



## unChain Newsletter

June Quarter 2013

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### 1. Special General Meeting of unChain Inc

On June 5<sup>th</sup> a special general meeting was held to put to members two resolutions

1. That Unchain Inc. adopt the new model rules as per the Associations reform act
2. That Unchain Inc. adopt a revised statement of purpose

Both resolutions were passed.

Some aspects of the new rules are: The new Rules permit Associate Members. These are non-voting members. The new Rules require the AGM to determine the subscription fee. The current Rules permit up to 2 ordinary members in addition to the 4 officers. The new Rules allow any number of ordinary members to be elected to the Committee. There are also different rules about nomination. The new Act spells out the legal duties of office holders – imposing duties similar to those of directors of companies - regarding improper use of information or position, duty to exercise reasonable care, duty to act in good faith and for a proper purpose, duty not to allow the association to trade while insolvent and duty to avoid conflicts of interest. Associations are divided into three tiers regarding financial reporting– with weightier financial obligations on the bigger ones. unChain is a Tier One Association, that is one with a total revenue of less than \$250,000. We have to report to the Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) on a similar basis as presently. Our accounts do not have to be audited but must be reviewed by an independent accountant if a majority of members at a general meeting vote to require it. The new Act replaces all references to ‘public officer’ with ‘secretary’. In most cases, the secretary will assume the responsibilities of the public officer. The new Act clarifies the rights of members of associations, including the circumstances in which members can inspect or get a copy of the rules, be notified of general meetings, vote at general meetings etc. It also sets out new requirements for grievance procedures and disciplinary action.

The revised statement of purposes is:

1. To develop and support measures that will make Port Phillip an even better place for living, working and recreation
2. To support the election of Councillors to the City of Port Phillip Council who are independent of and not aligned with political parties
3. To engage with the local community on issues that affect their amenity, particularly issues relating to the environment, planning and local community inclusion.
4. To support and ensure Councillors and other elected representatives stay connected with and act on local community concerns.
5. To represent local community concerns to local, state and national politicians, governments and agencies.
6. To assist in creating community by engaging and empowering people to comment on and take up local issues with appropriate authorities.

There was healthy debate around the wording of the purposes in particular that anyone running as a candidate for COPP council should not belong to a political party.

## **2. The Committee**

The committee continues to meet monthly. The website has yet to be updated but this is in the pipeline. A subcommittee has been formed to be a reference group for the Triangle Development. We will also be looking for people

interested in the Master Plan for Fishermans Bend and to work on the Yarra trams issue. We have also sent a questionnaire to the candidates in the federal seat of Melbourne Ports. There is more detail below on these matters.

### **3. Social Events**

The call is still out for any good social event organisers out there: we'd be keen to have a social committee. Our thoughts are to try to have a regular get together time and venue so that people can pop along and stay in touch – let us know your thoughts.

We invited unChain members to see a great film about planning issues, *Human Scale*, at ACMI on 4 July (with dinner afterwards). Feel free to join.

On 9 August Elwood College is holding a fundraiser at Riva featuring great music from Ross Wilson and the Peaceniks. A number of unChain members intend to go along to socialise. To book go to:

<http://www.trybooking.com/Booking/BookingEventSummary.aspx?eid=49724>

### **4. Membership**

Membership renewals for the year 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 are now due. The subscription is \$20. There are currently 70 registered members of Unchain and so we are hoping most of you will renew and remain involved.

You can pay:

By direct deposit into our ANZ bank account

unChain Inc

BSB 013 427

CMA – 278146477

(make sure you include your name)

By cash or cheque

unChain Inc

c/- Peter Holland

64 Chaucer St

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### **To Contact an unChain councillor or the unChain President:**

- Cr Jane Touzeau – 0432 287 634, [jtouzeau@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:jtouzeau@portphillip.vic.gov.au)
- Cr Serge Thomann – 0432 299 372 [sthomann@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:sthomann@portphillip.vic.gov.au)
- Cr Vanessa Huxley - 0406 890 739; [vhuxley@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:vhuxley@portphillip.vic.gov.au)
- Catherine Sharples, unChain President - 0421 221 242, [unchaininc@gmail.com](mailto:unchaininc@gmail.com)

## **5. New Port Phillip CEO and a new head of Environment and Planning**

Council has appointed a new CEO. In the unChain policy for the 2012 municipal elections we said:

*The Council appointed a new CEO in 2009 who oversaw well managed and coherent change throughout the organisation. The task for the next Council 2012-2016 is to build on the work that has been done. An important aspect of this will be the appointment of a new CEO as the current CEO is retiring at the time of the 2012 election. Appointment of a CEO is the most important decision a Council can make.*

In April 2013 the Council appointed a new CEO, Tracey Slatter, following a comprehensive search for the best possible candidate. Tracey Slatter is a former CEO of Otway Shire and Senior Executive in the Victorian Public Service with the Transport Accident Commission. unChain looks forward to working with the new CEO.

