If you were to be successfully elected in October 2019, name two ‘things’ that you would be most proud to say that you had achieved by the end of the triennium (2019-2022)?

Explain:

1. Transform the Tauranga City Council into a responsive, efficient and trusted organisation that makes pragmatically sound decisions and delivers on its promises. Without this, Tauranga will continue to fail on its delivery of major projects. I will work with, and support, our city Chief Executive to make any necessary changes and ensure Councillors are aligned in their support of necessary cultural change.

2. Greater Regional Cooperation – is critically important for planned growth and to access central government funding. Tauranga is the epicentre of business, culture, horticultural and marine science for the Region. However, its relationships with surrounding Councils and central government is lacking. Infrastructure funding is critical for Tauranga; we can no longer accept a city and region whose roads are locked up. We also need a voice on the environment, and we need to foster our leadership position as New Zealand’s epicentre for entrepreneurship & investment.

What is your ideal structure of local government in the Western BOP? Does this include amalgamation? Does it include appointed independent directors (similar to the DHB model)? And, is this topic an important priority for you?

Tauranga, New Zealand’s fifth largest city, is of strategic importance to our region and the country. We deserve better leadership to build stronger regional and government cooperation and transformative private sector partnerships.

Amalgamation must be on the table for discussion. This will need to be led by a strong and experienced leader with vision and who will take responsibility for leading cross-council collaboration to create solid working partnerships across our city, district and regional council.

The option of including independent directors is a discussion we should be having. The current system, which allows anyone to stand for council
or Mayor, irrespective of capabilities and proven past experience, is a model that could be evolved to include Independent Directors with a specialised skillset. This would bring greater governance expertise and capability to council, a skill—which appears to be very lacking in the current environment.

As the investment arm of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Quayside is essentially the holder of a significant proportion of community assets through its majority shareholding of the Port of Tauranga. While it is responsible for protecting and growing these assets, it is also responsible for supporting the community through the use of these assets.

I believe there is an opportunity to support key community infrastructure projects better than is currently evident. One example is the infrastructure fund that the Bay of Plenty Regional Council established that invested in the University of Waikato campus, marine precinct, the harbour work at Opotiki and Scion research in Rotorua. More of this strategic investment should happen, obviously based on strong business cases in terms of the return to the community.

Tauranga is the Bay of Plenty region’s epicentre for innovation, entrepreneurship and investment. It is time we embraced new ways to attract investment into the city and to fund major projects rather than the blunt instrument of continual rates rises, which is inefficient and unacceptable to residents, as it adds further debt to an already over-burdened TCC balance sheet.

Tauranga is in desperate need of affordable (intensified medium-rise) housing, greater infrastructure to reduce congestion, and to ensure the three waters and sewage system remains current, while planning for population growth.

Property rates and user charges are failing. Central government doesn’t have the resources to fund councils adequately, and TCC’s balance sheet is already overburdened. However, $150 billion of NZ Superannuation capital, dedicated to infrastructure, is available for investment. A fiscally responsible Mayor, with existing government relationships, must lead this paradigm shift.
What are your priorities for infrastructure investment in the Western BOP sub-region during the next ten years?

I have recently conducted an online survey which, at the time of writing this response, had reached over 5,000 residents, and asked that they rank those things most important to them in order of preference. Unsurprisingly, transport and roading ranked as number one (26.3% respondents), followed by rates, growth and debt (21.1%) at number two. So, the issue of infrastructure investment is key to many residents.

Therefore, my priorities are:

- Roading solutions and outcomes across the region to fix the current gridlock and to ensure we are developing arterial routes aligned to planned growth and in advance of housing and commercial developments. The sequencing of works is very important.
- Multi-modal transportation initiatives
- Affordable housing
- Strong regional and central government partnerships to access funding and deliver some of our core infrastructure requirements via PPP and PPI.

Do you agree that the Western BOP sub-region has transport issues? If elected, what are your priorities to address the sub-region’s immediate and long-term transport needs?

This is a significant issue and Greater Regional Cooperation has been one of my key platforms from the outset. In a recent survey I conducted, transport and roading ranks as the number one issue. We already know this so why is it acceptable for the councillors to say, “it is what it is”? Through poor planning, lack of regional cooperation and due to an ineffective council, Tauranga does not have an effective working relationship with Central Government and NZTA, hence the reactive position in which we find ourselves on transport issues.

We need effective roading solutions across the region to fix the gridlock, ensuring greater access to arterial routes, which much be aligned to planned growth in advance of housing and commercial developments, and we need further investigation into multi-modal transportation options. I believe we need a pragmatically workable strategy and ensure its delivery is effective and within budget.

What are your plans for ensuring adequate zoning and servicing of affordable residential, commercial and industrial land supply over the next ten years?

Critical to the future of well managed growth, is ensuring areas such as Te Tumu, Wairakei and Tauriko come on stream efficiently. To do so means we must collaborate closely with Iwi in respect of Maori land issues and we simply must
have better consultation and collaboration with our residents.

Well managed intensification of the Te Papa peninsula (Cameron Rd) for residential dwellings and expediting the development of the Rangiuru Business Park, planned since 2003, must be tackled. We should potentially look to charge development contributions on a per hectare basis so developers are incentivised to build more compactly and more efficiently, and we need to ensure our City Plan enables this.

