

Social and community issues – what matters to our Tauranga City Council Mayoral and Ward Candidates?

SocialLink¹ asked all mayoral and ward candidates five questions from a social and community sector perspective. They could leave out any questions they did not want to respond to.

Te Papa General Ward

There are nine people standing for the Te Papa ward. Five candidates provided the following verbatim unedited answers.

Andrew Caie

1. We have been acknowledging all the unpaid/voluntary work and support that happens in our communities during Volunteer Week June 16 – 22nd. What unpaid/voluntary work have you been involved in?

I have run a few community exercise groups for the elderly as a volunteer. I have been a "Puppy raiser" for Blind and Low Vision NZ. And I have been a sports coach and referee for our children.

2. What community strengths and assets do you see in Tauranga? How do you think the Council can support them?

Our community spaces are our strength. The "return on investment" we get from places like the historic village, and various community groups that operate out of spaces like the welcome bay community center, and the Merivale community center. They provide so much for our communities that the best way we can support them is by getting them the funding and facilities they need to operate properly.

Healthier, happier, and more connected communities pay dividends that unfortunately don't show up on the Cities 'balance sheet', But simply put - flourishing communities create flourishing economies and vice versa

¹ SocialLink is a registered charity managing and based at The Collective in 17th Avenue, a not-for-profit co-working space enabling collaboration. SocialLink is the umbrella peak body for the social and community sector in the Western Bay of Plenty. www.sociallink.org.nz

3. What do you think Council's role should be in supporting vulnerable community members?

This questions, in various forms, comes up often. And for me the biggest part Council can play is through facilitating visibility. If our people see themselves reflected in our society they are more likely to be active participants in it.

That ranges from one of our disabled community, seeing another disabled person being supported at work. Or one of our migrant community seeing themselves reflect on council and in council staff. Or through the creation of artwork for individual communities - such as an LGBT street artwork that has been asked at many Meet the Candidates events - that celebrates the diversity of our society.

Council should be a conduit to promote the visibility of all aspects of our city - especially the marginalised and vulnerable.

4. Following a petition presented to TCC recently, councillors may be asked to vote on the installation of Roadway Art [eg a crossing] celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Would you vote in favour of the motion? Could you briefly outline why you would vote that way?

Well, I didn't read ahead and mostly answered above. I don't like to waste your time and repeat myself, how very un-Politian-like of me..

Yes I would support the creation of the artwork. I do not know the legalities of it being a crossing specifically, but that, or another road artwork that is suitable absolutely has my support to promote visibility for that community. Especially with the unfortunate uptick in reprehensible behaviour towards our LGBT community.

5. TCC's Vision and Direction includes a Te Ao Māori approach, 'understanding and applying key Māori concepts to enhance outcomes for our communities, thereby bringing to life the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?

By upholding the values of Te Tiriti - and for me the main one I believe council can contribute to is participation.

Continuing the theme of visibility, that also includes being consulted with during the decision making process so that you can visibly see that you have influenced the outcome of decisions.

I think council honoring the "Partnership" of Te Tiriti, consulting and collaborating with Tangata Whenua and building a city inclusive of both Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti will be a council honouring Te Tiriti.

Terry Molloy

1. We have been acknowledging all the unpaid/voluntary work and support that happens in our communities during Volunteer Week June 16 – 22nd. What unpaid/voluntary work have you been involved in?

Te Tuinga Whanau Trustee. Pukehinahina trust chair. Tauranga moana lions president.

2.What community strengths and assets do you see in Tauranga? How do you think the Council can support them?

There are a significant number of community based organizations that are doing great work they need to be supported. Council needs to act like a family a family supports its own.

3.What do you think Council's role should be in supporting vulnerable community members?

We need to play our part we cannot leave sections of our community on the street. That said it wont be easy but we must try.

4. Following a petition presented to TCC recently, councillors may be asked to vote on the installation of Roadway Art [eg a crossing] celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Would you vote in favour of the motion? Could you briefly outline why you would vote that way?

The Rainbow community are part of our community and as part of our community i would support making our home their home.

5. TCC's Vision and Direction includes a Te Ao Māori approach, 'understanding and applying key Māori concepts to enhance outcomes for our communities, thereby bringing to life the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?

I am a strong supporter of the principles of the treaty. Maori wards absolutely. I would go further and suggest the Treaty should be part of a constitution for NZ

Rod Taylor

1.We have been acknowledging all the unpaid/voluntary work and support that happens in our communities during Volunteer Week June 16 – 22nd. What unpaid/voluntary work have you been involved in?

I was heavily involved in athletics, being a life member of Athletics Tauranga. I was President and heavily involved in operating the club and it's events for many years.

2.What community strengths and assets do you see in Tauranga? How do you think the Council can support them?

