Candidate responses to FOQVM to date 8/10/2020

Our questions to all candidates:

*Dear City of Melbourne Council candidate*

*Friends of Queen Victoria Market Inc. (FOQVM) is a community group dedicated to protecting the social heritage of Queen Victoria Market as well as its historic buildings. We work with the local resident’s associations in the City of Melbourne, who are also passionate supporters of the market. Our Facebook page has nearly 5000 followers and our posts have a reach of up to 30,000 people, many of who live or work in the city of Melbourne and will be voting in this election.*

*FOQVM believes the QVM’s traditional market environment makes an essential contribution to Melbourne’s community and culture. We believe the current ‘renewal’ plans will destroy the market's social heritage, as well as its built heritage. We support the QVM traders who want to protect their livelihoods and their way of life. We want to preserve the market as a place for small, independent businesses and to reverse the current management practices and proposals which have led to the market's recent decline.*

*We will campaign for every candidate who promises to protect the market. We will publish all responses on our FB page and will send them to the media. Please let us know your response as soon as possible.*

*To this end, we are asking all candidates the following questions:*

*1. If elected, what will you do to preserve the market's living cultural and social heritage and to support current and future small businesses in the market?*

*2. If elected, are you prepared to reconsider City of Melbourne’s QVM Renewal Plan? In particular, are you willing to revisit and vote against the plans to remove all vehicles from the market, including Queen St?*

*2. If elected, what will you do to improve the transparency and accountability of the QVM Board and the Market management?*

Responses received in order of receipt

**From Scott Robson MBA., BSc.**

The Vic Market is my local market, where I regularly shop. I can assure you that small business it is important to me and transparency and accountability are even more so.

Notwithstanding, I stand as a purely independent common-sense Melbournian. I am not limited by a single issue, political party, or ideology.

Importantly, I believe people are intelligent and capable of taking personal responsibility for their own decisions about the risks and opportunities they take.

I will encourage prosperity and life-quality, and protect against fear and control. Supporting the vulnerable and enabling the capable.

Born in Melbourne, graduated Masters of Business Administration, AIB, and Bachelor Science, Monash University.

My guiding principles are:

1. Question everything.

2. Choose common sense over regulation.

3. Council projects should be aesthetic and practical.

4. Think like a scientist rather than have faith in ‘science’.

5. People belong to groups; groups are not people.

6. We are all connected.

7. It all happens with a smile.

Once elected you will be welcome to discuss how your proposal can improve the livelihood of the community and together, let’s make Melbourne the world’s most liveable city again.

**From Joseph Burke**

1. Whatever is necessary.

2. I understand that plan is to incorporate a car park in Munro

development. I'm certainly open to revisiting plans to remove all cars

from the market.

3. There are procedures to remove under-performers, and I will apply

them without mercy.

**From Rabin Bangar Animal Justice Party**

1) I would look at proposals that promote this historic icon market well beyond the inner-city residents. In addition, I would support funding of advertising promotions and activities that cater for families. Covid 19 has negatively impacted the small businesspeople who have entrenched generational connections with QVM and as a society we need to look after them. We shall commit to supporting a range of packages in future budgets to help these very people.  As a Futurist, I would propose a Future 2040 study be undertaken with engagement from stakeholders across many spheres so that we are visionary in our thinking for both the survival of QVM  and  cater for future generations .I want us as representatives of the City of Melbourne to be visionaries in our planning for the city and QVM has to be part of that vision.

2) As a councillor, I shall propose a review of the City of Melbourne QVM Renewal Plan and revisit the vehicle parking proposal.

3) Ensure both the QVM Board and Market Management is represented by a diversity of skilled members that would add value in their positions. Implement set KPI (Key Performance Indicators) around timely accurate reporting and strong corporate governance. Promote regular dialogue with the Councillors to address issues in a more regular way.

**From Mary-Lou Howie, Morgan Watts Leadership Team**

To preserve the market's living cultural and social heritage and to support current and future small businesses in the market:

* Revitalise the market by ensuring the new retail plan attracts new traders and becomes an incubator for new small businesses;
* Ensure that QVM stall holders reflect the needs of the multicultural mix that is Melbourne
* Relax the 5km limit access to the market to 20 kms
* Trader security - 5 year leases and licences so that traders are secure in their futures and can invest in their businesses;
* Respecting Heritage: QVM has elevated heritage status by being on the National and Victorian Heritage listing - it is a national treasure. Develop a specific QVM Masterplan (at present it is a QVM precinct Masterplan) that acknowledges that it is a place of special cultural, social and architectural significance and must be protected as such.
* No safe injecting room at CoHealth 150 metres from QVM - this is a key issue for traders.

