

Dunedin Mayoral Candidates Forum- Environment & Sustainability

07.09.2016

Prepared questions

The following questions were prepared by Sustainable Dunedin City, Forest & Bird and Wise Response Society, the organisers of the forum. The candidates were given a few days' notice of the questions so that they could prepare their responses.

Question One: Biodiversity and invasive species: In relation to implementation of Te Ao Tūroa, what do you see as the DCC's role in supporting biodiversity and controlling invasive species such as wilding conifers and sycamores? What outcomes do you want? How do you imagine they will be achieved?

Jim O'Malley

- Communication between ORC and DCC
- Eradication is the priority
- More biodiversity issues beyond wilding pine and sycamore
- Limited resources, choose smartly and target
- City Forests, involved in Pinus Radiata, investigate different types of forestry

Rachel Elder

- Work with regional council closely
- Identify & Map areas, Inspire local communities to take responsibility, model their behaviour
- Sycamore project of DCC is going well
- Support working bees for native gardens, taskforce green, funding sources for getting rid of wilding pine & eradicating pests from the Eco Sanctuary

Aaron Hawkins

- Restoring values and increasing biodiversity are part of Te Ao Tūroa
- West Harbour Beautification Trust, focus on sycamore, good progress
- Volunteer Coordinator hired by DCC which is helpful
- Biodiversity has its own role
- Personnel to drive Te Ao Tūroa
- Imbalance on economic and environmental issues on council

Abe Gray

- Natural world is main selling point for Dunedin
- No excuse for sycamores
- Got to deal with the cats
- DCC with City Forests should move beyond Pinus Radiata
- Focus on rare ecosystems in that network, great expertise in DCC, recognise it and use it

Andrew Whiley

- Quality of biodiversity funding projects
- Great organisations around town that want to help
- 90 Day plan, wants to bring a roundtable of community together to get clear vision
- DCC Biodiversity App, they can identify what is going on, can eradicate it there and then
- Funding and volunteers unified

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Athol Bayne

- Council needs to work with DOC to develop workforce to assist landowners to protect biodiversity
- With help from central government, assist farmers and other private landowners
- Develop a five year plan to assist landowners

Barry Timmings

- Business and Sustainability can go together
- Not an expert, needs a team
- Align to environmental plan

Scout Barbour-Evans

- Enviro-schools background
- Environment important issue to Scout
- Pull out pine seedlings
- Replace with native trees

Dave Cull

- More funding needed, environment strategy work is being underdone
- New Biodiversity officer in Parks Team
- Vision for community involvement
- Big first for environmental plan
- Volunteer Coordinator

Question Two: Transport: What is your vision for Dunedin's transport system in 10 years' time?

Aaron Hawkins

- Safer cycling, better bus and electric vehicles are priorities
- We need to remain committed to cycle network, along key commuter routes, especially CBD
- Economic development imperative for buses
- Our buses are relics, we need to update fleet and lower fares
- First major overhaul of city via city plan, needs to incorporate charging of electric vehicles

Athol Bayne

- Bicycle & Car will still be common in 10 years
- However, driverless cars will be the only type of car you'll be able to get new
- Robotics- Robots will be as common as tablets; household robots might be here within four years; Council will have to consider how robots integrate
- Getting trams & trolley buses back, would enhance tourism and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Rebuild electrical system like Waipori to assist in GHG reduction by powering vehicles earning funds to reduce rates in the long term.

Barry Timmings

- Rideshare/ Uber Development System
- Electric Bus System

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- Real opportunity; good for the city + commercially
- Retrofit diesel buses with electric capability
- Low Emission Vehicle Contestable Fund- real opportunities to get decent funding to get these things on the road

Scout Barbour-Evans

- Students having discount & Goldcard user are good systems
- Buses too expensive, timetable issues, buses are old
- Put more money into investing in public transport
- DCC should takeover bus service to ensure decent public transport
- Electric buses, trams, safer cycleways, passenger trains- ideas for the future
- Public transport that is affordable and accessible for all Dunedin sites
- Important to protect planet and environment

Abe Gray

- Children can't take bikes on buses, there needs to be work on this
- All of the big cities, have good cycle and bus systems, should be a given for Dunedin
- We need a logical system, whatever is the quickest way you drive somewhere we need bus routes that do the same
- Getting State Highway One out of the University Area

Jim O'Malley

- Get buses back from ORC
- We need to run the fleet
- No profits are leading to quality
- Phone tracking system
- Light rail to north and south of the city
- Put an air, sea, road and rail hub near Momona, trucks off the road in the city out to airport
- Go from train to airport