There are multiple organisations involved in community and social work in the city. During the past few weeks I have become aware of many more than I had previously been aware of. A common concern from these organisations is that the Council is keen to 'consult', but

that actions from the consulting are sparse. Getting a better hit rate from council on the wish lists of our community organisations will be a priority for me.

3. What do you think Council's role should be in supporting vulnerable community members?

The Council's role is not to directly support the vulnerable, but rather to facilitate community organisations who have the appropriate skills and experience to make a difference. Enabling this support role goes back to my comments in question 2.

4. Following a petition presented to TCC recently, councillors may be asked to vote on the installation of Roadway Art [eg a crossing] celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Would you vote in favour of the motion? Could you briefly outline why you would vote that way?

Yes.

I cannot believe council staff have stonewalled this initiative and used NZTA Waka Kotaha as the excuse. This should be rectified in week one of the newly elected Council. If we are committed to making all residents in our diverse community feel welcome and safe this would be a fantastic symbol of our intent.

5. TCC's Vision and Direction includes a Te Ao Māori approach, 'understanding and applying key Māori concepts to enhance outcomes for our communities, thereby bringing to life the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?

Whilst not by any means proficient in Te Reo, I am very supportive of the changes New Zealand has embraced in recent times. I believe TCC has been a leading local body in how it has consulted and worked with the three local iwi. I am concerned that the Maori Ward Councillor being elected in this election may be the last - We must lobby central government to retain this ward.

Barbara Turley

1. We have been acknowledging all the unpaid/voluntary work and support that happens in our communities during Volunteer Week June 16 – 22nd. What unpaid/voluntary work have you been involved in?

Coach of junior Football teams, Secretary & President Papamoa Football Club, WBOP Football Federation Board, NZ Football Referees Board, Football Referee, Youth Referee Coach, Senior Referee Coach, Tauranga Citizens Club Executive Board.

2. What community strengths and assets do you see in Tauranga? How do you think the Council can support them?

Community Centres that help and support it's local residents, 17th Avenue Village with Arts, Crafts and community groups. Local Farmers Markets and other community markets.

Community gardens are among a small group of volunteers that support Tauranga residents. The council can support them through their community project funding, Creative BOP along with the many different festivals it supports.

3. What do you think Council's role should be in supporting vulnerable community members?

Working with organisations that are best able to deal with our vulnerable community groups

4. Following a petition presented to TCC recently, councillors may be asked to vote on the installation of Roadway Art [eg a crossing] celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Would you vote in favour of the motion? Could you briefly outline why you would vote that way?

I would support the roadway art, but it cant be a crossing as such due to NZTA regulations outlining crossings. There are many areas we could use the road art without impacting these regulations, similarly to the 'smiley' face outside Mount hot pools.

5. TCC's Vision and Direction includes a Te Ao Māori approach, 'understanding and applying key Māori concepts to enhance outcomes for our communities, thereby bringing to life the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?

Te Reo Maori is an important part of New Zealand culture and acknowledging and understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi is important for us all and compliments many things we do in our daily life.

Abraham (Bram) van Berkel

1. We have been acknowledging all the unpaid/voluntary work and support that happens in our communities during Volunteer Week June 16 – 22nd. What unpaid/voluntary work have you been involved in?

Nothing major - St Johns, Scouts, care

2. What community strengths and assets do you see in Tauranga? How do you think the Council can support them?

Supporting and encouraging individual / groups to continue their work in an open constructive manner as we seem to become more inward looking. Just to clarify, I have no respect for those (usually a very small group or individuals) that think they have the right to undertake action that defaces / degrades / harms our community. Please do not take this of context but there is a saying "it only takes one terrorist to hold a country to ransom"

3. What do you think Council's role should be in supporting vulnerable community members?

This is a very broad and open statement. The Council / Government can only do as much as practically feasible. We cannot continually expect / blame Government / Councils for all our woes / lack of empathy. There is need for all peoples (from top to bottom) to safely support our community through the journeys of life.

4. Following a petition presented to TCC recently, councillors may be asked to vote on the installation of Roadway Art [eg a crossing] celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Would you vote in favour of the motion? Could you briefly outline why you would vote that way?

I am a firm believer in respecting other people's views and not forcing our wants onto others. I am not against roadway/street art and/or any other form of expression as long as it is done appropriately and at the same time respect other(s) points of view. If elected to Council, I would review anything proposed against the safety and impact it has on others.

5. TCC's Vision and Direction includes a Te Ao Māori approach, 'understanding and applying key Māori concepts to enhance outcomes for our communities, thereby bringing to life the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?

Not sure if this will "enhance outcomes for our communities". I believe that Aotearoa / New Zealand has many cultures and that Māori / Mōro Mori as our first settlers need full understanding and recognition.