

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.

Arataki General Ward

There are ten people standing for the Arataki General Ward. Seven candidates provided the following verbatim unedited answers.

Sarah-Jane Bourne

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 am a Civil Defence volunteer.

I have in the past been involved with the Rural Youth and Literacy Trust and PTA's. I also enjoy attending planting days in our local communities.

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

One of our biggest strength and asset is our people.

We are fortunate to have a wide network of volunteers and not for profit organisations in Tauranga who work tirelessly (and often very quietly) to support our communities.

While Council has a limited pool of grant funding, we can support those who do amazing work in our communities by not only collaborating with them where possible but also volunteering our own time and using our networks to ensure they are supported.

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

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

One of Council's main functions is to provide for the wellbeing of its communities. Council should be collaborating with government agencies like MSD and organisations working with those vulnerable community members, to understand which sectors need extra support and make provisions to provide that support; ie elder housing, supporting youth into employment through the Mayors Task Force for Jobs, community centres and recreational facilities.

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?

Before reading the petition that is currently circulating and speaking to members of our Rainbow community I was opposed to this initiative, and I believed there were better ways to provide for and nurture diversity and acceptance in our community. With this new understanding I would support this motion, so long as rules and regulations for Roadway Art stacked up and so long as the crossing was to be installed in the appropriate place.

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?

As a Councillor I see myself contributing to this by continuing to foster strong relationships and cultivating network support systems within our communities; advocating for the protection and sustainability of one of our biggest assets - the natural environment; and align with our communities objectives and aspirations. By actively engaging with these principles, we can create a meaningful and collaborative relationship Council, Māori and our communities.

Anthony Goddard

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?

We support local community groups and often give away free services to deserving people. These efforts are our way of giving back to the community and acknowledging the importance of unpaid and voluntary work during Volunteer Week, June 16 – 22.

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

Tauranga boasts numerous community strengths and assets, including its vibrant cultural diversity, strong sense of community, and active volunteer networks. The city benefits from beautiful natural landscapes, robust local businesses, and excellent recreational facilities.

To support these strengths, the Council can invest in community-led initiatives, enhance public spaces, and facilitate events that celebrate Tauranga's diverse cultures. Additionally, providing funding and resources to local organisations, improving infrastructure, and fostering partnerships between businesses and community groups can further strengthen these assets and contribute to a more connected and resilient community.

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

The Council's role in supporting vulnerable community members should focus on ensuring access to essential services and fostering an inclusive environment. This involves implementing policies that address social services and supporting initiatives that offer food security and employment opportunities. The Council should also collaborate with non-profit organizations and local businesses to create a comprehensive support network. By prioritizing the needs of vulnerable populations, the Council can help build a more equitable and supportive community.

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 would vote in favour of the motion to install Roadway Art celebrating our Rainbow community and wider diversity. Such initiatives promote inclusion by highlighting the importance of diversity within our community and raise awareness, fostering a more accepting and supportive environment for all individuals. It also demonstrates our commitment to equality and makes our community a more welcoming place for everyone, boosting community morale and potentially attracting visitors, which can have a positive social and economic impact.

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.

(See <https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/our-future/our-direction/te-ao-m%C4%81ori-approach>) **As a councillor/mayor how do you see yourself contributing to this?**

As a councillor/mayor, I see myself contributing to TCC's Vision and Direction by actively promoting and integrating Te Ao Māori principles into our policies and initiatives. This includes engaging with Māori communities to ensure their perspectives and needs are considered in decision-making processes, supporting initiatives that celebrate and preserve Māori culture, and fostering partnerships that uphold the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. By championing these efforts, I aim to enhance community outcomes and create a more inclusive and culturally aware environment that respects and honors Māori heritage and values.

Teresa Killian

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?

COMMUNITY PANEL, LINKS AVE - TO GET OUR STREET REOPENED. OVER 14 MONTHS WORK INVOLVING OVER 2000 HOURS FOR OUR PANEL. EVERY 2ND TUESDAY FOR MANY MONTHS. PLUS ADDITIONAL WORK ON DESIGN ETC.

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

I WOULD LIKE TO PERSONALLY SET UP COMMUNITY PANELS IN EACH WARD RUN BY A COUNCILLOR EVERY MONTH AS A ONE STOP SHOP FOR ALL GROUPS TO ACCESS THEIR COUNCILLOR. I WOULD ALSO "GO TO THEM" ON A REGULAR BASIS. THEN I WOULD LIKE ALL COUNCILLORS TO MEET ONCE A MONTH TO CASUALLY DISCUSS THE WORD ON THE STREET AND DEAL WITH REQUESTS AND ANY CROSS OVER AND OTHER ADVISE FROM OTHER COUNCILLORS THROUGHOUT TAURANGA, WHO WILL ALL HAVE SPECIAL SKILLS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT.

I BELIEVE EACH WARD COUNCILLOR SHOULD BE ADVOCATING FOR THEIR OWN COMMUNITY.

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

I THINK TO MAKE SURE FACILITIES LIKE VENUES, SPORTS GROUNDS ETC REMAIN ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE. ALSO MAYBE AS A COUNCILLOR GO IN TO BAT FOR THEM. WHAT I MEAN IS IF COUNCIL CANNOT FUND REQUESTS, GO AND KNOCK ON THE DOORS OF SOME OF THE LARGER COMPANIES.

