

## Your vision for Port Stephens

### Questions for candidates for election to Port Stephens Council in 2017

Port Stephens Greens wish to assess where candidates stand on a range of issues, in order to assess which candidates share our values and priorities.

Candidates should preferably answer Yes or No to each question, but may add comments. In the absence of a Yes or No answer, or if comments qualify the answer, we reserve the right to make our own judgement about whether you do or do not support a proposition, and publicise your response accordingly.

If there is insufficient space for your comments, feel free to attach further pages with cross reference to the relevant Question No.

Please also feel free to send us any other information about your vision for Port Stephens, and what you see yourself offering in pursuit of that vision.

Please return as soon as possible to [email@portstephensgreens.org.au](mailto:email@portstephensgreens.org.au)

Based on your responses, we may invite candidates to address our Local Group.

Thank you.

Name of candidate: Jaimie Abbott Standing for (Mayor or Ward): East Ward

Date: 11 Aug 17 election – 9 Sep 17

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Yes (Y) or No (N)?</i>
<b>Governance, transparency and accountability</b>	
Q1. Will you support re-introduction of web-casting of Council meetings?	Yes
<b>Yes, these should be recorded and available on the Council's website. This accountability measure will improve behaviour of Councillors at meetings and ensure residents can be fully informed of positions taken by their local representatives.</b>	
Q2. Will you support re-introduction of a Council committee cycle that allows for at least two weeks consideration in public of papers on the Council agenda?	Yes
<b>In principle support. However this may not be practical in all situations – for example if a sub-Committee meets a week before Council to finalise a paper for Council.</b>	
Q3. Will you support full disclosure of the detailed financial accounts of all Council business enterprises including its Holiday Parks?	
<b>Subject to legal advice re : Commercial in Confidence contractual information, I support detailed financial reporting and performance auditing of all ratepayer assets.</b>	Yes
Q4. Will you support full disclosure of the costs to Council of legal actions?	Yes
<b>Yes, unless suppressed by a court order (ie confidential settlements)</b>	

Q5. Are there any circumstances in which you would favour a merger between Port Stephens and any other adjoining LGA?	No
<b>Port Stephens has substantial assets and underspending on basic infrastructure. These assets need to be utilised for the benefit of ratepayers who own them, and not appropriated to other Council areas.</b>	
<b>Planning approvals and compliance</b>	
Q6. Will you support a minimum public exhibition period of 4 weeks (excluding public holiday weeks) for DAs and other planning proposals which are clearly of major interest or significance to the community?	Yes
<b>I fully support fair opportunity for public engagement on major issues considered by Council.</b>	
Q7. Will you support giving greater priority and resources to monitoring of compliance with conditions of approvals, and, where necessary, to enforcement action?	Yes
<b>I support a risk based approach to compliance, where sensitive projects and/or serial offenders face stricter compliance requirements to be funded on a user pays basis.</b>	
<b>Ecologically sustainable development</b>	
Q8. Do you agree that protection of the natural environment needs to be given greater weight in Council planning and land use decisions? (e.g. to limit land clearing)	Yes
<b>Port Stephens has unique and pristine waterways and a world class coastline that is loved by residents and deserves greater recognition and protection. I support plans for Tomaree National Park to be included in a proposed application for World Heritage Listing of environmental icons from Barrington Tops to Myall Lakes and south to Port Stephens.</b>	
Q9. Do you accept that man-made climate change is increasing risks from sea level rise and more frequent and intense storms and bush fires, and that Council should adopt policies to adapt to the risks, including by limiting development in low lying areas and in bush fire prone areas?	Yes
<b>We need clear scientific information on erosion zones, protect mangroves and native vegetation securing sand dunes and defending our coastline, and cease development that will exacerbate the threat.</b>	
Q10. What if any role do you think Council should play in relation to the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park?	
<b>Council should support world heritage listing of the estuary and National Parks that protect the pristine water quality of Port Stephens Marine habitat. Broughton Island and Cabbage Tree Island should be included in the World Heritage Listing Application. Council should contribute to the cost of the application and lobby the NSW Government to take it forward. I would like Council to place greater emphasis on Aboriginal heritage in the Marine Park and believe it's can come together as a fantastic story for local tourism emphasising innovation and employment opportunities for local Aboriginal communities</b>	
Q11. Do you see any potential for coal seam gas extraction in Port Stephens?	No
<b>No, our astonishing and fragile aquifers must be protected from all mining.</b>	

