

JEREMY COWEN

REASON CANDIDATE FOR LANGRIDGE WARD – CITY OF YARRA

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Q1. Why have you decided to stand for the Yarra City Council? (200 words)

I'm a proud Abbotsford local, and I'm thrilled to be running as the Reason Party candidate, in the City of Yarra election, for Langridge Ward.

As an LGBTQI+ youth I have seen systematic under-representation of people like myself in all levels of government. I am a firm believer that our council should be as varied as the vibrant community it represents.

I believe a prerequisite of running for office shouldn't mean that you have to be a political staffer or a union leader. Why can't we just have passionate locals who understand the heart of local issues.

Having been on wage support since April, I have experienced first-hand the devastation that COVID-19 has caused to our hospitality, tourism, entertainment, and arts industries. Whilst devastating, this has afforded us the opportunity for swift and pragmatic change in our struggling shopping precincts.

Led by community engagement and evidence-based policy, I believe we can improve our city for the better.

With pragmatic and progressive policy, I look forward to seeing a city that we can all belong to.

This is why I'm running for local council.

Q2. Are you a member or supporter of a local group or organisation? (100 words)

Having only moved to Yarra in 2018 I am still yet to find the time in between work to get heavily involved in local groups. However, I am a strong supporter of Victoria Street Drug Solutions and Supporters of NRCH MSIR.

Q3. Have you been a participant in a local project or campaign? (200 words)

Having only moved to Yarra in 2018 I am still yet to find the time in between work to get heavily involved in local groups. However, I am a strong supporter of Victoria Street Drug Solutions and Supporters of NRCH MSIR.

Q4. What experiences have you had with the Yarra City Council? (200 words)

Q5. What role does the community play in council decision making?

How can this be made more effective? (200 words)

Community should always, and will always, be at the heart of our local council. Councillors must remember who they are elected by and who they must represent. The onus is on the council to ensure that all voices in the community are given the opportunity to be heard – not just the loudest voices. We must explore different ways, including via social media, to include the young and non-English speaking voices in our community.

Our system isn't broken. There is a place for (improved) iterative trials, we actually just need our councillors to listen.

And that's my commitment to Yarra – to listen and to act for the community.

Q6. How do you propose to communicate with the community if elected as a councilor? (100 words)

As stated before, looking at ways we can reach out more effectively to our younger and non-English speaking constituents, through social media, is a great place to start. Weekly or fortnightly listening posts and co-hosted community meetings with other councillors to listen and respond to community concerns.

Q.7. What are your priorities if elected to the Council? (300 words)

- **Fully rejuvenating our shopping precincts, through improved public amenity and small-business support, jointly with local stakeholders**
- **Strengthening and expanding our current recycling and waste management program and making it easier for residents, manufacturers, and local businesses to take part in the process.**
- **Expanding car-share policies and creating a framework for electric-vehicle-charging in our streets.**
- **Exploring new festivals and events that can be held in our neighbourhoods to support local artists, creatives and small businesses.**
- **Ensuring easy accessibility, for those of all abilities, to our streets and public spaces.**
- **Ensuring new buildings add to public amenity and hold up to the highest of environmental standards.**
- **Exploring better community consultation, particularly those who are typically under-represented, through all avenues available, including social media.**

Q8. The FRA has identified the following key priority areas - (500 words)

Heritage Protection and Conservation

Planning Permit Information and Advocacy

Yarra Council Strategy, Policy and Guidelines

Homelessness and Social Issues

Climate Action

What priority would you give to each and how would you respond to your top 3 if elected as a councillor?

Climate Action, Planning Permit Controls and Yarra Council Strategy, Policy and Guidelines (see Q7 for details)

Q9. What should be the role of Yarra City Council in relation to State and Commonwealth governments? (300 words)

Yarra Langridge and Nicholls Ward Candidate

Survey 2020

Q 10. What relationship should the Yarra City Council have with neighbouring councils? (200 words)

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