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Media Statement - The Douglas Shire Sustainability Group Election Advertising.

The Douglas Shire Sustainability Group (DSSG) has published the outcome of its survey of candidates on key sustainability issues.

We are pleased that the majority of candidates have responded to our survey questions, said Didge McDonald, President “Both Mayoral candidates have responded fully to our propositions, with Mayor Leu indicating strong support.”

Seven of the nine councillor candidates have responded to our request; with candidates Johnson, Noli and Zammataro providing fulsome and, in the main, supportive comments. The remaining two candidates did not respond to our request, so we have assumed they do not want to disclose their position on environmental policies.

Candidates McKeown, Melchert, Rowley and Scomazzon responded, but did not answer any of the survey questions. One reason given by candidates who failed to respond with answers is that they are unsure of the current financial position of the Council.

“DSSG does not require specific dollar commitments. We are seeking to understand whether candidates can commit to a policy position, agree to plan for, and eventually, budget some resources, to that policy, said Mr McDonald. “We also understand (and expect) that all Councillors would be responsible and trustworthy when it comes to budget allocations”.

Other reasons candidates gave include being bound by a commitment to represent all residents of the shire equally, and / or consult with community on all policy decisions. Along similar lines, another candidate observed the DSSG questions “seemed to promote the views of DSSG.”

“Of course DSSG promotes its views - that’s in line with our constitution, and entirely appropriate in the context, just as a cricket club might seek an undertaking about cricket facilities, for example”, said Mr McDonald. “I don’t play cricket, but I don’t find it inappropriate that the cricket club would seek a commitment of candidates. Many voters in this election agree with our position.”

“We believe that protecting our environment, using our resources sustainably and building a global reputation on those values is the key to a strong economy supporting nature based tourism, clean/green agricultural produce and to ensure Douglas remains a wonderful place to live.”

Didge McDonald, President