The City of Melbourne’s renewal plan is to gentrify, reduce and re-purpose QVM. The Morgan-Watts Ticket understands that the redevelopment has been a contentious issue for over 6 years, hence the market community’s unrelenting objections We would halt the renewal plans and develop a moderate responsive development which aligns with trader and customer needs through an equitable round table process involving democratically elected trader and stakeholder representation to help steer any future changes to the market.

Support cheap accessible at-grade parking is essential to the viability of the market - retain 500 car spaces in the existing QVM car park; retain street parking in Queen St; retain trader parking under the sheds and on existing car park.

To improve the transparency and accountability of the QVM Board and the Market management

* Disband the private company QVM P/L on which the QVM market board sits, to be replaced by the City of Port Phillip governance model for South Melbourne Market which involves councillor, trader and stakeholder representation to directly manage the market.
* Ensure no commercial-in-confidence decision- making occurs in this model - minutes and actions to be publicly disclosed.

**From Jackie Watts, Morgan-Watts Team Ticket**

I have, staunchly defended the heritage integrity QVM since the grandiose

and inappropriate so called QVM Renewal Project first emerged at the Doyle

Council. I will continue to do so. The City of Melbourne has an obligation to

preserve, not only its heritage architectural and QVM economic viability into

the future.

New Traders and ideas: During my terms on council I have championed the following QVM

management proposals for new business, new marketing programs & events:

* Pressed QVM management to reach out to new traders in the refugee

and migrant as an easy entrée into small business. Negative response

* To enable equitable non-discriminatory treatment of newcomers by

requesting the CoM (as the ‘owner’ of QVM) require QVM management

* to translate contracts into languages other than English. Partial

success.

* Proposed a QVM promotional bus to being shoppers from Chadstone to

QVM – booking on-line. (Chadstone has such busses to the CBD)

Negative response

* Advocated for collaboration with City Wide Waste to collaborate on

establishing permanent Trash and Treasure market stall to dispose of

discarded household bric-a- brac collected from around the

municipality.

* Long advocated the establishment a Click and Collect service. Partial

success.

* Pressed for the creation a Moomba float to advertise the QVM to

100,000s of people during the Moomba Parade. Negative response

* Pressed for the QVM to mimic the CBDs extraordinarily popular annual

Gingerbread Display (QVM could extend to other Xmas fare) Negative

Response

* Pressed QVM to offer municipal retailers an opportunity to open pop-up

stalls to clear excess seasonal stock post COVID. Negative response

* Advocated for the monthly secondhand Bookstore on Sunday. Success.

QVM governance is seriously flawed and Board remuneration costly. QVM

Pty Ltd should be disbanded and QVM management be brought ‘in-house’ at

Town Hall and to include traders, council Reps and QVM stakeholders as per

the City of Port Phillip’s model re South Melbourne market.

Recognizing the elevated Heritage status of QVM (National and State)

advocate for a QVM specific Masterplan during the next Council term which

would, of course, extend to the Car Park which is an integral; part of the site.

The QVM car park is an essential trading asset& fundamental to the

viability of market trade. The Greens and LM Capp have

misrepresented re the State Govt. in arguing there are prescriptive

requirements for public open space on this site. ie effectively re-purposing this space from a QVM trading asset to public open space. If re-elected I will continue to argue for vehicles access and presence in the market and on the retention of the existing car park.

Many aspects of the latest QVM Renewal Plan are concerning.

These reflect inadequate trader consultation. I await the ruling of HV.

No safe injecting room at CoHealth 150 metres from QVM  - this is

a key issue for traders.

In Council I have staunchly argued against the Victoria St. MSIR

location from the outset. The opposition to this view from the

Councillors now forming the Capp Team was initially strong.

My views align with those of the QVM traders, nearby residents and

vulnerable social housing tenants who live above CoHealth premises.

Council holds a 299-year lease on the site and therefore has control

of the premises as well as activities carried out by tenants. Council

has voted to in effect ‘veto’ MSIR activity on this site. It is my view

that community based MSIRs are not acceptable.

**From Mary Masters, Residents First**

I am aware of the work of FOQVM and commend you and your group on your

community action.

Janette, Samantha and I have been moved to run for council as we’re

tired of not being heard by council – much the same as Mary-Lou Howie.

We need residents on council to ensure that local communities and local

businesses are put at the heart of council decision-making. We are

hopeful that there is a groundswell of support at this election from

resident and local business voters to finally tip the scales against the

many stakeholders and potential councillors with political alliances or

representing interests ‘big business’ and property developers.

Like most Melbournians, I have a personal attachment to QVM. I grew up

making weekly trips to QVM with my parents. My parents still make weekly

visits: my dad will text to tell me of the latest bargain he got on a

lesser-known cut of meat (his cooking specialty) and to give me the

market price of lobster, and my mum always buys multiples of anything in

season that she can’t resist (only that which she doesn’t grow in her

own vegetable patch) and drops them off on my doorstep. I am a West

Melbourne resident and shopping at the QVM has been a ritual for me for

the past 13 years and my young kids will now skip Saturday breakfast in

order to hold out for a borek to eat while they sit and watch Stephen

busking outside the deli hall.