Andrew Whiley

- 20% of emissions are transport emissions
- 4% residents use the bus
- 52% of cars have one person in them
- Electric will change things
- We need to get more people on buses, bus tracking app, automatic signs
- Electric Bikes will change things; more students living in the hills
- Bike sharing systems, car sharing systems, less car ownership, cycle network will get used more

Dave Cull

- More transportation choices
- People want more cycleways and infrastructure in general
- Target for 40% of trips to work by public transport, that's 30% currently
- NZTA is responsible for disjointed cycleways
- Better integration between modes
- DCC can coordinate public transport alongside cycleways and other infrastructure
- Council is replacing fleet with Electric Vehicles
- Integrated & Smart system whereby vehicles will be controlled by a system

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Rachel Elder

- Green technology becomes cheaper and easier, there will be more buy in
- More charging stations, planning cycleways with communities
- Dunedin is cold and hilly, we can't ignore cars
- Win-wins solution for car-parking, take population with us
- Electric buses, but changed routes recently with major flaws
- South Dunedin area loses out on spending as a result
- Consult with community and create win-win solutions
- Modelling best practice with Electric Vehicle fleet, biking.

Question Three: Greenhouse Gas Emissions: New Zealand's commitment to the Paris Climate Change Accord, restricting GHG to no more than 1.5-2 degrees above pre-industrial levels, should relate to the whole country, so what changes would you be promoting in Dunedin City so it would be playing its part

Scout Barbour-Evans

- Climate change is already affecting us
- Transport takes up a huge amount of emissions
- Safer Cycleways, buses and passenger trains and all fossil fuel cars replaced
- DCC can help regulate other environmental issues, such as the waste system, more wheelie bins/less bags
- Encourage businesses to become carbon-neutral
- Advocate for more community gardens
- We need to work hard to protect Dunedin's environment

Athol Bayne

- Greenhouse gas emissions in Paris have established baseline
- Council should be trying to phase out all fossil fuel cars
- Take our businesses with us (carrot + stick)
- Looks like Sun plays complex part in global warming, we might get temporary cooling than intense warming we need to have a proper plan, both Council and central Government

Dave Cull

- DCC has made a start with compact of Mayors worldwide
- First thing we have to do is establish a baseline (emissions inventory)
- Adopting targets that are aspirational and realistic
- Development and implement comprehensive climate change mitigation plan
- Woodchips and the like can replace fossil fuels
- Cosy Home's group aims to reduce energy use in homes
- Not all initiatives are about reducing emissions and will have a multiplying effect

Rachel Elder

- We generally don't use fossil fuels for electricity which is good
- New builds should have energy efficiencies
- Energy audit DCC (LED lights)
- Community Initiatives on food shares, gardening, foraging
- Planting more forests both exotic and native
- Encourage schools, university and polytechnic students to plant natives
- Planting fruit trees

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- Buying 2nd hand furniture and second hand clothes
- Not just about what Dunedin can do, but about what each and every one of us can do at home

Abe Gray

- Green Island Landfill reduction, it's important
- If other cities can do three bin systems, we should try that
- Freecycling student rubbish/used furniture
- Important for mayor to lead by example, I'm a botanist and produce very little rubbish at home
- Using community skills and expanding them out
- Waste to energy should be implemented

Aaron Hawkins

- Climate Change is biggest issue of all time
- Talk but no action
- Local Government has been active
- Te Ao Tūroa, set goals of Carbon Neutral City by 2020
- Every investment in Dunedin needs to have that in mind
- Composting in cities, difficult but not insurmountable
- Social/Inequality issues
- Need to look for long term to do what's right for future generations

Jim O'Malley

- NZ doesn't have transmission lines to move electricity up NZ
- DCC should continue with energy plan, budget is 5 million
- 20/38 of fleet can be converted into Electric Vehicles, monitor them and share results with community
- Three bin system, rubbish, compostable and glass/plastic. ADI systems comes out of Invermay, methane production from green waste, let's build one in Dunedin.

Barry Timmings

- Reduce waste to landfill, energy efficiency and electric vehicles
- Quality problem of housing, improve stock over time
- Dunedin was founded on intellectual independence
- Motor Vehicle industry good example of adaptation

Andrew Whiley

- City Library- More efficient energy system saves \$60,000 alone
- Sustainability & Energy Manager put in place at DCC
- They can help DCC and general citizens to adapt
- 75% of Greenhouse Gas emissions come from landfill; need to reduce this
- Plant more trees, soak up the emissions
- Green Technology Hub established, where green tech companies can incubate ideas and share them
- Energy efficiency in homes; rates relief for energy efficiency

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Questions from the audience

The following were spontaneous questions from the audience. Not all candidates chose to answer all questions.

