

QUESTIONS FOR ALL NOOSA COUNCIL 2020 ELECTION CANDIDATES

(responses to be no more than 50 words and returned by COB 15 March 2020)

Candidate Name

1. Will you seek to develop a Climate Emergency Action Plan in consultation with the community in time for the 2020-2021 Budget?

As at December 2019, 84 Australian councils have declared a Climate Emergency. However, the key step is then to develop a Climate Emergency Action Plan, which many councils are now doing. Check out [Yarra](#), [Bayside](#) and [Moreland](#) Councils as examples of what Noosa should do.

2. Will you support the creation of a Green Business Extension Officer in Council, to work with businesses to assist them to reduce their electricity costs and emissions?

\$27M in business electricity costs leaves the shire each year. If these costs were reduced or eliminated, business would have more to invest in growing the business. Approximately 13% of Noosa businesses have installed rooftop solar. The Zero Emissions Noosa [website](#) has documented 10 case studies of local businesses going down this path. These businesses are unanimous in extolling the financial benefits of this initiative, describing it as a “no brainer”. However, many small businesses do not have the time to do the investigations required to reach a decision. Our proposed Green Business Extension Officer would assist those businesses.

3. Will you endorse a massive urban pathway tree planting program in anticipation of increased temperatures in coming years?

It is important for health and well being and the environment to encourage more walking and cycling. However, the [urban heat island effect](#) is increasingly being recognised. Shade tree planting must be started now in order to have shade trees in 10 years time as temperatures continue to rise..

4. Will you work within Council to achieve a shift to electric vehicles for Council's fleet?

As Council has committed to zero emissions for its own operations by 2026, it is time to commence transitioning the Council fleet to electric. This [guide](#) from the Electric Vehicle Council provides useful information and assistance.

5. Will you request the CEO to review all employee Key Performance Indicators to ensure that climate emergency action is embedded in all Council policy, strategy and operations?

Business as Usual is not good enough when you have declared a Climate Emergency. The whole structure and priorities of Council must be reviewed.

6. Will you pursue with all vigour Council gaining control of its street lighting and associated costs and energy efficient lighting?

It is essential that Council gets control over its street lighting costs. Council currently pays Energex significant outlays for the cost of street lighting. However it has no control over how these costs are arrived at, no transparent process for how the costs are arrived at, and little or nothing occurring with respect to energy efficient (and lower cost) LED lights. This [trial by Brisbane City Council](#) documented over half a million dollars in savings through switching to LED lights.

7. Will you investigate how Council can work with low income and rental households to achieve an uptake of rooftop solar for these sectors?

The 2016 Census documented the high proportion of Noosa households which are in rental or mortgage stress. While 37% of Noosa households have rooftop solar, rental and low income households are missing out. This has led to the phenomenon of “solar poverty”. The Noosa Council should implement measures to work with these households to facilitate the uptake of rooftop solar.

8. Will you ensure that Council's capital works program gives priority to sustainable transport initiatives, and not to making trips easier for the private car?

A key principle in the [Noosa Transport Strategy 2017-2027](#) states, “Provide infrastructure and services that are designed to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists, scooters and public transport over private cars”. However, Council’s capital works programs still appear to be giving priority to making trips easier for the private car.

9. Will you support an electric bike sharing scheme in dedicated locations on Council public land?

Such schemes are now widespread and contribute to the reduction in dependence on the private car. Check out this [video](#) about the electric bike scheme in Copenhagen.

10. Will you require a detailed Operational Plan which enables proper review of performance by councillors and the community?

The Operational Plan is supposed to detail the non-capital works initiatives to be undertaken in the coming year, linked to the annual Budget. Performance against initiatives is then reviewed every quarter. Noosa’s Operational Plan is vague and non-measurable as to success or failure. This needs to change.

11. Will you ensure that Council delivers on the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy currently being prepared?

This strategy is an important component of Council’s sustainable transport goals. It is expected to be ready for public consultation in late 2020. However, while it is good to have a strategy, it is even more important to allocate the dollars to enable its implementation. In your first Budget, you need to ensure that this occurs.

12. Will you support Council moving towards a commercial and community composting facility and service, as the emissions from the Council controlled landfill comprises over 65% of Council’s total carbon footprint?

This [link](#) provides details of over 500 councils in Australia undertaking such initiatives.

13. Will you support a requirement for electric trucks in Council’s next waste collection contract?

This [article](#) is informative on financial benefits of electric waste collection trucks.

For more information, please check www.zeroemissionsnoosa.com.au