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Natalie Johnson

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Dear Candidate for election (candidate) to Douglas Shire Council (DSC),

Douglas Shire Sustainability Group (DSSG) is seeking to understand each candidate's commitment to managing the environmental attributes of Douglas Shire. To do this, we ask all candidates to answer the following questions, noting that DSSG will publish the results for the information of voters.

1. Will you plan, budget and commit to a comprehensive Douglas Conservation Strategy that engages the public, identifies priorities, builds capacity and delivers through corporate, operational and land use plans?  
**Yes.**
2. Will you plan, budget and commit to Council taking the following actions to protect the Great Barrier Reef:
  - a) Pursuing carbon neutrality, **Yes**
  - b) Improving water quality by working with farmers, reef tour boats, residents and business; and **Yes**
  - c) Promoting Douglas as a Reef Safe destination? **Yes**
3. Will you plan, budget and commit to a strategic future focussed plan for conservation of the Daintree Coast, including the following actions:
  - a) Partnering with the local residents and traditional owners in conservation and management through activation of the Daintree Landowners Kit, **Yes, it is a great resource – even as a town resident I found the information interesting simply as I live in a tropical climate!**
  - b) Voluntary buyback for conservation for large properties and within the Councils identified conservation zones, **Yes – undeveloped ones. Buyback of developed blocks should consider any potential impact on the current community such as loss of population leading to loss of services.**
  - c) Supporting and Initiating weed and pest programs, **Yes**
  - d) Management of dogs and implementation of current domestic animal policy; and **Yes**
  - e) A policy on electricity that promotes conservation rather than promotes development? (DSSG believes upgrading Stand Alone Systems will reduce fossil fuel use and improve living whereas a subsidised grid will be a subsidy for development, will not reduce fossil fuel use and is not what most residents want) **I believe if residents prefer to upgrade their RAPS and remain off grid they should have this option, and many residents I have**

spoken to prefer this. I also believe if residents and businesses want to connect to a localised micro grid (Cape Tribulation or Cow Bay) – and there are many who do - they should have this choice, provided it meets environmental standards and is funded and maintained by the State – not local government. The Douglas Shire Planning Scheme ensures development is controlled sustainably.

4. Will you plan, budget and commit to compliance with the existing urban footprint for Douglas Shire Council (as described in the current land use planning scheme), in all decisions taken on development applications? **Yes, however I am not shy of development within the Planning Scheme. Currently, with a strain on water resources, a two lane highway to Cairns and a need for ensuring a strong agricultural sector, I believe it is wise to limit our urban footprint.**
5. Will you ensure Douglas Shire Council has a plan to build on its water security strategy, including a clear understanding of the need to limit development on the basis of water availability, acknowledging the impact of climate change on water security? **Yes. As above, I see opportunities for development within the current planning scheme. The creation of a circular water economy through increased use of recycled water, individual residential tank collection, education and maintenance will assist in ensuring our water security.**


We will use a 'traffic light system' of ranking candidates' responses, including comments.

For ease of publication, we welcome simple responses – preferably yes, no or maybe. If you would like to add additional comment, we will publish full responses on our web site.

Deadline for response is close of business 3 March 2020, by email to [sustainabilitydouglas@gmail.com](mailto:sustainabilitydouglas@gmail.com)

The results will be published in the Gazette on 12 March 2020.

Yours sincerely



Laurene Hull

Secretary