My next-door neighbour is the daughter of a market stall holder and grew

up working on a stand. Her sister took over the stand when their father

died but she is now so unhappy with the market redevelopment and what

this will mean for traders – the issue with removal of car access is

only one of the issues cited – that the market-stand legacy may stop

with her generation. I am only aware of some of the wide array of issues

that traders have with the redevelopment, but think that it would be a

travesty if it led to the market’s decline.

Conversely, another of my local neighbours is a trader (non-fresh

produce) who appears to be pleased with the market redevelopment and the

significant investment that is being made in the redevelopment and in

bringing more people to the markets and the future direction.

These conflicting views put paid to the main priority of Residents

First, which is that Council needs to move beyond ‘consulting’ with its

community members and instead ensure they are embedded in

decision-making. The relationship between traders and engaged community

members, and the City of Melbourne and the QVM board sounds like it has

become quite toxic. It is the responsibility of City of Melbourne to

‘manage’ all stakeholders and this has not been done successfully.

If elected, team members from Residents First will work towards ensuring

that community stakeholders have a louder voice on Council and attempt

to address the issue by working closer with the community and market

traders.

**From Rohan Leppert Greens**

As a member of the Queen Victoria Market Committee of Trustees, Vic Market shopper and

local resident, I am delighted to answer your questions on behalf of the Greens team.

Our track record is already strong on the market’s social and cultural heritage, and on

support for traders. Though the Greens were never the proponents of the Renewal

program, we:

1. Amended the renewal masterplan: instead of H and I sheds becoming an outdoor

dining area as proposed, we required that they forever remain for fresh fruit and

vegetable trading.

2. Applied a ‘no construction zone’ buffer around the Aboriginal Cemetery.2

3. Established the Trader Support Fund (‘Trader Connect’) to assist traders to

successfully operate, grow and innovate their businesses throughout the renewal

program.

4. Proposed the Market Square Charter to ensure that the uses and management of

the new open space meet community expectations and respect the heritage of the

market. I wrote the final amendments to the Charter which Cr Watts moved, and

the Friends of Queen Victoria Market acknowledged our joint efforts.

5. Supported the market’s listing on the State and National Heritage Registers.

6. Called for the creation of a Statement of Shareholder Expectations, and insisted on

the inclusion of language to direct QVM Pty Ltd to, among other things:

a. “Recognise and protect the market’s original and primary role as a fresh food

market.”

b. “Ensure trading and retail space supports independent retail and small to

medium sized businesses, not large chains or supermarkets.”

c. “Demonstrate stewardship in preserving the Market as one of the great open

air markets of the world, retaining its heritage, traditions, unique offer,

diverse community of market traders, gritty atmosphere and authenticity

into the future.”

d. “Work collaboratively with the City of Melbourne, traders and the

community to ensure the historic and pre and post European cultural

heritage of the market is preserved.”

7. Supported the waiving of licence fees from QVM Pty Ltd to City of Melbourne for the

duration of the Renewal period.

The Greens will continue to listen, react and engage with traders, the market community

and QVM Pty Ltd to ensure that while the Council seeks solutions that guarantee the

market’s long-term success, those solutions always respect the “heritage, traditions, unique

offer, diverse community of market traders, gritty atmosphere and authenticity into the

future.”

We agree with the Friends of Queen Victoria Market’s position in 2016, where you argued

to the planning panel on planning scheme amendment c245, supported by the expert

witness that you called, that the carpark’s rezoning to Public Park and Recreation Zone is

appropriate for the land. We disagree with the revised position of the Friends of Queen Victoria Market that the land should not be used for public park and recreation purposes.

Your question suggests that all vehicles are being removed from the market. This is

incorrect. New underground parking to offset existing parking is being built in the Munro

and Southern Development sites (which will result in carparks being the same average

distance from the trading sheds as is currently the case), with the Southern Development

site still to go through planning, meaning that ceiling heights to ensure vans and trucks can

be catered for are still able to be designed.

The new public open space at Market Square is a once in a generation opportunity to build

significant public space in the heart of the city, to reduce the urban heat island effect, and

to bring even more people to the market precinct for the benefit of traders.

In 2018 in competing for the Lord Mayoralty I pledged that, if elected, I would seek to

“Review the QVM Pty Ltd constitution, particularly the remit and structure of the board of

directors. Place directors with direct trader and small business experience on the board, and

properly resource and support a genuine Trader Representative Committee.”8

While the board has been reviewed – in that it has been reduced – and small business

expertise is now found on the board, we still have not had the meaningful and

comprehensive review that is needed, I believe.

