

Josh Fergeus (Rucker)

1. How serious a threat are global warming and climate disruption?

I've just finished reading Bill McKibben's *Eaarth*. I was putting it off because I am a regular reader of books and papers on global warming / climate change and I knew it would simply serve to reinforce things I already knew and didn't want to hear. I really enjoyed it, however, because of the way Bill emphasised local solutions as a big part of the overall picture if we are to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. The effectiveness of these local solutions is one of the reasons why I am interested in being a local councillor. It is a massive threat which I do not believe our society or any level of our government takes seriously enough.

2. Do you support the following Darebin Council initiatives? Please comment briefly on each.

a. ***Climate Change Action Plan 2007-2009*** including the aim of carbon neutrality for council operations by 2020?

Yes. However, I believe Council needs to be doing much, much more to achieve this goal. I have included this goal in my 150 word candidate statement.

b. ***Darebin Community Climate Action Change Plan 2009-2015*** including the aim of carbon neutrality for Darebin municipality by 2020?

See above.

c. ***Darebin Climate Change and Peak Oil Adaptation Plan 2009?***

I support this plan, a plan which only came to fruition due to my friend and running mate Cr Trent McCarthy

d. Membership of the ***Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action?***

I was disgusted to see Cr Morgan move a motion to suspend Council's membership of NAGA, and have commented publicly about how I thought this was a shortsighted and foolish decision. Council has deprived local businesses and residents of the benefits of millions of dollars worth of support in becoming more energy efficient, and thus moving towards Council's own goal of carbon neutrality. If elected I would immediately propose that Council rejoin NAGA at the earliest opportunity.

3. What action have you taken to influence climate change and/or sustainability policies at the local, state or federal level?

I have run for the Greens in three previous elections - for Monash Council in 2008 as the first-ever Green candidate for that area, in Chisholm at the Federal election in 2010, and in Mount Waverley in the State election in 2010. At each of these elections I was the sole voice raising climate change as an issue in the local area, and championing sustainability measures, local food production, and renewable energy. I have also been occasionally involved with the work of Quit Coal.

4. What action would you take on climate change and/or sustainability policies if [re]elected to council?

I would continue the excellent work of Cr Trent McCarthy in these areas, focusing on

ensuring the carbon neutral goal of Council was properly implemented, rejoining NAGA (and the VLGA, which has shown some leadership in these areas), and supporting residents and traders to make the change to more sustainable practices. This would include advocating for walking, cycling and public transport, encouraging the take-up of solar power within Darebin, and reducing barriers to residents successfully producing food locally.

5. We are also interested in your community campaigning in areas other than climate change and sustainability. What other community groups or campaigns have you been active in and what was your role?

I am the President of the Darebin Residents and Ratepayers Association, the Secretary of the Foster Care Association of Victoria (the peak body for volunteer foster carers across the state), a Director of the Australian branch of Defence for Children International, and a Director at Care With Me, an organisation working with migrant and refugee communities to better link them in with appropriate local services.

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