Another important new appointment will be the Head of the Environment and Planning Division. He or she will be a key person in many matters such as the St Kilda Triangle, Fishermans Bend and the Port Melbourne foreshore.

## **6. The St Kilda Triangle**

An unChain subcommittee has been formed for the St Kilda Triangle Development. There are two aspects live at present: an Amendment to the Planning Scheme and project management.

Council has two 'hats'. One hat is as the responsible authority. In March 2013 the Council endorsed a proposed planning scheme of amendment to implement the St Kilda Triangle vision it developed last year. (Amendment C106). unChain made a submission on this, which is available on our website. The next step is a Panel hearing in October which will consider submissions and report to the Minister.

The unChain submission on the Planning Scheme amendment was made in June 2103. It was broadly supportive of the *St Kilda Triangle 2012* and Amendment C106. However it was submitted that Amendment C106 must allow the responsible authority sufficient flexibility to enable it to best achieve the vision promised in *St Kilda Triangle 2012*. In particular flexibility may be required in considering:

- The new building behind the Palais
- The new building beside the Palais
- The link to the foreshore by building over Jacka Boulevard
- Traffic flows and car parking

CAPP have made a similar submission. unChain will make a submission to the Panel Hearing in October but meanwhile will work with Councillors and

officers to determine whether the current Amendment does allow the Council the flexibility that it will need in the future.

The second 'hat' that the Council has regarding the St Kilda Triangle is as the proponent for the re-development. It is in this area that Council does not have the capacity and expertise. In 2010 the Ombudsman, George Brouwer, severely criticised the City of Port Phillip over the failed re-development of the St Kilda Triangle. He said: 'I question whether the City of Port Phillip had the capacity or the expertise to manage the tender'.

unChain members with expertise in project management prepared a detailed paper for Council on how significant projects are done – this is a set of skills that the Council does not have. This has been presented to Councillors and Council officers.

unChain also made a submission on the draft Council budget in June. Originally there was only \$185,000 in the draft budget for the project management of the Triangle. This was inadequate. Our unChain experts estimated that it should cost about \$1 million over 3 years to manage the project. unChain's submission was effective and the allocation for the project management of the Triangle in 2013/4 was raised to \$300,000.

## **7. Council Budget**

In our policy document for the 2012 Council elections we said:

*It is the responsibility of the elected Councillors to ensure that the level of rates imposed on ratepayers is not too high and that ratepayers are getting good value for the rates that they are paying.*

In June 2013 the Council finalised its budget for the 2013.14 year. The Budget includes an increase in its rates of 4.5% which remains below the Victorian metropolitan council average of 4.9%. The Council said:

*The 2013/14 Budget contains capital works funding in excess of \$29 million including \$13.4 million for roads, \$11million for buildings, and \$4 million for parks and open spaces. This expenditure includes continuation of major capital projects including Liardet St Family and Children's Centre, significant facilities upgrades at Northport Oval, Emerald Hill Library and Heritage Centre, Gasworks Arts Park and Alma Park. The Budget maintains the focus on the future and the need to adapt to a different climate with \$4.36 million in initiatives that support Council and community action to reduce energy consumption and emissions. A further \$1.43 million will be spent on drainage to cope with higher run off and mitigate flooding.*

## **8. The No.96 project - Yarra Trams proposals for Fitzroy and Acland Streets**

Yarra Trams are proposing significant changes for Fitzroy and Acland Streets. The aim is to reduce the time of the trip and allow the 96 tram runs every four minutes. To enable this they are proposing works on Acland St and to replace the no 133 Fitzroy St tramstop on the beach side of the Grey St intersection with a super-stop to the City side of the intersection. unChain has always supported public transport. However the proposals and the processes raise significant concerns.

