

Sustainable Waikato questionnaire to Hamilton City Council candidates 2016

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HCC candidate name: **CATHY HOLLAND - HAMILTON WEST WARD & WAIKATO DHB**

1. Have you personally been involved in any group, organisation or activities that relate to sustainability? Please give details and outcomes.

On behalf of my tupuna, I am a Kaitiaki over land interests that I am privileged to preserve and protect for beneficiaries, both present and future.

Sustainability and sustainable development focuses on balancing the fine line between competing needs - our need to move forward technologically and economically, and the need to protect the environment in which we live. The tension is well illustrated between agri-business that sustains us economically but at what cost to our present and future environment.

I chair the Oparau Station Trust. Ours is an ancestral block of 830 hectares of land out on the West Coast of Kawhia. We run a diversified farming programme of cropping, grazing, forestry and we are currently establishing a beef finishing unit. There are Waahi Tapu sites on the land.

In 2014, we signed a Kawenata with the Crown to manage and “preserve the natural environment, the landscape amenity, the wildlife habitat, the freshwater habitat, the historical value of the land and the spiritual and cultural values” associated with the block. Specifically we have set aside 120 hectares of wetlands for this purpose. We are the first land owners on the west coast to set aside land for environmental and biodiversity protection.

In the fenced off areas, we have embarked on a comprehensive replanting programme to reintroduce native plants onto our land. We recently sought the help of a local school to plant out 1500 natives as a fund raising activity for the school but also to raise the awareness of conservation and land management to impressionable young minds.

Part of our land is Tiritirimatangi Island where land around the shoreline has now been fenced off to prevent stock run off into the harbour.

Last week, we planted 350 pohutakawa seedlings along the western side of Tiritirimatangi so as to anchor the shoreline and prevent further erosion. We have been lucky to do this with biodiversity funding and in partnership with the Waikato Regional Council and DOC.

Although the outcomes are insignificant to measure to date, there is anecdotal evidence that the waterways are becoming clearer and eels are starting to return to the waters.

2. Please rank, in order of (1) to (7), what you consider to be the most pressing needs for sustainability today, (1) being the most pressing and (7) the least. Please also add one of your own ideas.

	Rank	Comment
Adapting to the impacts of climate change	6	
Reducing our contribution to climate change	5	
Sustainable economic growth	1	Promoting jobs and stronger economies
Sustainable transport options	3	Looking at ways to decrease the volume of cars on the road; lift use of public transport; encourage citizens to ride bicycles and provide safe cycle lanes
Sustainable urban design	4	Increasing connectivity between suburbs and communities across the city
Water quality in or rivers and lakes	2	Especially the Waikato River
Other		
Sustainable housing	1	Social housing and affordable housing

3. In your view, what is the most effective thing Council could do to improve wellbeing for those of lower socioeconomic status in our city?

28% of Hamilton's population live in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation.

- 1) If you are poor, irrespective of where you live, life 'sucks'. We have too many families in Hamilton who are barely surviving from day to day.
- 2) I believe that solutions to issues that confront communities' across the City are more enduring if resolved by and within the community itself. In this respect the Council is well positioned to be at the forefront of social development and to facilitate social change.
- 3) As the civic leader, the Council can be the catalyst that brings government agencies and community organisations to work globally /collectively on agreed strategies that will improve the lifestyle and aspirations of vulnerable families. Otherwise "we will continue to do what we have always done and will (not surprisingly) continue to get what we have always got" – which is an ever widening gap between the haves and have nots.
- 4) We need to be honest and acknowledge that poverty features in our City and that children are living in substandard accommodation and are going hungry on a daily basis. Otherwise we will continue to offer "breakfast before school" programmes without dealing with the

core issues of poverty and the impact it is having on our tamariki mokopuna. I see the role of Council as leading these conversations.

4. What do you see as future priorities for transport in Hamilton City and what benefits do you believe these changes will bring?

The key priorities have to be:

1) For drivers

Licensed drivers, well maintained roads, safer driving

Benefits

Safer roads and less human cost as a consequence of motor vehicle accidents

2) For cyclists

Incentives to cycle, safe urban cycling

Benefits

Keeps vehicle traffic to a minimum

Encourages recreational and physical activity

3) For pedestrians

Safe walking lanes, encouraging walking buses for primary school children.

