

Darebin Council Elections 2020: Questions for Candidates

23rd September, 2020

Dear Candidate,

Below is a list of questions compiled on behalf of Darebin community groups; Darebin Progress Association, Darebin Residents Group, Save THE Preston Market and Darebin Appropriate Development Association.

The aim is to supply our members answers to question most important them in the hope it will aid their voting choices in the upcoming council election.

We have aimed to keep the impost on your time to a minimum by posing most questions for yes or no answers with some also asking how you might achieve the answer as a Councillor.

Your answers will be posted, unedited, on our websites and Facebook pages for maximum coverage to our members across Darebin.

Please leave a YES or a NO and remove or cross out the answer you don't want.

GENERAL RESPONSE

Name: Louise Kenney-Shen _____ Ward: North Central _____

Please tell us in 50 words the main reason you are running for Council and your top three issues you want council to adopt

I am running because I believe I have the creative vision and drive to make a positive difference to my community. I have identified a number of gaps and issues that need to be addressed in funding, transparency and delivery of services and will be proactive in resolving these.

1. Upgrades to Reservoir Leisure Centre and the precinct it is in, including a 50m pool and continued maintenance of the East Reservoir Senior Citizens centre.
2. Improved support for community groups and a more needs based approach to funding and assistance offered to community organisations, sporting clubs and community facilities.
3. Easier avenues for community input into planning decisions and transparent processes to ensure proper representation of needs and wishes of affected persons. This includes more community voice in addressing the Preston Market issue.

GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILTY AND TRANSPARANCY



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One of the glaring weaknesses of the majority of current councillors has been their inability/failure to accept that they represent the community. The following questions require a simple yes/no/how answer to demonstrate your commitment to important democratic procedures.

1. Will you support complete transparency in issues affecting the community?

YES	
HOW?	
Regular meetings with the community to discuss issues and present resolutions for discussion.	
Changes to question time in Council meetings to allow more direct discussion between residents.	
Publishing of voting records from Council meetings	

2. Would you guarantee regular meetings with the community by all means available?

YES	
HOW?	
Maintain an open dialogue with community groups, residents and traders to ensure issues are addressed in a timely fashion and with as much input from those affected as possible.	
Prioritise council and local issues.	

3. Will you actively consult with community groups prior to any local by-laws being enacted?

YES	
HOW?	
see above.	
I will add, community consultation with those who use facilities and services most frequently is essential in maintaining that user base and ensuring that any 'improvements' or changes are encouraging increased participation in community activities and use of facilities and services, not deterring existing users.	
If something affects a residents daily life, they need to be given the opportunity to respond to that change.	

4. Would you restructure Public Question Time in allow questions directly to Councillors?

YES	
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5. Will you support a review of the Council newsletter to make it more informative, regular and representative?



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YES	I would like to see reinstatement of local newspaper where possible as well.
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6. Will you ensure Advisory Committees recommendations are heard in General Council meetings?

YES	
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7. Will you work for the community and not to serve any political party?

YES	
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8. Will you insist on an annual staff survey and make it available to the community?

YES	
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9. Will you listen to the Community’s opinions when motions for spending and approvals for planning are brought before Council?

YES	
<p>HOW? As with above answers, communities MUST be advised and heard when deciding issues that will affect them. Council needs to start seeing residents and regular community users as the most important stakeholders in infrastructure, facilities and amenities and treat them as such in consultation processes before making final decisions.</p>	

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Will you oppose the demolition and relocation of the Preston Market elsewhere on the site and actively support its retention?

YES	
<p>HOW? Implementing height restrictions supporting existing traders Applying for stronger heritage protection for the area Use the market as a local history landmark to encourage greater engagement from outside Preston and make the retention of the space the most attractive and financially sound choice for owners.</p>	

2. Will you support mandatory heights limits be applied to the Preston Market site?

YES	
<p>HOW?</p>	



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review of existing planning mechanisms and reinstatement of previous restrictions Lobbying of state government and planning bodies in a constructive and amicable manner

3. Will you oppose the practice of trading off of objectives and standards, such as height limits in the planning scheme that can result in poorer outcomes but gets developments built in Darebin?

YES	
HOW?	Things such as open space and social infrastructure should be non-negotiable requirements and not tools to trade in order to get developments through which are opposed by the community. I will treat them as such.

4. Do you agree to a complete review of the Darebin Planning Scheme including consultation with community groups and members to ensure it is clearer in its intent, eg: applies mandatory heights to development plans, better protects neighborhood character and increases neighbourhood residential zoning?

YES	public consultation should be an essential part of planning processes
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5. Will you support the Open Space Levy and Developer Contribution Levy that adequately increases the amount of land dedicated to open space in order to meet the future needs of Darebin's growing population and ensure that the money is spent in the general locale of where the development occurs?