The consultation process on the proposals has been a disgrace. Yarra Trams seem to believe that it can ram through the changes it wants to achieve its ends and ignore any other interests. The Council has no power to veto the proposals but Yarra Trams and Public Transport Victoria have to get the approval of the Minister. So to change any undesirable proposals will require a campaign by the community and the Council.

The issues in Acland St involve whether it is appropriate to turn all or part of the St into a mall with no cars but only the 96 trams, loss of over 50 car parks, loss of Palm trees, lack of consideration of a full range of alternatives, impact on shops, impact on traffic flows in the area.

The issues in Fitzroy St include the impact on access to the School and the Bowling Club car park, impact on congestion in Fitzroy St, impact on local residents and traders and, again, the lack of consideration of a full range of alternatives.

It appears the proposals have not been planned as part of a 'big picture' but are designed in small parts with Yarra trams KPI's in mind. Catherine Sharples has met with the principal of St Kilda Park Primary School and the school is writing a response indicating their objection to the 2 proposals. Unchain will be looking to engage the community on this matter and send a response to the Minister. We encourage look at what is proposed - see <http://ptv.vic.gov.au/projects/trams/route-96-project/>.

Please let us know what you think [unchaininc@gmail.com](mailto:unchaininc@gmail.com). The unChain committee and Councillors will engage the community to make sure that they can have an effective voice on this issue.

## **9. Linden Gallery**

unChain Councillor Vanessa Huxley is the Council representative on the board of St Kilda's Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts. The gallery is one of Melbourne's oldest council-funded art galleries and has a reputation for quality exhibitions. It is well known for its annual postcard exhibition. This was the centre of controversy this quarter.

The gallery mounted the 'Like Mike' exhibition that honoured boundary-pushing Australian artist Mike Brown, who was convicted of obscenity in 1966. In May 2013 Victoria Police raided the gallery and removed some of artist Paul Yore's work after a complaint about allegedly pornographic images. The

gallery had a notice saying the exhibition "may not be suitable for children", and parts of it may be offensive, but that 'we leave viewing to your discretion'.

The gallery responded by closing the gallery for some weeks, leaving works by seven other artists behind locked doors and sparking accusations of censorship. What should the gallery have done? This was what the Board decided:

*We acknowledge that questions have been asked about our response to this matter and are acutely aware of the concerns of the community and of those who have had difficulty understanding our decision to temporarily close the gallery and seek classification for the work ... We hope it can be appreciated that this has been a complex matter, where we have tried to find the right balance in managing our artistic, legal and moral responsibilities. Indeed, some observers have considered that we haven't always got this balance right. However, we can assure everyone that while it may not always be evident externally, we have been working tirelessly to resolve all the issues in a timely and appropriate way as well as manage the concerns of all the artists and our stakeholders. The exhibition has re-opened and we will be extending our opening hours in the hope that as many people as possible will come and see this amazing exhibition. We hope that you have the opportunity to come and take a look and make your own assessment about the artistic merit of the work.*

## **10. The St Kilda Festival**

In our policy document for the 2012 election, unChain said:

*The St Kilda Festival was started thirty years ago, largely aimed at dispelling the disreputable reputation St Kilda had at that time ... The current Council has taken significant steps to improve the festival from the perspective of local residents. Measures have included improved cleaning up, earlier finishing times, noise control, a wider range of activities to make the festival more family-friendly, controls on drunkenness, and resident participation in decision-making. It is important that these improvements in management continue and there be increasing local content ... The Festival is under threat because it has limited funding ... unChain believes there should be a substantial increase in the level of State government contributions to the St Kilda festival. unChain also believes that the right sponsor(s) will be able to offset a significant proportion of the costs of the Festival. If however, in this post/ongoing "GFC" environment, finding significant sponsorship proves problematic, the Council would have to consider other models. This would be done in full consultation with music industry representatives, musicians and operators, residents, various bodies like the traders associations and the SK Tourism Association.*

In June the Council decided to save the Festival in 2014 by adopting a different funding mix. The cost to ratepayers was \$1.6 million in 2013 and this

was not an acceptable level for the future. The alternative was to cease the Festival in 2014.

Council has decided on a new funding model for the Festival that will increase revenue through various means. These include:

- An updated sponsorship strategy that includes managed alcohol sponsorships.
- Review of fees and sales.
- Introduction of ticketed entertainment events.
- Financial contributions from those enjoying the benefits of the Festival including patrons and beneficiaries.
- Fundraising events including benefit concerts.

