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COMPLETE

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## Q1

Candidate Name

Angelica Panopoulos

## Q2

Harmony Park Ward

Contesting Which Merri-bek Ward?

## Q3

Greens

Are you a candidate for a political party? Which Party?  
Are you standing as an Independent candidate? If you  
are standing as an Independent but you are also a  
member of a political party, please write that party in the  
Comment box.

## Q4

Connections to Merri-bek Wards. Outline your connection to Merri-bek, do you live in the ward you are contesting, do  
you work in that ward? What are your other connections to the Merri-bek community?

I'm a lifelong Merri-bek local, have grown up here and have spent the past four years proudly representing this community on  
Council as both Mayor and Councillor.

## Q5

Climate Emergency. Merri-bek Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2018. Do you accept the  
research evidence from climate scientists and the UN Secretary General that:

	Answer
the earth is already too hot and we are outside the safe climate zone?	Yes
we face a climate emergency?	Yes
local cooling is required to prevent runaway warming?	Yes

## Q6

Governance and Triple bottom line accounting brings to account three domains that we need for a good life. They are economic, social and environmental sustainability. In the past projects have been delivered based on organisational silos often not considering other aspects outside the silo. Will you endeavour as a Councillor for Council to use triple bottom line accounting on all Council infrastructure decisions to ensure that climate emergency priorities are embedded in Council decisions? Note that triple bottom line is already encapsulated in the Local Government Act 2020 Section 9, 2b and 2c for good Council governance.

(no label)

Yes

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## Q7

Transport: Upfield Rail Upgrade - Problems with parking and traffic congestion, capacity issues of public transport need solutions for upgrading the Upfield Line. According to Infrastructure Australia, the northern region Transport Corridor will reach and exceed capacity in the next decade. Do you support the Northern Councils Alliance campaign to Connect Melbourne's North for duplication and extension of the Upfield rail line to Craigieburn and Wallan for provision of a more reliable and frequent rail service catering for the growing population in Merri-bek and residents in new growth suburbs further north?

(no label)

Strongly Agree

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## Q8

Transport: Mode shift - What actions will you be pushing for to facilitate a mode shift to more sustainable modes of transport in Merri-bek as part of, or beyond, Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy (PDF), including increasing safety for walking and cycling and increasing public transport advocacy?

As a current Greens Councillor, I'm proud to be part of a Greens team on Council that's consistently voted to make it safer, easier and more enjoyable for people to walk, ride and catch public transport. This has been through defending and strengthening transport strategies, voting in favour of active transport projects, strong public transport advocacy (on bus timetabling & frequency, Upfield line, LXRP, accessible tram stops) and securing significant budget increases towards bike and pedestrian spending.

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## Q9

Heat Vulnerability: Large sections of Merri-bek's north are at the extreme end of the Heat Vulnerability Index, meaning residents are very susceptible to global warming extreme heat events. What will you do to address this beyond existing policies, including Merri-bek Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan (PDF), Merri-bek Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2017 (PDF), Cooling the Upfield Corridor Action Plan 2018-2028 (PDF)?

Merri-bek Council's existing strategies to combat extreme heat are incredibly valuable tools and resources. What is needed is for them to be fully funded to ensure maximum benefit for communities most at risk. There is potential for further work to help homeowners and renters to keep their homes cool by expanding programs like solar savers (assisting low income households to install solar panels and insulation) and workshops on making rentals climate friendly.

As a current Councillor, I am incredibly proud to have championed practically doubling Merri-bek's tree planting budget, however the allocation towards meeting and exceeding our urban forest goals can always be increased. Planting trees that grow into creating canopy cover are one of the best defences we have against increasing temperatures.

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### Q10

**Waste Management.** Merri-bek aims to be a leading council in sustainable waste management. What will you do to help Merri-bek in educating citizens on waste streams, to achieve Merri-bek's 2030 zero waste to landfill target as part of Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0?

Having been part of Council's most recent waste reforms as a current Councillor, I remain committed to Merri-bek's 2030 target of zero waste to landfill. Now that the food and organics bin has been universally rolled out, we will see a reduction in the amount of food and organics waste going into landfill.