YES	
HOW?	see Q3 comments. suitable infrastructure for the immediate area should be an element of development approval.

6. Will you support a review of the Planning Committee Charter to give objectors more time to present their case, to allow at least one councillor to call up planning applications and, release the agenda papers and reports at least seven days ahead of meetings and to allow residents to ask questions and make submissions?

YES	
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AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

1. Will you support Council having an ongoing role in the direct delivery of home support care services to eligible older people and people with a disability in Darebin?



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YES	
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2. Will you support Council subsidising the cost of home care services to eligible residents?

YES	
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3. Will you support Council continuing to directly deliver to eligible older residents and people with a disability the following :

● home support services;	YES	
● personal care,	YES	
● shopping,	YES	
● respite,	YES	
● food services,	YES	
● home care,	YES	
● community transport,	YES	I'd love to see an aged care shuttle bus to take older Darebin residents to and from council run health programs.
● home maintenance	YES	

4. Will you oppose further restrictions of eligibility criteria for home care services in Darebin?

YES	
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5. Will you agree to support Council becoming a registered home care provider?

YES	
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6. Will you agree to maintain at least \$6m in council co-funding for age care services and provide open financial reporting of aged care services?

YES	
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FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND SERVICES

1. Will you campaign and vote to provide more public facilities eg; toilet facilities, bins, footpaths upgrade, bike paths, Outdoor Gyms, upgrading parks, and regular removal of graffiti and litter in Darebin?

YES	
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HOW?

I think that at a time like this, council can provide more jobs in the community by increasing rubbish collection as our open spaces see increased usage and require more regular maintenance and cleaning.

Playgrounds should all meet a basic standard and equipment should be regularly safety checked to ensure usability. There needs to be more dog friendly amenities put in in East Reservoir, and East Preston needs upgrades and increases in available green open space.

2. Will you vote for balanced services and equal spend across all of Darebin, particularly Reservoir, including rebuilding to the Reservoir Leisure Centre?

YES

RLC needs a 50m pool to properly service the area and users. The RLC should be used to create a health and wellbeing Hub in the North of the city

3. Will you oppose unsubstantiated use of money spent on consultants?

YES

community consultation should be conducted rather than private. Only where expert knowledge is required in assessment, such as water quality checks at Edwardes lake or conservation efforts for local fauna and avifauna, should outside consultants be used

4. Will you vote for more parking and vote against blanket parking restrictions?

YES

There needs to be a tailored approach to parking issues which reflects the differences in demographic, service size and area across the municipality.

5. Will you support Council in making publically available more detailed financial reporting on departmental, program and project expenditure?

YES

ratepayers who wish to do so should be able to see where their rates are going.

● ENVIRONMENT

1. Given that we are in a climate emergency and everyone; individuals, corporations and all three levels of government must be part of mitigation and adaptation, are you prepared to commit to strong action on global warming?

YES



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HOW?

Implementation of council run education programs - like the life ed van, but for the environment and climate change.
 Transition council vehicle fleet to electrical
 incentives for businesses and developments to be sustainable, environmentally friendly and reduce carbon output - stronger planning mechanisms to ensure this
 Potential to increase awareness and involvement with Clean Up Australia Day Festival, community engagement and participation in Rapid Canopy project
 Consultation with First Nations experts to ensure sustainability through planting of native flora
 addressing issues of overpackaging in the municipality and reducing plastic waste

2. Will you bring policies to Council that will make a real improvement at a local level to Darebin’s environment and biodiversity?

YES

HOW? (please provide examples)

see above point regarding planting of local flora. This will encourage native fauna and avifauna to return and flourish
 Conservation of grasslands and bush habitats
 restrictions/curfews on household pets such as leashing dogs, keeping cats indoors from dusk onwards etc.

3. Darebin Council set up both Climate Emergency Darebin and the Darebin Nature Trust as key initiatives very early in their term. What do you know about these two entities and their specific achievements?

The groups have been successful in their efforts to lobby on current councils issues and have drawn attention to the political aspects involved.

4. Have they been effective?

no - based on discussions with local environmentalists and conservationists. These groups should aim to be MORE effective on a regular basis rather than only being a wide focus at election times. (This is an issue I have noticed, that many people are suddenly interested in the last month or so. We should try to retain that interest)

In order to share this information to voters please return your responses to the sender in a Word, PDF or JPEG document by the 30th September 2020.



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Thank you.

On behalf of:

Darebin Progress

Association: <https://www.facebook.com/Darebin-Progress-Association-163813440325401/>

Save THE Preston Market Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/4553059228098235/>

Darebin Appropriate Development Association: <https://www.darebinada.org/> and

Darebin Residents Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/695607447257408>

