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COMPLETE

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Q1

Candidate Name

Emma Burrows

Q2

Westbreen Ward

Contesting Which Merri-bek Ward?

Q3

Independent

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?

Proud local, calling Merri-bek home for over 20 years. I live, shop, play and stay active in Westbreen. I have raised by 3 children in Westbreen and am friend to my neighbours. I am active in our community and schools - volunteering for community organisations and school council, mentoring young people and a participant in a council-led community panel to design the vision for Merri-bek.

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

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

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?

Traffic calming measures to reduce speed of cars. Safe, well-lit and connected bike and walking paths. Build trust with community by placing infrastructure where it will work, acknowledging that many in the north require car transport due to age, disability and lack of connected public transport. Involve and employ locals to facilitate a shift to active transport that will resonate with their neighbours.

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)?

Support Council's efforts to respond to the urban heat island effect, and increase canopy cover. Support the use of reflective coatings to roads and footpaths to reduce heat absorption. Investigate cooling centres - air-conditioned public spaces where vulnerable people can escape the heat. Install shade cloths in local parks. Ensure building codes stipulate better insulation, cool roofs and efficient air-con systems. Use heat mapping technology to identify hot spots. Ensure roll out of Vic Gov battery program caters for high energy demand periods during hot days.

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?

The Merri-bek waste management initiative, which focusses on employing local residents from Glenroy and Fawkner, to assist with waste reduction and management is cutting-edge. I would like to see this roll out in other areas, helping to manage waste effectively, but also provide local employment, fostering community involvement in sustainability.

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)?

Merri-bek already has a high number of households with solar panels (>9000), due to the Solar Saver program. The next challenge is to store this energy and use it during peak periods or outages. I am keen to know more about how Merribek council will work with the Victorian government's household battery initiative to increase the use of renewable energy and reduce reliance on the grid and fossil fuels.

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?

Encourage businesses to adopt energy saving measures - efficient HVAC systems. Promote installation of solar panels through rebates/incentives and circular economy practises. Provide training programs for skill development in green industries, offer grants for green businesses that create sustainable jobs.

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?

Employing residents as part of the food system strategy implementation will ensure that people receive culturally relevant and nutritionally rich foods. Provide targeted grants to areas with vulnerable communities, led by community. Supporting existing groups that have demonstrated impact in this area will maintain action while other more culturally relevant programs gain momentum.

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?

Ensure building codes stipulate better insulation, cool roofs and efficient air-con systems. Encourage sustainable development - with provisions for green spaces, appropriate drainage, avoiding overshadowing.

Q15

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

Priority 1

Services for people in need, food security, support for older residents, youth services.

Priority 2

An active and safe community

Priority 3

Environment

Priority 4

Building trust, transparency and collaboration between council and community.

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? | Undecided |
| If (re)-elected will you initiate and/or support measures to pressure the state government to return to multi-member wards? | Undecided |

Other (please specify):

I understand there have been concerns regarding single member wards eroding democracy and I have researched these arguments. The smaller ward structure does enable the councillor to listen, consult and better represent their constituents. I encourage more dialogue around this issue and am open to new information.

Q17

Respondent skipped this question

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?