

#15

COMPLETE

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Page 1: 2020 Moreland Council Candidate climate survey

Q1

Candidate Name

James Conlan

Q2

South Ward

Contesting Which Moreland Ward?

Q3

Greens

Are you a candidate for a political party? Which Party?
Or are you standing as an Independent candidate?

Q4

If you are receiving campaign funding for this election, who are you receiving funding from? (list all or state 'None')

Greens candidates receive funding from locals donating to the campaign and from statewide party funds. The Greens unlike other parties, don't take donations from big property developers or pokies interests. Donations of \$1500 or more are publicly declared as well.

Q5

North East Ward

Connections to Moreland Wards. I am a resident in:

Q6

What are your other connections to Moreland wards

I am a volunteer / unpaid carer in

South Ward

I am a community advocate in

South Ward

Other (please specify) If you have other connections to Moreland, please state the ward(s) and the connection(s) briefly in 100 characters.

Lived in Moreland for 26 years.

Q7

Triple bottom line accounting brings to account three domains that we need for a good life. They are economic, environmental and social which includes health. Do you commit as a Councillor for Council to use triple bottom line accounting on all Council infrastructure projects and will you try to ensure that climate emergency is embedded in every Manager's performance plan?

(no label)

Agree Strongly

Q8

Transport: Upfield Rail Upgrade - Problems with parking and traffic congestion, capacity issues of public transport (once the pandemic passes) necessitate solutions for upgrading the Upfield Line. According to Infrastructure Australia, the northern region Transport Corridor will reach and exceed capacity in the next decade. Will you support 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 Moreland and residents in new growth suburbs further north?

(no label)

Strongly Agree

Q9

Transport: Tram Network Extension: As a Councillor will you support ongoing advocacy for the Victorian State Government to extend the No 58 West Coburg Tram along Derby street in Pascoe Vale, and No 19 North Coburg tram routes further north along Sydney Road to Campbellfield?

(no label)

Strongly Agree

Q10

Transport: Mode shift - What actions will you be pushing for to facilitate a mode shift to more sustainable modes of transport in Moreland as part of, or beyond, Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS), including changes to parking restrictions, increasing public transport advocacy, cycling and walking infrastructure?

Addressing the climate emergency will require us to radically change the way we move around our cities. While it is the state government who funds, plans and manages the public transport system, councils own approximately 90% of the road network. Thus, councils can significantly influence the transition towards active and sustainable transport by making our local streets safer and more attractive to walk and cycle. That's why I'm committed to significantly increasing the cycling and walking budgets if elected to council. I'm also committed to ensuring that the walking and cycling projects committed to in council's own capital works plans are actually built. Too often it's cycling and walking projects that are delayed or cancelled. I will ensure the council staff deliver the projects committed to in their own plans. I'm also committed to quieter, safer streets by allocating more space for walking and cycling, where appropriate, and in close consultation with locals.

While the state government controls the state-wide public transport network, councils can and should play a vital role in broader public transport advocacy. Moreland Council played a crucial role in the campaign to stop the East West Link by using its platform to elevate the issue. I would use my position on council to work with local community transport advocacy groups like the Upfield Transport Alliance, Moreland Bicycle User Group, Walk on Moreland, and Moreland Community for Action on Transport in delivering improvements to public transport services.

I would also use my position on council to continue the campaign for protected bike lanes on Sydney Road.

Q11

Heat Vulnerability: Large sections of Moreland's north are at the extreme end of the Heat Vulnerability Index, meaning residents are very susceptible to global warming. What will you do to address this beyond existing policies, including Moreland Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan (Word Doc 48MB), Moreland Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2017 (PDF 9MB), Cooling the Upfield Corridor Action Plan?

As a former town planner with a specialisation in urban green infrastructure, I am highly committed to addressing our municipality's poor performance in the Heat Vulnerability Index. In line with Greens my colleagues, I am committed to reducing Moreland's susceptibility to the urban heat island effect, particularly in the north, through a range of interventions at council's disposal.

The Urban Forest Strategy highlights that it's not enough to simply plant more trees - we need to choose the right trees for the right places, and above all, we need a comprehensive maintenance strategy and budget to ensure our trees survive, especially in a warmer climate.

