s for how WCC could support residents and/or businesses?

Increasing awareness and capacity of hardship measures available through Council for things like rates, day care, kinder fees as well as increasing awareness of other hardship resources including for things like utilities, rent, banking,

etc.

Increasing and extending free parking in the CBD will be a key way to support locally owned businesses going forward.

Do you have any ideas on where the council could cut costs, if necessary, to keep rates at the state cap?

Reducing staffing costs especially in the executive team would be a place to start.

Preferences will decide who is elected to the council. Are you planning to preference most highly new candidates, existing candidates or you won't be putting forward preferences:

I will be releasing my preferences and plan to include some sitting councillors as well as many of the fantastic new candidates. I don't believe that a council made up of all new candidates is in the best interests of Warrnambool, but I do think we need some fresh faces and new ideas.

If you were elected, what ways – if any – would you keep residents and ratepayers informed as an individual councillor?

I would continue to operate my candidate Facebook page as a councillor to keep people informed and also consult with the community. That and my memberships and involvement with various local groups and organisations would be the main way I maintained two-way communication as an individual councillor.

If you were elected, what would you have liked to have achieved at the end of your four-year term?

I have an ambitious but achievable goal of ending homelessness in the City of Warrnambool by the end of my four year term. I would also want to see work begun on the South of the Merri upgrades, a new outdoor gym and a new all abilities playground, as well as cheaper pet registration and an increased open season for the 50-metre pool at Aquazone.

Are you a member of any political party? If so, which one?

No, I am not.

In the past two years, have you been a member of any local club, organisation or association?

I am a member of the Warrnambool Community Garden, the Deakin University Student Association, a volunteer with Coastcare Landcare, a volunteer with Birdlife Australia, 2019 treasurer of the Deakin Warrnambool Enviro Club, member of the Headspace Warrnambool Youth Reference Group, member of the Project Control Group for Beyond the Bell's Youth Conversations project, a regular attendee of Business and Professional Women South West Victoria events, a member of the Women With Disabilities Australia Warrnambool Hub, and a contributor to the Great South Coast Regional Partnerships COVID-19 and young people working group.

You can find Cassandra's candidate [Facebook page here.](#)