A governance review amid such extraordinary change is something I believe should happen

as a matter of good practice and should not be taken as a criticism of the current Chair and

Directors who do extraordinary work in difficult circumstances.

The Council also needs to work harder to support its subsidiary; clear communication,

reporting and policy review are shared responsibilities.

https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/meeting-

archive/MeetingAgendaItemAttachments/755/13578/EXTRACT%20OF%20MINUTES%207.2.1.1.pdf p.14 2 https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/meeting-

archive/MeetingAgendaItemAttachments/755/13578/EXTRACT%20OF%20MINUTES%207.2.1.1.pdf p.13 3 https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/meeting-

archive/MeetingAgendaItemAttachments/751/13510/AUG16%20CCL%20AGENDA%20ITEM%207.1.pdf

https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/building-and-development/urban-planning/local-area-planning/queen-

victoria-market-precinct-renewal-plan/project-planning-framework/pages/public-open-space.aspx 5 https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofQueenVictoriaMarket/posts/3177951895598319

https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/meeting-

archive/MeetingAgendaItemAttachments/790/14143/AUG17%20CCL%20AGENDA%20ITEM%206.9.pdf

[https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/c245-qvm-panel-report-12-july-2016.pdf p.101](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/c245-qvm-panel-report-12-july-2016.pdf%20p.101)

**From Kath Larkin & Daniel Dadich, Victorian Socialists candidates for Melbourne Council Leadership Team**

1. Victorian Socialists are firm believers in welcoming community spaces that allow for people to congregate and socialise. We also believe that the community should have access to fresh, nutritious and affordable food products. This makes us friends of the Friends of the QVM (in actual fact many of us are already members of the Facebook page). We oppose the QVM Renewal Project as it currently stands, as the plan looks to change the nature of the community market into a supermarket, removing the fresh produce and increasing the price of products for the community. We would like to see a QVM that puts the needs of the community first, with fresh affordable produce, a space where the community can gather and enjoy the sites, sounds and smells of the market.

2. If elected, we would definitely reject the QVM Renewal Plan as it stands. We see vehicle access to the market is necessary for traders to continue the turnover of fresh produce during the day, as well as making the market more accessible for the community who should not have to walk blocks to put away their groceries.

3. Victorian Socialists believes in real democracy. We would consult the community on all important decisions and put their needs above the advocates for big businesses. All decisions and the reasoning behind them would be posted online and the decision makers would be held accountable if straying from the community interest.

**From Arron Wood**

- as Acting LM I supported the application for National Heritage Listing and I support retention of the heritage sheds and social fabric of the market

- I support the market being a fresh produce and general merchandise market and recognising the long history of many traders by trying to retain as many of them as possible

- I support the market being a trading place for small, independently owned businesses

- we’ll ensure no supervised injecting room on the doorstep of the market

- I’m prepared to negotiate a compromise outcome on the existing carpark to retain some at grade parking immediately adjacent to the market sheds

- if elected we propose a review of the governance structure of the market with input from traders and customers

- I plan to personally meet and hear from traders directly on issues with regard to transparency, accountability and governance

**From Fiona Sweetman Your Melbourne Team Get It Done**

1. I would great more promotion for the many access points to the market, I would encourage more amenities for banking, toilets, and more to ensure that overcrowding and dispersion on the market site.

I would encourage more Melbourne Made, I would encourage more Victorian Grown, I would encourage more Foodmiles projects, to add value to the proximity of the market to such a large local population.

I would also sing its praises MUCH MUCH louder in the tourism value - there are so few markets like ours in the world.

I would encourage more use of the market space out of standard market hours for ways that vendors and small businesses can add value to their market and their brands. I feel it should not sit unused on so many days of the year.

More storytelling about the importance of the site, and then the market itself, and the draw card it is for so many diverse cultures of our city.

2. I am ready to relook at the Renewal Plans, we are much further along in time, and the world changes. Removal of All vehicles in a delivery heave enterprise is not ideal, so I would be looking to understand the practical reasons for this and see better solutions.

I am an advocate for pedestrianisation of the City, BUT I am also a passionate advocate for accessibility and inclusion, so i would not want to BLOCK cars where not other accessibility was available.

3. As the Council owns the site, I feel the transparency is a VERY important element of the Market management. I would have more regular meetings with ALL councillors by the BOARD, and a more direct access to Management plans.

Governance is a hugely important element of council - and business I am on a few. So I would ensure proper updates on the Board papers and venue management would be shared with council, and in turn dedicated council meetings for the MARKET itself... I am not aware of how it is currently managed (the transparency) so I will investigate what is or is not working first.

**From Team Hakim Your Local Independent**