It's also clear that, even with Moreland Council's proactive tree planting initiatives, tree canopy will decline over the next few decades due to infill development. Even if council achieves its canopy goals outlined in its urban forest and urban heat strategies, these gains will be lost unless private tree destruction is addressed. That's why I'm committed to advocating for stronger statutory tree protection under the Moreland Planning Scheme.

Increasing our city's resilience to climate change and the urban heat island effect will also require improvements to our public infrastructure, like more shading, water fountains and water sensitive urban design.

Also, making our buildings more energy efficient is a crucial way to not only reduce our buildings' energy consumption, but also to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, especially vulnerable residents in more disadvantaged postcodes.

Q12

Waste Management. Moreland aims to be a leading council in sustainable waste management, yet its rate of diverting waste to organics and recycling sits just above the state average. What will you do to help Moreland in the rollout of the Food and Garden Organics Collection Service, and achieve Moreland's 2030 zero waste to landfill target as part of Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0?

Having worked in the recycling industry, I'm highly cognisant of our collective waste problem. I'll work to fast-track the implementation of the currently-delayed waste strategy, particularly the FOGO collection service. This must be a priority given that organics make up around 35% of the waste in kerbside landfill bins, causing unnecessary landfill and emissions. I will work constructively with other councillors in fasttracking the implementation of FOGO, and work with communities to build public support and ensure the broader municipality is educated on the issue.

Q13

Energy Efficiency and Renewables. Moreland has a goal of “Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy”. Yet Moreland has one of Victoria’s lowest uptake of solar PV. How can Moreland “walk the talk” on renewable energy and meet the community goals set in the Zero Carbon Moreland – Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25?

I currently work as a community campaigner to improve the energy efficiency of our homes, plus renewables uptake, so I fully appreciate the need to increase renewables uptake and reduce energy demand through energy efficiency measures. I’m particularly interested in the decarbonisation and democratisation of energy through community-owned and controlled renewable energy. If elected to council, I would explore and help deliver community energy projects, like solar gardens and micro-grids. Such projects could be delivered by partnering with community groups and other councils. Moreland Council currently has funding allocated to assist vulnerable households with energy efficiency upgrades. I would support the extension and expansion of such projects. The Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) are currently exploring a municipal energy provider model, which I am also interested in. In short, there are many ways that council could leverage its purchasing power and capacity to pool community resources to deliver transformative renewable energy and efficiency projects, cutting climate pollution and helping communities take control of their own energy. I believe such projects will require close, constructive, working relationships between council and community groups, which I look forward to forging during my time on council, if elected.

Q14

Pollution and litter: How will you educate and incentivise business in industrial zones (especially in the North East Ward) to avoid pollution and litter from entering our drains and our creek systems?

The Greens are keen to see more on-ground signage indicating that what goes down the drain or street, ends up in our waterways and our bay/oceans. People need to know that their actions and inactions have a wider impact. This should be combined with more community education around micro-plastics and their impacts.

The Greens are committed to exploring any levers that Council may have to incentivise businesses and industries to do the right thing. We’re keen to hear of any levers Council can use to ‘incentivise’ businesses and industries. If our local laws could be deployed then that should be explored.

Q15

Supporting business and the environment as part of Covid Recovery What actions will you take to help Council promote environmentally sustainable jobs as part of a Covid recovery such as by possible development of large abandoned sites for a sustainability hub (such as former Kangan TAFE automotive campus)? How else will you advocate for supporting small business Covid recovery that includes environmental co-benefits?

Moreland does not have its own waste recovery site within its boundaries. The city relies on other Councils to provide this service and on private waste transfer sites. The federal and state governments have the resources and powers to introduce measures of this size and importance. Land, like Kangan TAFE, is expensive and not part of Councils assets. Were the Vic Government open to a partnership to utilise this facility to support sustainable industries, the Greens would be eager to explore this and support such an outcome, or similar.

At a special Council meeting on 21/9/20 councillors voted to support funding for outdoor dining and related initiatives, including using car spaces and vacant land to facilitate eateries as they re-open, as the virus spread is brought under control.

Furthermore:

The Victorian Greens are calling on the Vic Government to invest in COVID recovery plans including shopping strip renewals and shopping locally.

The Victorian Greens have also called on the Vic Government to invest in 23 new or expanded recycling factories by 2025 to meet the state's needs and ensure high recycling rates and new jobs. It would be good for Moreland or the region to host one of these recycling factories.