How do you involve youth in sustainability?

Rachel: EnviroSchools, get schools involved in projects

Dave: Pathways for kids to enable them to volunteer, proactive work, youth council and under environmental strategy volunteer coordinator can help

Andrew: Gig-City, daily water testing in schools, monitors in homes

Abe: Don't tell them your plan is sustainable or DCC, cool and entertaining for them

Jim: Primary school, planting and education. High Schools; monitoring of sea level rise and temperature, own the data and brings social change. DCC needs a formal office.

Aaron: Getting young people on board isn't our question, universal support; how do we get young people's parents involved

Scout: EnviroSchools always room for growth; make children or youth guardians of their environment, responsibility. Sustainability education. More vegetable garden and fruit gardens. Promote sustainability and help low income families. Support older people to learn.

Barry: Best reason is because they want to, no shortage of people it's about helping them to do that, risk that we have is heavier council

Athol: Have Council lead and organise environmental and sustainability events and competitions, Organise use of public transport with youth fares, and spend money elsewhere to educate public and high school students.

Andrew> Would you support oil and gas drilling in Otago?

- Yes, would support exploration and development
- Gas is good transition fuel, if we stop burning coal
- Shows Dunedin is open for business
- Should a discovery be made and the gas fields fully developed, then within five years, the potential employment opportunities and benefits for local businesses will be huge. The BERL report estimates the potential benefits to the Otago Community will be: 256 jobs, \$179million spent regionally and \$71million generated per year in GDP for the local community over 45 years. In the first few years of development, there will be an excess of 1,000 jobs created and \$1billion spent. [*Note: wording here supplied by Andrew Whiley as a correction because our notes were incomplete.*]

Dave> Business recycling

- No ability for compulsion
- Dave Cull would consider it
- Product Stewardship

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Barry

- You can work with suppliers to do it
- Great for more kerbside options

What is the central issue in South Dunedin?

Dave:

- Climate Change> Storm water/drainage & storms

Jim:

- Enormous burden on city, have to ask can we or can we not engineer ourselves out of it
- Ground Flow of water also comes from hills, not just tidal influence, whole system management

Athol

- South Dunedin must have highest priority, with possibility of liquefaction and earthquake damage from the Akatore fault line could lead to inundation and possible loss of life

What do you want the DCC to do to protect remaining indigenous habitats on private land?

Abe

- Explain why it is in everyone's interests, use science communication resources

Aaron

- Grant scheme for this purpose, which partners 50/50 with landowners. Technically you need to be QE2 Covenanted Land, we need to relax it, can you lift limit from \$5000.

Athol

- Develop a policy for economic support to keep land undeveloped

What are the benefits of NZ becoming first "night sky" city?

Dave

- Economic/Social/Health Benefits from right shade of LED

Abe

- Everyone agrees with it, space station flies over, planets visible, we have to do everything we can to enhance experience of it

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Do any of you have a vision of a successful economy that is not based on growth?

Jim

- We don't need to grow city population
- We can work less than 40 hours a week, focus on quality of life instead
- Obsession with growth is awful, need a balance
- Long term survival and enjoyment in life

Andrew

- Growth is good, but we don't want to grow greenhouse gas emissions

Dave

- We need to think about adding value not growing
- Shift to what we're producing is worth more, smart IP
- Demographic, we need to infill as there will be more people over 65.

Rachel

- Social, Environmental and Economic sustainability
- We need to grow but it needs to be balanced
- Sending people out of the city to work is not sustainable
- 40% of south island's youth unemployment, need to provide hope

Aaron

- We live in a finite system, need to preserve that
- Trickle-down economics doesn't work
- Dunedin is not going to return to great age of manufacturing, we need economy of 21st century
- Future of work
- Social infrastructure is key

Athol

- Without growth economy becomes stagnant, people suffer
- We need to have value-added industries
- Develop city growth strategy for tourism

Scout

- Sustainability is investment in future population
- Dunedin's population isn't likely to grow, need to protect it with rental warrant of fitness
- About people in Dunedin

Barry

- Democracy will give us a council that reflects voters of the city
- What do we want from a mayor?
- Consensus, clear leadership, need to look after every aspect.

Abe

- People are talking about economic growth which comes with waste
- We can have growth with efficiency
- Self-sufficiency

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What are the candidates' views on promotion of veganism for ethical and environmental reasons?

Scout

- It should be a transition