

**Combined Residents of Whitehorse
Action Group (CROWAG) Incorporated.**

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Candidate Questionnaire, Whitehorse Council Elections – October 2020

Name of Councillor candidate: [Trudy Skilbeck](#)

Whitehorse Council Ward: [Eley](#)

The *Combined Residents of Whitehorse Action Group Inc. (CROWAG)* represents a number of community groups and individual members across the municipality. In the current COVID-19 environment we are seeking to assist candidates to reach our members, helping them to make informed decisions when they vote.

CROWAG advocates for appropriate and sustainable development concerning built-form, public amenity, and the natural landscape within Whitehorse to all tiers of government. It seeks to promote the quality of life for residents and the natural landscape of Whitehorse. It lobbies Whitehorse Council to improve its relationship with its constituents in the areas of public accountability, public transparency, good governance, community engagement, fairness and equity.

Your responses to this questionnaire will be made available:

- a. to all CROWAG individual and group members and their networks within Whitehorse
- b. on the CROWAG website at www.crowag.com

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please answer all questions and keep written responses to each question to less than 150 words.

1. How long have you been a resident of Whitehorse?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 20+ years

2. Do you live in the council ward for which you are a candidate?

Yes or No

3. List the community, political and/or professional organisations with which you have been involved during the last 10 years.

The Governance Institute of Australia and The Chartered Governance Institute (International) : I am a Fellow of both peak bodies
Strathcona Grammar : Deputy Chair, Board Member, Governance Committee Member and Finance & Audit Committee Member
Blackburn South Bendigo Community Bank : Deputy Chair, Board Member, Governance Committee Chair
The Baptist Union of Victoria : Professional Standards Board Member
Surrey Hills Children's Centre : Committee Member
Box Hill Baptist Church, Forest Hill Uniting Church, and, more informally, other churches in Whitehorse
Blackburn South Girl Guides : Committee Member
Laburnum Primary School : Class Rep

4. What positive achievements resulted from your membership of these groups?

My core contributions are to governance (constitutions, policy documents, strategic/forward planning, fiscal oversight). I include in this the diverse forms of stakeholder collaboration that I've led or influenced, for example in the recruitment of a new Strathcona Principal where I designed and facilitated focus groups to enable all parts of the School Community to shape what was wanted in a 'CEO'. Sometimes my main role is doing the dishes (!) or something like contributing BBQ supplies to an effort run by Whitehorse Churches Care. I push every group I'm involved in, and they are all social purpose oriented, to be inclusive, to really listen (not pretend-listen), and to consider both present realities and future aspiration.

5. Please state what you want to achieve as an elected Councillor

I want to support excellent governance. I want to influence for better quality Council meetings, merit and evidence based decision making and well communicated follow up. I want to support both community driven ('bottom up') action, which may be based on single issue/micro detail matters AND Council driven ('top down') action, which needs to be macro and strategic. I want to bring a new kind of Council leadership that can do both detail and big picture and 'walks their talk' without politicising.

6. What are the top five issues you believe could improve the functioning of the *Whitehorse City Council* in representing its ratepayers and community?

- 1) Locally driven COVID health response (which could mean community mental health services alongside future involvement in contact tracing, services to people in iso, vaccine roll out)

- 2) Locally driven COVID business support (which could mean rates deferral or other relief, microfinance schemes and other self sustaining initiatives that can be community driven)
- 3) Climate Change Action
- 4) Open Space Management
- 5) Rethinking best services (best value add, prioritising the most vulnerable in our community experiencing 'poverty' in all its forms – financial, health, social isolation)

7. There are many important roles of Local Government. As a Councillor you will need to make difficult decisions with many issues of importance competing for your vote, council action and finances. Whitehorse Council's responsibilities are listed below.

In the boxes below, please **rank the roles that are most important to you** from 7 (Most important) to 1 (Least important). Please do not use the same ranking number more than once.

| | |
|----------|---|
| 4 | Children and Families including childcare, kindergartens, maternal and child health, playgroups, immunisation |
| 7 | Health and Wellbeing including disability services, home and community care, meals on wheels, food safety |
| 5 | Residential and Commerce including strategic development, planning, and building, business development, animal registrations, rubbish collection and recycling |
| 1 | Sport and Leisure including sportsgrounds and pavilions, aquatic and leisure centres, Morack golf club |
| 6 | Non-structured Recreational activities including cycleways and shared use paths, parks and gardens, bushland, and open space |
| 3 | Roads and Safety including management of roads and footpaths, streetscapes (including street trees), street lighting, car and bike parks, pedestrian and cycling safety and security, disabled accessibility |
| 2 | Community including library services, theatre and the arts, community centres, volunteering, community grants |

8. The following Issues of specific interest to CROWAG.

In the boxes below, please **rank the priority of the issues** in order of importance **to you** from 10 (Most important) to 1 (Least important). Please do not use the same ranking number more than once.

| | |
|----|--|
| 6 | Engagement with residents and ratepayers |
| 10 | Transparency and governance in council matters |
| 7 | Council response to Climate Change and Sustainability issues in terms of mitigation, adaptation, and urgency |
| 2 | Administrative and budgetary efficiency. |
| 1 | Council rates and capital expenditure policies |
| 3 | Administration of Council's planning and building provisions in the Whitehorse Planning Scheme (WPS) e.g. overall level of development in the city, building site compliance requirements, general administration including inspections, Planning Permit Conditions compliance, administration of tree and vegetation controls, tree retention and protection on building sites, ensuring compliance with landscape and planting plans, community consultation, fines and prosecution for transgressors |
| 9 | The city's natural landscape, tree canopy, streetscape, and overarching neighbourhood amenity considerations |
| 4 | Provision of infrastructure for walkers, cyclists, and people with disabilities |
| 8 | Management and utilization of the city's parks, open spaces, and linkages (e.g. shared use paths, waterways, and residential streets) |
| 5 | Traffic issues in Whitehorse |

9. If you have any further comments please note them below:

A theme for me is that Council issues must be considered in an integrated way. I appreciate why your excellent survey is structured as it is, and yet I could have 'voted' most sections in an entirely different order and still be true to my core. The most effective thing a municipality can do, in my opinion, is to stop operating in silos and start applying multi-disciplinary and genuine collaboration-for-problem-solving thinking. I am an integrator; that's my main governance emphasis.

Thank you for completing the CROWAG questionnaire.

For further queries contact CROWAG secretary David Berry on 0413 457 184

Please save your completed questionnaire and send it as an attachment by email to 'Whitehorse Councillor Candidate Responses' at: crowag.inc@gmail.com