Q12. Do you agree that proposed expansion of sand mining and hard rock quarrying operations in Port Stephens would impose unacceptable levels of heavy vehicle traffic, habitat destruction and other adverse effects?	
<b>Sand mining operations must comply with DA conditions set by the EPA. Past decisions have conferred legal rights to mine sand – the opportunity for Council is to advocate strict conditions to mitigate the impacts on residents and local environment. I would prefer contamination issues that we already know exist be resolved before new risks are considered. Whilst I recognise the legal rights of leaseholders to progress their applications, we must take every action possible to limit impacts.</b>	
Q13. Should Council actively promote the use of renewable energy and energy conservation, both in its own operations and in the general community?	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Council has an opportunity to incentivise development of sustainable housing and promote renewable energy in its own operations, including streetlights, electric vehicles, water recycling and waste management.</b>	
Q14. Should Council actively lobby the State Government to implement a ban on the supply by retailers of single use plastic shopping bags, to reduce both the environmental impact and the costs to Council of disposal?	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Plastic bags are having a disastrous impact on our Marine Life. Coles and Woolworths are going to ban single use plastic bags in the next year which is fantastic. The NSW Government should show leadership assisting small businesses, like bait shops to adopt environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic bags. I want to work with Government and local businesses to accelerate a ban on plastic bags but want a transition to ensure local shops are prepared and not impacted.</b>	
<b>Koala Protection</b> Q15. Will you support an urgent review and update of the Port Stephens Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management, with a view to stricter protection of koala habitat and movement corridors?	<b>Yes</b>
<b>I support all measures to protect koalas including lowering speed limits where wildlife corridors cross roads (these are known hotspots); all new road construction should eliminate conflict with koala crossings; I support pet bans in new developments adjoining koala habitat; we need to prioritise a new Koala Management strategy and fund feral animal eradication campaigns on the peninsula.</b>	
Q16. Will you support major Council expenditure (up to \$2.8 million) on a Koala hospital/tourist attraction at One Mile Beach which is based on an estimate of 45,0000 visitors a year paying \$15 each within three years of opening?	<b>Unsure</b>
<b>I support the koala hospital initiative. I am concerned that making it a tourist attraction could impact negatively on the injured koalas in the hospital who require a stress free environment. We must prioritise the needs of the koalas. If there is a compatible tourism opportunity in the proposal I could support that.</b>	
<b>Social, health and welfare policies</b>	
Q17. Will you support Council actively working with State and Federal governments to increase the supply of affordable housing in Port Stephens, including more not for profit social housing? (e.g. through Council's zoning and planning functions)	<b>Yes</b>
<b>There is an opportunity for Council to specify affordable Housing as a component of all new developments. I would like to see new housing that</b>	

<p>young locals can purchase, leveraging federal and state government assistance packages. Council needs to play a strong role in social housing, partnering with non-government agencies to ensure access, safety and amenity. I do not support the construction of a large public housing estate in Port Stephens – experience suggests they turn into crime ridden ghettos. Dispersed housing with mixed ownership is a better approach.</p>	
<p><b>Specific local issues</b></p>	
<p><b>Williamstown contamination</b> Q18. Will you support Council actively lobbying for State and Federal Government solutions to the problems of PFOS/PFOA contamination around the Williamstown airport and RAAF base, and back this up with Council action such as better drain management?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Of course I want the best outcomes for local residents.</b></p>	
<p><b>Mambo wetlands</b> Q19. Will you support Council lobbying the State government to buy back the land sold by the Department of Education in 2016 and incorporate it into the Mambo Wetlands Reserve?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>The decision to sell the land was completely wrong and I openly support anything we can do to reverse it, and ensure the land is returned to public ownership and used to augment the fragile nature reserve.</b></p>	
<p><b>Tomaree Lodge</b> Q20. Will you seek to ensure that when Tomaree Lodge closes (in 2018), the land is used for public purposes and not sold for private development?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>I support retention and transfer of pristine native vegetation to the National Park. I cannot rule out reuse of the developed part of the site and need to consult stakeholders and surrounding residents as I am not able to know what is proposed and form a view on the future of the redundant buildings.</b></p>	
<p><b>Nelson Bay Town Centre</b> Q21. Despite Council's recent approval of an apartment building more than double the current height limit, will you support new strict height limits on new buildings in the Nelson Bay town centre to ensure that they do not breach the tree line on the surrounding hills and ridges, when viewed from the foreshore?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>I support residential development to support local businesses in Nelson Bay CBD, however I believe the high limits should not impede views of the surrounding escarpment which is an iconic feature of Nelson Bay.</b></p>	
<p><b>Your affiliations and preferences</b></p>	
<p>Q22. Are you a member of a political party, and if so which party? (whether or not you are standing as an independent)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Yes – NSW Liberal Party. Standing as an Independent.</b></p>	
<p>Q23. Will you or your Group be directing preferences to any other candidate(s), and if so, which?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Ryan Palmer for Mayor</b></p>	
<p>Q24. Will you be receiving more than \$1000 in financial or in-kind support for your campaign from any one or more donor(s) (person or organisation), and if so who?</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>

<p><b>I am funding this campaign myself with some help of friends and local businesses. A full list of declared donations will be made public by the NSWEC. I do not envisage any such large donations.</b></p>	
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