The unChain Councillors have provided strong support for saving the Festival. Without them, it would have been stopped. The Council has not made a final decision on a particular funding mix – what sponsors to accept, on what terms, how much to charge for ticketed events, how to get a contribution from attendees etc. This is what the Council will be working on in the future,

## **11. The Marina Reserve and Skate Park**

The Marina Reserve at St Kilda has proved to be a great success. It is important to note that it is not just a skate park. The skating facilities have been very successful including the anti-graffiti campaign. The Reserve also has new barbeque facilities and children's playground. It also remains an off-leach area for dogs.

There is an Advisory Committee with significant unChain involvement. unChain Councillor Serge Thomann is the Chair, unChain Councillor Vanessa Huxley is a member, unChain Vice President Peter Holland is the representative of the dog owners and unChain member Jane Polenti is a representative for families. If you have suggestions, contact Peter on 0411 470 651 or [hollandp@me.com](mailto:hollandp@me.com).

## **12. Flood control especially for the Elwood canal**

For unChain Councillor Jane Touzeau, flood control, especially for the Elwood canal, has been a major concern. In our policy document for the 2012 election, unChain said:

*Flash flooding of the Elwood canal is a major local issue that requires joint action by the State government, Melbourne Water, Port Phillip Council and neighbouring Councils. In February 2011 we suffered a major flood. (2010/11 was the wettest 2-year period on record). There have been similar floods in previous decades, and various interventions, especially the Head St diversion, have reduced incidences of flooding in Elwood ... A Flood Management Plan has been developed together with Melbourne Water and will be kept alive*

*by the incorporation and completion of annual actions ... We must also have the co-operation of the State government and neighbouring Councils ... A significant issue is to reduce the flow of water by various water sensitive urban design measures, such as diversion of water into wetlands and other sites throughout the catchment. These, and other engineering solutions, would require support from Melbourne Water and the state government.*

In April the Municipal Association of Victoria released a report (Port Phillip Bay Coastal Adaptation Pathways project) showing that timely coastal adaptation will help Port Phillip residents prepare for flooding. Even under the worst-possible scenarios modelled, the report confirms that with timely adaptation actions, residents are economically better off to stay in these areas. Case studies from five urban areas around Port Phillip Bay were used to test the economic analyses, including Elwood Canal. An important future step is for the ten bayside councils and the state government to achieve a comprehensive coastal hazards vulnerability assessment for Port Phillip Bay.

In the meantime Melbourne water, which is the catchment management authority for the elster creek catchment, has commissioned a study of the entire catchment. This has yet to be finalised and released.

Council in its 2013/14 budget allocated a further \$1.43 million to be spent on drainage and water sensitive urban design.

### **13. Balaclava Station**

In our policy document for the 2012 election, unChain said:

*'There are two important strategic opportunities in Carlisle Street. One is the Balaclava Station Project and the other is the Supermarket Renewal Project. It is important to get both of these right'.*

In June we saw the start of the \$13 million upgrade to the Balaclava station. The Premier turned the sod and unChain Councillor Vanessa Huxley attended the ceremony since the Balaclava station is in her ward. Over 3000 residents use the station each day. The upgrade will include better waiting areas, accessible toilets, CCTV, better lighting and a two-tiered ramp which will be accessible for people with disabilities. Also in the coming budget Council has committed \$400,000 to improving the quality of the connections from Carlisle Street to the station.

### **14. The Grand Prix in Albert Park**

In the unChain policy document for the 2012 election we said:

*'unChain believes that our largest park is not the appropriate site for a Grand Prix ...The Grand Prix has a significant impact on local residents, schools and traders. There is disruption for months to park*

*users, especially with respect to community sporting facilities. This disruption gets worse every year as more and more park users are displaced ... There is also a significant financial cost to the Victorian taxpayer ... The Victorian Auditor-General's peer reviewed cost benefit analysis found the GP is a net loser for Victoria and his office found there is no evidence of extra tourists coming to Melbourne because a grand prix is held here. The Grand Prix is awash with a sea of red. It has over \$250 million of accumulated losses, and the real cost to the Victorian taxpayer would be far greater if all the government subsidies were included. In addition a majority of local businesses surveyed in 1996, 1998 and 2005 either suffered a decrease in trade or experienced no change during the grand prix period ... Are there not better ways for the State government to spend over \$50 million dollars each year? How many schools, hospitals, aged care facilities and flood interventions could be built with this money?*

