

WCC candidate Lynn Hudson talks with The Terrier

CANDIDATE LYNN HUDSON:

10 QUESTIONS FROM THE TERRIER:

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

I have:

an enquiring mind;

high-level previous board appointments and legal experience;

high-level written and oral communication skills.

Do you see any particular issues, projects or problems in Warrnambool that would like to work on as a councillor?

I honestly feel that the WCC has lost the trust and faith of its base. Integrity, trust and clarity in the decision making of the WCC needs to be restored as a priority. I believe that a well run Council with a membership focussed on the needs and wants of electors, residents and ratepayers – including business – is a top issue.

I would like to see better and safer boating facilities installed which will benefit locals and attract visitors with all of the benefits that brings to the broader WCC has an interesting demographic and improved facilities for the unemployed, under-employed and young families should yield beneficial results long term. On the other hand nearly 20% are aged 65+ and it is important that these experienced residents are equally well looked after.

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

Yes. The number of in camera council meetings is of concern given the Councillors represent ratepayers and residents.

There seems a general unease in the community with what a perceived lack of transparency in decision making. Good communication is the key to all good relationships. I am of the view the lack of trust and confidence in the WCC is damaging to the community and is quite plausibly a disincentive to investment here. To be more open as a Council suggests open transparent decision making, clear policies that are known and uniformly applied with less discretion in the hands of staff.

It is important to make time to attend meetings of local organisations and respond to residents and ratepayers concerns and problems as they perceive them to be. People are much better informed these days and it is unacceptable in my view for the Council to be voting on decisions that may adversely have deleterious financial consequences for the community with “the blinds down” nothing to see here position.

The next 12 months is 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?

If elected I would focus on streamlining/ reducing/modifying the applicable policies, regulations and or fees associated with helping businesses whether they be hotels, cafes, festivals, food and beverage outlets, retails shops and the like.

Changes can be made on an interim basis to actively encourage back to C19 levels and hopefully improve on them. For example, making it easier for pavement dining or waive or reduce fees for small businesses to have signage on the pathway to making it easier for marquee’s to be erected to expand useable outside areas and the customer base.

Do you have any ideas on where the council could cut costs, if

necessary, to keep rates at the state cap?

I would undertake a review of external consultants, travel – especially interstate and international, legal costs and tender processes. For example, I would consider employing an appropriately qualified Legal Officer within the WCC so as to reduce the costs of engaging external private lawyers.

Preferences will decide who is elected to council. Are you planning to preference most highly new candidates, current councillors, or you will not be listing your preferences

Obviously I hope to be the first preference for voters. I don't intend to dictate where voters should place their next choices. That said, I honestly hope voters seriously consider the range of hugely talented new candidates.

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

Clearly the work of the Council is, or should be, a team effort. There is attendant risk if each Councillor purports to inform ratepayers of the work and achievements of Council as there is a possibility of non uniform messaging or even 'grandstanding' without appropriate credit to the team. People are generally better informed these days. If elected I undertake to help the community and the cohorts within it to respond in a timely manner to their problems and concerns as they perceive them to be.

Interaction throughout the community is important. Examples of personal interaction work include visiting, for example, Aged Care Homes, meet with the Ratepayers Association, becoming anchored within the community, attending meetings of other community groups and actively participating in local government events. Councillors can always be contacted via their e mail and the newsletters and community forums published by the Council are a great initiative.

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

I would like to achieve a reduction (in real terms) of the rates and charges currently imposed by Council. In addition, I would like to achieve clear equitable and uniformly applied policies and guidelines particularly in the often contentious area of public works tenders and planning approvals.

Are you a member of any political party?

No.

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

Yes. I am a paid up member of the sensational Warrnambool 4WD Club and also the Warrnambool Bowls Club.