Advocating for small businesses to be supported is an easy ask of Council, making it effective and implementable is the challenge.

The Greens would be keen to work on and develop such programs and outcomes that provide direct benefits for the community.

Q16

Food Security How would you address food security in Moreland beyond the existing Moreland Food System Strategy? (including as a part of the clean Covid recovery)?

The Greens led the work in updating the Food Systems Strategy in the 2016-20 term, under the leadership of Cr Natalie Abboud.

Further support for the recently established Northern Food Community Hub, is needed, including initiatives in the urban agriculture domain bringing employment and enterprise prospects and other benefits too.

The Greens will continue to support and resource the establishment of new community garden spaces and nature strips across the city.

Follow up on Cr Dorney's recent work in the Council chamber to facilitate nature strip and laneway options for greening and food options will also be undertaken.

We will also advocate for additional funding of the Moreland Nature Plan to ensure it meets its goals, and that species are protected and saved.

Council can also play a role in helping local communities plant out public spaces, like nature strips.

Q17

100

Food Security. The IPCC Special Report on Land and Climate Change Summary for Policy makers (2020) articulates major emissions reduction can be achieved from adopting a primarily plant based diet (B6.2). Will you advocate for public health policies that promote proper nutrition and dietary change by Moreland residents as per the IPCC (C2.4)?

Q18

Buildings, Biodiversity and Urban cooling: What would you do as a Councillor to ensure that with new building developments, Moreland has sufficient vegetation cover to contribute to biodiversity outcomes and urban cooling beyond existing policies in the Urban Forest Strategy, Moreland Nature Plan, and the Achieving Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0 project?

Greens on Council will work to:

In collaboration with the local community, strongly and publicly advocate to the state government to strengthen the Moreland Planning Scheme's tree protection and biodiversity requirements. The planning system is currently broken. Council can use its platform to advocate for its improvement.

Ensure more resources are allocated to education for the community regarding the benefits of trees and their cover and the extent of the loss of trees and this impact in the private realm.

Advocate for adequate funding of the Moreland Nature Plan to ensure it meets its goals.

Ensuring that the ESD Policy 2.0 project is undertaken, monitored and then approved quickly by the Planning Minister, without the usual delays.

Continue to promote the nomination of additional trees to the Significant Tree Register.

Look to further support the Urban Forest Strategy to meet the targets or stretch (where additional resources can be found).

Explore with the community other measures to reach the goals and measures in these policies/strategies.

Q19

Cement Emissions. Use of Portland Cement contributes to 8% of global emissions. Alternative low emissions/zero emission cement products are available at reasonably competitive rates. Will you commit to amending Moreland Council Procurement policy sustainability filter to purchase low carbon/zero emissions cement/concrete products?

(no label)

Strongly Agree

Q20

Climate Citizen Assemblies: Under the new Local Government Act 2020 (community engagement policy), all councils in Victoria are required to use deliberative practices for the development of their Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan, at the bare minimum. The gold standard of this kind of democratic, deliberative practice is a Citizens' Assembly. So, will you support such a democratic framework for Council's climate emergency response by establishing a Citizens' Assembly?

(no label)

Strongly Agree

Q21

What are your top four priorities for the Council Plan to be formulated for 2021-2025.

Priority 1	Act on climate emergency by supporting community-controlled, renewable energy projects and energy efficiency upgrades for homes and businesses, especially vulnerable people
Priority 2	Creating safe, quiet streets and encouraging mode shift to sustainable transport by building more bike and pedestrian paths and slowing traffic.
Priority 3	Fighting inappropriate development by supporting communities through the planning process and advocating for strengthened planning laws that put people before profits
Priority 4	Greening and re-wilding our city with tree planting along nature corridors and streets, plus supporting community gardens and public plantings

Q22

Do you have any other comments on Council Climate Leadership and Advocacy (include any actions you have taken on this)? Do you have any supplementary comments relating to the questions above, comments on other issues related to climate change not covered, or comments on climate change generally?

If elected to council, I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with CAM and other climate and residents' groups to help Moreland Council take bold, decisive leadership on climate action in addressing the climate emergency. As a community leader who has been involved in climate and sustainable transport campaigns, I would bring my capacity to bring community groups together in delivering meaningful change to Moreland.