In this June quarter, the Save Albert Park (SAP) group drafted an open letter to the premier, Denis Napthine. unChain was a co-signatory. The letter said:

*We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the State Government's apparent intention to extend the F1 grand prix contract beyond 2015. Our reasons encompass the environmental and resident amenity effects of staging the event in Albert Park Reserve, together with public health and civil rights issues, but here we emphasise the financial and economic aspects of the matter ... In the interests of openness and accountability can you advise what measures will be taken to determine whether or not the grand prix provides value for money for Victoria? ... Will these measures and the conclusions reached be made public before any decision is made to extend the grand prix contract? ... Finally, we seek your views on the possibility of relocating the grand prix to a purpose-built motor sport facility. You will be aware that the Linfox-owned site next to the Avalon airport has been offered for this purpose, in connection with a feasibility study undertaken by the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport (CAMS). Such a facility would provide the opportunity for your Government to rid itself of the ideological anomaly of operating a socialised motor racing business. It would also create real, full-time jobs, and earn public gratitude for the return of Albert Park Reserve to the citizens of Melbourne for its proper purpose, that of providing unrestricted year-round access for sporting and passive recreation.*

## **15. Fishermans Bend**

Fishermans Bend was a major part of our submission in March 2013 on the new Melbourne metropolitan strategy. The government's strategy is for an expanded central city zone that has a potential for 220,000 new residents and 200,000 new workers. Most of this is centred on Fishermans Bend (80,000

new residents) and neighbouring Southbank (another 80,000 residents). In contrast Docklands has 'only' 15,000 residents.

unChain submitted that the Southbank and Docklands precincts have not been satisfactory developments. If the community believes that a similar outcome is in store for Fishermans Bend, there will be significant opposition. However if the community can see that lessons have been learnt, then there should be a significant level of support. Our submission said:

*unChain submits that we must learn from the experience of Southbank and Docklands in planning for Fishermans Bend. Already there are concerns because the government has rezoned the area before a master plan, planning controls or developer's infrastructure levy had been drafted ...*

*The issue is whether it is already too late. There are reportedly plans for at least 17 towers in the Montague section of Fishermans Bend alone. These will add at least 4500 apartments in a small section of Fishermans bend ...*

*We should aim to build a community at Fishermans Bend, not just houses and apartments. There should be a high-density precinct, but this does not necessarily mean high rise buildings. There should be limits on the Minister's unfettered discretion. It is submitted that there should be a mandatory height limit and provisions on active street levels, set-backs and controls on exterior design. At the very least there should be a Master Plan that has involved substantial community involvement. Because it is an industrial area, there are few residential neighbours and so there will be less scrutiny of individual proposals. This makes it doubly important to have a well-thought out Master Plan.*

*Fishermans Bend should aim to provide affordable housing, with a mix of housing tenures and a mix of people. Community infrastructure such as child-care centres, schools, parks, transport links and health services must be included from the outset. There must be stronger compliance on height controls, rejuvenated streetscapes, more public spaces, encouragement of walking, cycling and public transport and the provision of better local amenities for residents, workers and visitors. We should perhaps be aiming at a 'creative' industries precinct, perhaps anchored by a university campus.*

unChain is cautiously optimistic that a satisfactory master Plan will be developed and that the lessons from Docklands and Southbank have been learned. Places Victoria is coordinating the planning for the area and there is a Project Control Group with input from the City of Port Phillip and the City of Melbourne.

unChain attended Council meetings in the June quarter and asked for an update on the Master Plan. We have been informed that the development is going satisfactorily and that the expertise of the City of Port Phillip has been

very influential in the development of the Master Plan. We asked Council for public consultation on the draft Master Plan as soon as possible. We anticipate that this will be released in the next month.

