

WCC candidate Richard Ziegeler chats with The Terrier

CANDIDATE RICHARD ZIEGELER:

10 QUESTIONS FROM THE TERRIER:

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

I am a lateral thinker and a problem solver; I have many years experience of high level governance; I have very well developed communication skills, both verbal and written.

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

There are several, the old chestnuts being the harbour and boat ramp, with the associated difficulties pertaining to the beach use and its degradation, parking and the decline of the CBD. I would like to establish a pathway to resolution of these problems, none of which realistically will be completely fixed in one council term.

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

Council MUST be more open.

If people don't know what's happening then they invent their own explanations. We have a right to know, to see and hear debate and to contribute.

General business and open question time must be brought back to council and regular media interaction must be promoted. Expensive, glossy publications with platitudinal stories have

to cease. There is an established newspaper with local employees.

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?

Wherever possible Council has to take a softly-softly approach to businesses and residents who face financial difficulties because of the Virus.

Community must look after it's own and if Covid has badly affected businesses then Council must be cognisant of that and be prepared to give concessions and considerations to assist them financially or even practically. B/S education and courses are not always helpful and usually do not help in a practical sense.

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

Staffing, sharing resources with Shire neighbours more effectively; using local contractors; looking more closely for thrifty/clever/innovative solutions.

Council has to recognise that staff are usually its most valuable resource: if staff are happy and valued then they will do the best they can and try to follow the concepts of value for money, thrift and if necessary, frugality. I'm sure that staff have their own ideas about how Council can save money. After all, they too pay rates!

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:

New candidates.

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

Open communication is very important. I will make myself ever available for contact at my place of work and I hope to have regular informal sit-down sessions somewhere in town where folks can come to chat on a Saturday morning.

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

Some tangible progress on the issues mentioned above. I want people to see that yes, things are improving and we can see that we are moving to where we should be.

That we are living within our means and Council is NOT paying big wages to executive level staff who do not show solid results. The old furphy that 'if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys' is not always true. It has to be recognised that staff are also residents here and have the same right to be proud of Warrnambool; they too want it to be as good a town as it can be for their families.

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

If so, which one? No never. Are any one of them any more open and honest than the others? Are any of them much different from each other?

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

Oh my! How many do I have room for? I am a Life Member of the Warrnambool Theatre Company, I have been a part of Heatherlie Council (Chair, Deputy Chair, Convenor of House Management and Governance Committees and Life Member); Lodge; Co-Director of Primary Performers; Dennington Community Association; Warrnambool Ratepayers Association (until 16 Sept 2020); Deputy Chair of International Society of Prosthetics and Orthotics and Director of Governance for Australia; Australian Occupational Therapy Association; Bail Justice for Victoria (and Honorary Justices Association); Club Cabaret Inc (a

charitable Cabaret group in Warrnambool).

Closing thoughts or ask and answer your own question here:

Look, I can't honestly say that I will get any further than any other Councillor if I get in, but I will try. I will not make any promises that I can't be sure of honouring. BUT I do promise to give my all to the very serious job of representing residents and ratepayers and I WILL make public any Council business which I am legally allowed to.

I know that putting myself up as a Councillor is a way to have slings and arrows cast my way and often unreasonably. I can only hope that if I put in, openly and honestly, people will respect that and be assured that I am on their side.

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