One area for continual improvement is in the contamination of the yellow recycling bin. This may require a further education campaign to ensure people know what to put in each particular bin.

There is also a role for Council to play in advocacy around both manufacturer and consumer choices, especially in relation to soft plastics.

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### Q11

**Energy Efficiency and Renewables.** Merri-bek has a goal of "Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy". How can Merri-bek "walk the talk" on renewable energy and meet the community goals set in the Zero Carbon Merri-bek – Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 (PDF)?

This really would just be continuing the existing work of Council, but with an increased budget allocation. Increasing budget allocation is something that I've consistently fought for on Council as an elected Councillor.

The biggest thing here is getting all of Council's aquatic and leisure centres off gas and onto renewable energy. Greens on Council successfully ensured that the Fawkner Leisure Centre would be gas-free in its recent upgrade, but now is the time to address Council's other aquatic and leisure centres.

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### Q12

**Supporting business and the environment** What actions will you take to help the Council promote environmentally sustainable jobs in the municipality and for businesses to reduce emissions in their operations?

This would involve continuing to support the programs within Zero Carbon Merri-bek that support businesses with recycling, reusing, waste minimisation and energy efficiency.

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### Q13

**Food Security** How would you build community resilience and address food security in Merri-bek beyond the existing Merri-bek Food System Strategy 2024 - 2027 (PDF)? How do you think Council could further support culturally relevant and nutritionally rich food to diverse and vulnerable communities?

The Food System Strategy is only in the first year of its current iteration and so needs time to progress. This strategy really is groundbreaking for a Council and recognises the complex intersections of climate change, socio-economic status, community resilience and food security. Continuing to support local community gardens, food swaps and granting access to commercial kitchens at low or no cost are some ways that Council can support this access to culturally relevant and nutritionally rich food.

## Q14

Buildings, Biodiversity and Urban cooling: What would you do as a Councillor to ensure that with new building developments, Merri-bek residents have protection from overshadowing existing solar PV systems, and that Merri-bek has sufficient vegetation cover to contribute to biodiversity outcomes, urban cooling, and water sensitive urban design beyond existing policies in the Urban Forest Strategy (PDF), Merri-bek Nature Plan, and the Achieving Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0?

As with many of these questions, the policies and fundamental principles are in place - but more funding is needed to fully realise their potential. Regarding planning, many of the controls are out of Council's hands and are subject to the approval of the state Planning Minister. This is most evident in the Elevating ESD in the Planning Scheme Amendment that has been sitting on the Minister's desk for many months now, resulting in multiple Councils not being able to enforce higher environmental standards in new builds.

As per Merri-bek Council's existing policies and guidelines, where there is an application that overshadows existing solar panels, the applicant can be encouraged to change their design, contribute to the supply of new panels or relocate the existing panels.

## Q15

What are your top four priorities for the Council Plan, to be formulated for 2025-2029.

Priority 1	<b>Central Coburg Revitalisation - a new library, social housing &amp; green and open space</b>
Priority 2	<b>Foster a climate resilient city</b>
Priority 3	<b>Drastically increase cooling through tree planting and maintenance</b>
Priority 4	<b>Rapid expansion in walking and cycling infrastructure</b>

## Q16

Democracy and representation: advocacy to State Government on multi-member wards versus single member wards. The state government has imposed single-member wards on Merri-bek against the recommendation of the council, the Local Government Association of Victoria, and even the Victorian Electoral Commission. This shift in electoral structure is an imposition by the parliament, not a choice of experts.

	Answer
Do you support or oppose single-member wards?	<b>Oppose</b>
If (re)-elected will you initiate and/or support measures to pressure the state government to return to multi-member wards?	<b>Support</b>

## Q17

Do you have any other comments on Climate Leadership and Advocacy by Council? Do you have any supplementary comments relating to the questions above, comments on other issues related to climate resilience and climate adaptation, or comments on making decisions for the whole municipality?

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