## **16. Schools in South Melbourne and Port Melbourne**

In our policy document for the 2012 municipal elections we said:

*The Creative City needs an educated population, however the population growth in the inner city is creating a critical shortage of and the State government has delayed building new primary schools. Foolishly, successive governments have closed schools and sold the sites. Architect Charles Webb constructed the Dorcas Street Primary School in 1880. It was closed in 1996. The JH Boyd Girls School site was sold in 2005. Now we need new schools to service our growing population. Construction of new primary schools must commence immediately to cater for population growth in Port Melbourne, Fisherman's Bend, St Kilda Road, South Melbourne and Southbank.*

In Council's budget submission to the state government, the top priority was a new school in South Melbourne. This was successful. In May 2013 the Minister for Education Martin Dixon announced funding in the state budget to purchase land in Ferrars Street, South Melbourne for a new primary school. The Minister is also funding a two-story relocatable classroom to address the current over-crowding at Port Melbourne Primary School.

## **17. Emerald Hill precinct and the Library & Heritage Centre forecourt**

In June the Council received submissions on the draft design for the Emerald Hill precinct. This involves improvements and future uses for key assets at Emerald Hill including the South Melbourne Town Hall.

unChain candidate in the 2012 elections for the Emerald Hill ward, Richard Roberts, made a verbal submission to Council. He was concerned that the proposal was bad for business and parking and that the parking surveys don't stand up. He said that the money would be much better spent on enhancing the shopping area around South Melbourne Markets, replacing worn footpaths and removing graffiti. The Council is considering these submissions.

## **18. Port Melbourne Foreshore**

The future of height controls in the Port Melbourne foreshore is a significant issue for residents. In Port Melbourne, a decade ago, a set of height controls that balanced the interests of developers and the community was developed. As part of the overall Beacon Cove development there was a restrictive covenant imposing a three storey height limit on Waterfront Place and a

commitment to provide various community services there.

Former unChain President Serge Thomann ran as a candidate in the 2010 state elections. He 'blew the whistle' – revealing that the then Minister for Planning, Justin Madden, had received a proposal for a 28-storey tower in Port Melbourne consisting of a hotel, residential and retail precinct. The proposal became known as "the sheik's tower". The Age's investigatory reporter wrote that 'A senior government source said that the sheik's development company had received a 'nod and a wink' that approval would be granted by the Department of Planning'. However the defeat of the Brumby government in the 2010 elections meant that this did not happen.

After the 2010 elections, the new State government returned authority over the site to the Port Phillip Council. The Council resolved to prepare a draft Urban Development Framework (UDF) for the Port Melbourne foreshore. unChain made a number of submissions. Council has separated the new UDF for the Port Melbourne foreshore and the new provisions in the planning scheme for the Waterfront Place site. The Council refused an application by the developer of Waterfront Place and this is now at VCAT. What should the height limit be on Waterfront Place. One argument is that the developer bought the site with a well-thought out height limit of three stories so it is not entitled to anything greater. Another is that a limit up to 10 stories may be appropriate – but should this be mandatory?

## **19. Referendum on Local Government**

The Australian Constitution does not mention local government. A federal parliamentary committee has recommended that a referendum be held on this issue. The committee recommended the referendum be held at the same time as the forthcoming federal election.

Local government relies on a range of funding sources, including its own revenue measures, as well as grants from state and territory governments, and the Commonwealth. In 2009, a High Court decision (the *Pape* case) put into serious doubt the Federal Government's ability to directly fund local government projects. A constitutional referendum empowering the Commonwealth to directly fund local government would put beyond doubt its ability to fund vital local projects. However, there are various arguments against direct funding of local councils.

The Port Phillip Council and unChain will be urging voters to vote YES on the referendum question.

## **20. unChain and the Federal election in 2013.**

A questionnaire has been drafted to survey the Federal election candidates for Melbourne Ports. The survey was sent to all members for comment. The

survey has now been finalised and has been sent to the three candidates, Michael Danby (Labor), Kevin Ekendahl (Liberal) and Ann Birrell (Greens). The survey will also be sent to the other candidates when they are known after close of nominations.

The three candidates from the major parties have three weeks to work out their replies. These replies will be put on the unChain web unedited. Then members of unChain will be given two weeks to comment on the candidates' replies. A final assessment of the candidates on their position on local issues will be made by the executive of unChain, taking into account assessments made by members. The unChain Councillors will not participate in the executive's assessment of the candidates' replies. The unChain assessment will be then put onto our website. Individual members may also request for their individual assessment of the candidates' responses to be put onto the unChain website.

We know that sometimes a candidate may not agree with the party position and may want to work to change this. Therefore we will assess the individual candidates' replies and track record, but also his or her party's policies and track record. If a candidate does not reply, we will still assess him or her based on individual track records and parties' performance and policies.