

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

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

Thank you.

Name of candidate: SARAH SMITH Standing for (Ward): CENTRAL WARD

Date: 14.8.17

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Yes (Y) or No (N)?</i>
Governance, transparency and accountability	
Q1. Will you support re-introduction of web-casting of Council meetings?	Y
Comment? All residents should be able to access council meetings in a convenient way	
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?	Y
Comment? This is the only fair way for councillors to have enough time to consider items and make an informed decision	
Q3. Will you support full disclosure of the detailed financial accounts of all Council business enterprises including its Holiday Parks?	Y
Comment?	
Q4. Will you support full disclosure of the costs to Council of legal actions?	Y
Comment?	

Q5. Are there any circumstances in which you would favour a merger between Port Stephens and any other adjoining LGA?	
Comment? Circumstances may change. At this point in time I do not see a merger as beneficial to Port Stephens. Any change would need to be fully reviewed and represent the best interests of our residents first	
Planning approvals and compliance	
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?	Y
Comment?	
Q7. Will you support giving greater priority and resources to monitoring of compliance with conditions of approvals, and, where necessary, to enforcement action?	Y
Comment?	
Ecologically sustainable development	
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)	Y
Comment?	
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?	Y
Comment? We have so many untouched natural areas in Port Stephens and they need to be protected and managed for the future	

Q10. What if any role do you think Council should play in relation to the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park?	
Comment? Council should have a role in the management, maintenance and education about the park	
Q11. Do you see any potential for coal seam gas extraction in Port Stephens?	N
Comment?	
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?	Y
Comment? Heavy vehicle traffic is already at excessively high levels along our overloaded roads	
Q13. Should Council actively promote the use of renewable energy and energy conservation, both in its own operations and in the general community?	Y
Comment:	
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?	Y
Comment:	
Koala Protection 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?	Y
Comment: This process needs to be ongoing and updated regularly to ensure the safety of our koalas	

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?	
Comment: If the potential profits from this attraction are put back into the management and protection of koala habitats it would be a great resource. As long as the facility is managed correctly and profits/losses are disclosed.	
Social, health and welfare policies	
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)	Y
Comment?	
Specific local issues	
Williamstown contamination 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?	Y
Comment? This issue should be front of mind for any council. It is a disgrace	
Mambo wetlands 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?	Y
Comment?	
Tomaree Lodge 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?	Y
Comment? This land should definitely not be sold for private development. It should always remain in community hands and be available to use.	

<p>Nelson Bay Town Centre</p> <p>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>Comment?</p> <p>I believe all development applications need to be fully assessed on merit and not passed under any sort of blanket rule. The correct style and size of developments can only be a bonus to Nelson Bay and surrounds.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the approval process by current council has not been adhered to.</p>	
<p>Your affiliations and preferences</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>	N
<p>Comment:</p> <p>I have never been a member or attended a meeting of any political party</p>	
<p>Q23. Will you or your Group be directing preferences to any other candidate(s), and if so, which?</p>	
<p>Comment?</p> <p>Undecided</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>Comment?</p> <p>I am funding my campaign 100% from my own pocket. I am receiving help to distribute campaign material from friends and supporters</p>	

My main goal is to listen and represent our community. I want to restore confidence in our elected councillors so that they can work to best serve Port Stephens.

I am committed, energetic and excited by the future we could have with a new council

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.