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 LOVE TO SEE A RAINBOW CROSSING - I JUST LOVED THE FIRST TIME I USED THE WELLINGTON ONE. I THINK SUPPORTING DIVERSITY IS ONE OF OUR SUPERPOWERS IF WE ARE ABLE TO. I WOULD JUST SAY I WOULD NOT LIKE IT TO BE NEGATED BY EXCESS COSTINGS ON THE TCC SIDE, (THEY LOVE TO OVER-ENGINEER THINGS) OTHERWISE THAT WILL BECOME THE CONVERSATION AND DETRACT FROM THE CROSSING. ONCE AGAIN AS A COUNCILLOR WE CAN USE OUR PROFILES TO KNOCK ON THE DOORS OF BUSINESSES AND UTILISE OUR OWN SKILLS IN THE COMMUNITY, LIKE LOCAL GRAFFITI ARTISTS.

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 HAVE COMMENCED MY TE REO COURSE AT BAY LEARNING, BUT CURRENTLY ON HOLD DUE TO THE CAMPAIGN. AS A PART -SAMOAN WOMEN WHO NEVER LEARNT HER LANGUAGE DUE TO FAMILY COMPLICATIONS I TRULY VALUE OUR UNIQUE CULTURE.

THANK YOU

Adrienne Pierce

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?

Not a lot locally but I have a volunteering list on my website - www.adriennepierce.nz

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

Outside environment, Council maintained and funded walkways, parks, good sporting facilities always room for more.

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

Providing meeting spaces and access around the city. Working with Central government agencies.

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 it's a global sign that a city supports diverse communities.

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?

As a New Zealand who has Māori whakapapa I am supportive of this approach.

Kim Renshaw

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?

My first role volunteering was at the SPCA when I was a child - I spent my Saturdays there while my parents worked. Since then, I have volunteered at a lot of events and festivals as a waste worker and volunteer co-ordinator. This decade, I have been the chair of the Mount Business Association and then treasurer, and I have been the treasurer of the Mount Toy Library (charity) as well. I have donated time to our local kindys and schools to support with waste minimisation education with teachers and students, and have done a lot of unpaid work to support events to reduce their waste, to help them design better systems for waste management.

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

There are so many organisations out there doing the work in community, too many to list here. Council has a role to play to support these organisations with access to council owned venues for meetings and tenancy (where appropriate), and with funding for specific organisations. Council should be boots-on-the-ground physically out in the community, working with these organisations to hear what their members/people they support, need, to thrive. Council must also ensure the voice of our minority communities are heard and action is taken, to ensure the council machine is engaging with and supporting them. Strong neighbourhoods are also something I feel strongly about, giving people a sense of belonging, and support. Strong neighbourhoods support our mental health and strengthen the fabric of our society.

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

Council should ensure we are enabling wraparound support systems for our vulnerable community members through supporting those organisations who are boots on the ground. Although some might say this is outside the council's remit, I don't necessarily agree. In addition to that, I think we should have a subcommittee within the council that looks at the wellbeing of all those in our community (ensuring we are engaging with those who's voices are not often heard), to measure how council projects are making our community a better place. I think we should prioritise those projects based on equitable and environmental outcomes, alongside budget constraints and time sensitivities.

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 can't see any feasible reason why we shouldn't support this - its more art in the city which is good for everyone's mental health, and I also feel it is important to be visible with our

support for the rainbow community. So supporting artwork that celebrates our diversity and in this scenario, the rainbow community is something I would vote in favour of.

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?

As a pakeha woman I approach my role in our society as tangata tiriti, and if I am elected I will vow to be a good treaty partner. I acknowledge tangata whenua and am humbled as I learn more about mātauranga Māori. I think a Te Ao Māori approach is really helpful in providing good outcomes for community and environment.

Andrea Webster

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 always support events at my Marae and schools. Coaching/managing sports, sand dune replanting, mangrove management in local estuaries.

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

Our strengths are our people, our community facilities and our environment. Council should continue to invest and maintain our assets and acknowledge and support the efforts of our people through recognition ceremonies, naming rights and celebrations.

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

Council could facilitate a collaboration of services to work together with the vulnerable community members to find solutions.

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 in favour of any action that supports and celebrates our Rainbow Community and wider diversity. I believe ALL people should be treated equally and with respect.

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 will ensure that I understand and uphold all of my duties and obligations as a councillor. I have had extensive experience of this intention in action as a member of Te Rangapu Mana Whenua working together with TCC.

Harris Williams

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 been heavily involved with my current rugby club, Te Puna, over the past three years and all the great things they do in that community. I recently moved to Arataki with my partner and am a big believer in earning community respect through action. I have been helping on Saturdays with the Arataki sports club any way I can, and I have put my hand up to help with community meal prep on weekdays at the community centre. We are just getting started!

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

Diversity is an asset - we are taught as kids that what its our uniqueness and individual traits that make us special. We as councillors need to do a better job of getting our boots on the ground, forming relationships with our community groups, and asking how council places and spaces and infrastructure can better facilitate diverse community.

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

Much the same as above ^ our job is to create an accomodating city for all. It starts with active engagement, team work and relationship building, because its those who live and breathe their existence everyday who know what's best on behalf of their community.

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?

It's a question for our rainbow community and I would support their consensus - do they see a rainbow crossing as a vital step towards acceptance, or tokenism? Some in our rainbow community might view it as a nice gesture, but still face systemic and or social injustice in their day to day lives. I'd love to know what how our community feels about these sorts of gestures.

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 listening and acknowledging the treaty as a significant document of importance. It comes down to how you walk the talk, and if you practice what you preach. I want to prove to local Hapu and Iwi my commitment to partnership protection and participation.