Benefits

Keeps children off roads and safe

Supervised by adult /parent

Keeps children safe from predators

4) For citizens

Improved public bus service

Benefits

Greater convenience and availability for non-driving residents.

5. What sustainable water management strategies do you think Council should implement?

Strategies

- 1) A futuristic plan that is reviewed annually
- 2) Profiling of the importance of water as our most precious mineral / "taonga"

- 3) Promoting conservation and preservation of quality water supplies as a finite resource if we don't look after our supplies today
 - 4) Implementing strategies to police misuse and contamination of water ways – interface with agri-business
6. **Do you see the Council as having responsibility towards managing native biodiversity within the city? If yes, what policies would you like to see in place to support this? If no, please explain.**

YES

Policies

Protection of identified “native indigenous” areas within the city are reserved

7. **What strategies do you think Council should employ to minimise the City's waste?**

Continue with strategies in the Hamilton City Council Waste Management and Minimisation Plan 2012.

Still forming a view – interesting topic – impact on climate change

8. **How can Hamilton celebrate cultural diversity while helping to strengthen cross cultural ties?**

- It is important that the Council practices an “inclusive” policy that welcomes all ethnicities and cultures into the City. Diversity adds to the richness of the City.
- Currently 1 in 5 residents identify as being Maori. The population of Pasifika and Asians is projected to double over the next 20 years whilst the Maori population will not be as significant.
- An interesting scenario is the relationship that the Council has forged with Waikato Tainui. Prior to settlement, the Council was dismissive of the tribe; however the huge tribal investment in the City as a consequence of the Raupatu Settlement has changed the terms and nature of the relationship/ partnership. This model, which is underpinned by economic and commercial development, is a model of how the Council might engage with other cultures that bring value to the City.
- In recent years the Council as sponsored other joint initiatives with cultural and ethnic groups – and should continue doing so.
- The issues experienced by migrant and refugee communities are often complex. The Council has done well to employ a designated contact person to engage with these communities. The networks within and amongst these communities are very strong.

9. Do you think Council has a role in supporting businesses, schools, families and individuals to make more sustainable choices? If no, why not and if yes what ideas do you have to support this?

- 1) Long term sustainability has to be one of the key drivers of Council. To actively manage resources and grow the economy at the same time will require a capital investment that should attract joint funding both public and private.
- 2) The Council funds Community Houses in Hamilton for whom a deliverable of their agreement with Council could include a campaign to promote sustainable choices. The Council would devise the messages and develop the resources and the Community Houses would be the messengers.
- 3) Most sectors have comprehensive networks that can be tapped into to spread the word.

10. Do you think Council has a responsibility to have policies to mitigate climate change and manage its impacts? Could you please give some examples?

Examples

- Sound and reasoned leadership by Council in decisions that impact on climate change
- Quality water control and management –pollution can harm and do harm to people's health, livelihoods and lives. Better standards of education and healthcare - particularly as it pertains to water quality and better sanitation.
- Waste management and resource utilisation
- Stakeholder engagement – on the basis that people have stewardship of their environment and therefore it is important to put people at the forefront of solving issues that impact on our future sustainability.
- Preservation of native reserves and wildlife
- Sustainability to include health of the land, air and sea

11. Suppose that your Council is considering a proposal for economic development. The development would increase regional GDP and create a significant number of jobs. It would also add significant pollution to waterways and further degrade their ecosystems. Would you support the proposal or not? What is your reasoning?

Without being privy to the detail of the proposal I would not support this proposal. However, as a Councillor, my duty is to make an informed decision on whether or not this proposal is a sound investment for the city of Hamilton.

I would therefore want to undertake my own due diligence on the economic benefits of the proposal against the risks and detriment to the environment and in particular consider any strategies that would mitigate the future risk to the environment.

At the end of this process, I would then make an informed and considered decision YES or NO.

Cathy Holland

Candidate for Hamilton City West Ward & Waikato DHB

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