



## **Glen Eira City Council Elections 2020: Questionnaire to all candidates.**

Given the current COVID environment, electioneering by candidates is extremely difficult. *Save Glen Eira* believes that ratepayers would welcome candidates' views on numerous issues currently confronting our municipality. We therefore are inviting all candidates to fill out this questionnaire to provide residents with some insight into their future councillors. All submitted questionnaires will be published on our website.

- 1. Name: Jane Karlake**
- 2. Glen Eira Ward: Camden**
- 3. Why did you decide to run for Council?**

I have had a long interest in advocating for community services, to ensure they are adequately funded and able to serve the community interest. Council human services are uniquely placed to provide the best care in the community and also serve to maintain Council's perspective on the needs of its people.

COVID has made everything Council does more important than ever and I believe my background and experience would make me a good councillor. Being a key member of the campaign to defend our residential aged care has reinforced the need to stand up for our community and defend our services.

I am passionate about the environment and the liveability of our community and while I recognise the need for more housing and high and medium density housing around public transport hubs this should not be at the expense of our open space and access to amenities. Our built environment is a treasure trove of superb architecture from each decade of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and we need to ensure our heritage is not lost.

More recently I became concerned that there were too few women standing for Council and when I started to see candidates emerge I grew increasingly concerned about the diversity of candidates.

We are in a moment of time when we have the rarest of opportunities to get the settings right for care and support, stimulus and development for our communities future.

- 4. What local activities are you involved in?**
  - Formerly committee member and volunteer Carnegie Toy Library
  - School Council
  - Led a local campaign to prevent the privatisation of the Glen Eira Residential Aged Care.

- 5. What do you see as your strengths/skill set to be a Councillor?**

I spent many years working in family violence and women's services, assisting women and children to leave violence and find safety. Through this work I learnt how valuable affordable housing and social supports were in preventing significant disadvantage.

I have worked for many years supporting working with local government and community services and public sector agencies and have a strong understanding of the role of these agencies and their complexity.

I am an analytical thinker, capable of deep empathy and problem solving. I am a leader who has shown courage in adversity. I rely on a clear ethical framework and strong humanitarian values to guide my principled positions. I am not captive to any vested interests and am a genuine independent thinker. I believe I have the capacity to weigh decisions carefully and stand up for my community's interests.

#### **6. Are you a member of a political party? If so, which one?**

I am an independent candidate. I am not endorsed by a party, nor have I been sponsored by a party. I have my own political views and I am a member of the Labor party. This does not mean that I have a labor party policy position or a particular barrow to push. The views I have expressed are my own and are consistent with my values.

Not everyone who subscribes to the values of a political party are members. I note there is a wide field of mildly to very conservative candidates who claim to be independent and may well not be party members, despite their views according closely to the Coalition party's positions and even more right wing parties.

#### **7. What do you see as the current important issues facing Glen Eira?**

- Community connection, preventing social isolation
- Maintaining strong suite of human services
- Continuing to increase open space to improve community access and recreation options.
- Addressing inappropriate development proposals including height controls.
- Improving the quality of developments to ensure setbacks, vegetation, room for trees, open space etc
- Initiatives to extend Council's work to mitigate carbon emissions and support for progress to zero emissions by 2030 or sooner.
- Future proofing our community and ensuring services and facilities including schools and early learning can accommodate our growing population.
- Improving bicycle and pedestrian safety; reversing the trend of cars being king of the roads. Increased bicycle storage at community facilities, shopping centres and transport hubs.
- Neighbourhood planning, to ensure everyone has access to open space, safe, pedestrian and bicycle routes to access shopping centres and community space.
- Ensure we have state of the art libraries, that are recognised as places of connection and resources to prevent social isolation
- COVID adaption of our arts and cultural services. Scale down and develop a neighbourhood program of performing artists and pop up festivals in small parks to make these events save in a COVID world

#### **8. How would you evaluate and take into consideration residents' views on topical issues?**

Consultation mechanisms need to be rigorous and participatory. Planning sessions with the community should be held in advance of the development of the Council plan. Real dialogue on the challenging issues should be encouraged between the community and their representatives.

#### **9. Would you support and lobby for mandatory formal oversight committees with community representatives to help ensure greater accountability of council actions?**

I don't know how this proposal would work. Councillors are elected for the function that I think is being proposed here.



10. Would you support the banning of political donations from developers, as in NSW?

Yes

11. Our planning provisions require Councils to balance important and often competing issues How would you prioritise the following issues? (Rank: **High/Medium/Low**)

- Prioritise purchase of new open space in areas of lesser open space. **High**
- Protection of residential amenity - **High**
- Economic activity through construction and development- **Low to medium**
- Heritage conservation... **High**
- Housing affordability and social justice...**High**
- Medium rise infill in low rise streets abutting low rise residences. **Medium**
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- Protecting communities, small local businesses & shopping strips **High**
- Sustainable initiatives ...**High**
- Protecting fauna corridors and biodiversity ...**High**
- High-rise development in Activity Centres. **High**
- Increasing the tree canopy **High**
- Support for council initiative cultural events - **Medium**
- Inclusion of affordable/social housing in new developments. - **High**
- Support for new bike or pedestrian paths through Glen Eira. ... **High**
- Support for Council initiatives to reduce carbon footprint (Council & Residential) - **High**
- Support for creation of deliberative community panels for all major projects/budgets - **Low - Medium**

12. Is the current residential development adequately making provision for affordable housing?

I don't believe it is and what I see is good affordable rental housing demolished to build expensive townhouses that reduces access to our community for low to medium income households.



13. How happy do you think the residents of Glen Eira are with the current level of development?

Very unhappy in pockets. I have a strong sense of people feeling that they have lost control over their immediate environment. I think this anxiety and uncertainty has a real cost on community well being.

Residents being placed in a position where they need to fight against extremely well resourced developers who have expert legal teams is a David and Goliath battle that does not serve the community interest well.

This does not mean that I don't believe there is a pace for appropriate medium and in some places high density development. The main issue is to ensure it does not compromise existing amenity or create new urban planning problems such as exacerbate a lack of open space or increase congestion.

The challenge for councillors is how to find controls and reduce this uncertainty.

14. Some zoning types eg Activity Centre Zoning (ACZ) can result in no later appeal-rights for residents. Do you think this is fair on residents?

No.

15. Do we need tighter planning controls and added scrutiny to protect residents in or nearby to mixed-use zones?

Yes we do.

16. What changes would you like to see implemented by the Glen Eira City Council? Eg planning scheme, local laws, meeting procedures, other changes

I believe there needs to be greater expectations pae on developers to ensure all developments give back green space, tree canopy and improve public amnesty. In some instances this could be infrastructure such as bike paths, or bike storage.

In walking the streets of Glen Eira I am staggered at the amount of damage to paths through construction and renovations work. There should be a stronger inspection and compliance approach to ensure that developers are required to 'make good' any damage to our community's infrastructure.

Councils often rely on their capacity to take matters in camera. Reduced transparency undermines good governance and integrity. Council should strive to ensure that in camera decisions are used on the rarest of occasions.

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