To facilitate this, SmartGrowth, our long-term plan looking out 20 plus years, must be held to account. As your Mayor, I will work with the TCC Chief Executive to ensure we deliver better on these critical development projects.

Quick Poll: which of the following tourism related projects would you support contributing (Regional/City/District) Council resources/funds towards:

- Airport expansion / new airport
- Major international hotel
- Major conference/convention centre
- Regional museum
- Sports stadium
- Public access to Omanawa Falls

None, council resources should not contribute to tourism-related projects

Other: Further to the above, I would want to see individual business cases on each of these developments to make a fully informed view including prioritising, timing and likely funding models. In my various Chair and Directorships, I have established a reputation for ensuring I have an intimate knowledge of business proposals to ensure I make a measured decisions. I believe this is where the current Elected Members do our city a disservice. If elected as Mayor I will ensure I am fully briefed within the first few weeks to ensure I can then give strong and concise leadership around decisions of this nature.

What is the (Regional/City/District) Council’s role in supporting the local tourism industry?

Tourism Bay of Plenty has developed a strong Regional destination management strategy which they are now tasked with executing. Protecting our natural resources and developing a more sustainable approach to our environment is pivotal to a responsible city. BOP tourism visitor spend is expected to increase by 60 percent over the next decade and it is vital we create enriching experiences for our tourists, while ensuring our natural wonderland is respected.
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| What is your position on the (Regional/City/District) Council’s rates policy in regards to targeted rates and/or commercial differentials on the local business and industrial community? | I note in recent Council chamber discussions this has once again been a topic of discussion pertaining to city centre streetscape works, as one example of council considering targeted rates to recover/share costs.  
Greater care in decision making must be taken though to ensure diligent consideration is given to the scope of benefits. I currently hold the view that if it solely benefits the business community, and establishes essential infrastructure to support/stimulate economic and business growth, then targeted/commercial rates should be considered.  
However, if the wider community also benefits it would be unfair to only charge the business community and expenditure should come from the general rate. I believe fairness and equity must be pillars of any policy making around these discussions. |
| What would you do to restore confidence in the regulatory services or building consent departments within the sub-region? | The council consenting process must protect home buyers. While it is important to ensure a commercially expedient consenting process, it is equally important to ensure the checks and balances are in place to prevent another Bella Vista fiasco from happening. Currently, the relationship between Policy and Compliance at TCC is fractured and in desperate need of repair.  
Opportunities exist to support developers who consistently provide thorough and accurate information during the consenting process by enabling them to fast track ‘known quantity developments’ of a similar type to those completed successfully. |
There are also opportunities to sort consent applications in terms of their importance, i.e. an important housing or commercial development should be triaged ahead of an alteration. Overall, the staff employed by council should have the expertise to determine regulatory outcomes and sufficient processes should be in place to ensure the outcomes are good for everyone.

TCC is one New Zealand’s least friendly business councils. The consistent message I get from the business community is that council needs to get out of the way and better enable businesses to enter and thrive in our city.

Downtown Tauranga is a CDB in crisis because of totally ineffective leadership; a lack of respect for the business sector is very evident. As an experienced executive, I will, in my first 100 days, establish a working group to engage and collaborate with the city’s business leaders to fully establish their needs. Working in silos, inside council chambers, and making decisions without proper consultation with the very communities for whom Council is making decisions, is not effective governance.

It’s time for a Mayor who can work with our city Chief Executive to transform TCC into a responsive, efficient and trusted organisation that makes pragmatically sound decisions and delivers on its promises.

I will bring a new level of leadership experience to the role of Mayor of Tauranga. My experience spans the private business sector at CEO, Director and Chairman level, government entities at both Director and Chair, Not-For-Profit and the Military.

My resume has been available on my website from the outset of my campaign and I encourage you to go to tenbypowell.co.nz/about and click on ‘my resume’.

My mix of commercial, government and Not-For-Profit experience has created a rich and deep cross-sector knowledge base enabling my ability to work effectively with diverse cultural and socio-economic groups domestically and internationally.

It would be an honour to serve you as the next Mayor of Tauranga. I am committed to bringing my senior executive and governance leadership
experience to fix and grow this outstanding city of ours.

This survey focuses on policy and leadership to unravel the mess in Tauranga, yet this question suggests voters should choose based on ‘local contribution’.

I respect those in our community who give back; I am one.

My contribution has not just been at a local level; I’ve contributed at a national and international level. Whilst my contenders might scoff at this, there is an undeniable flow-on effect to the local economy and community.

My contribution has been significant to the small business community in New Zealand, including the many SMEs in Tauranga. It includes the following ‘pro-bono work’, encompassing years of commitment: Over fifteen years advocacy for NZ’s small business economy; Chairing the Govt’s Small Business Council; service on the APEC Business Advisory Council, including Co-Chair of the Digital and innovation Working Group and Immediate past co-Chair of the SME Working Group; and the Govt’s Sector Work Place Engagement Programme.

Further to the Quick Poll on Tourism Related Projects above, I would want to see individual business cases on each of these developments to make a fully informed view including prioritising, timing and likely funding models. In my various Chair and Directorships, I have established a reputation for ensuring I have an intimate knowledge of business proposals to ensure I make a measured decisions. I believe this is where the current Elected Members do our city a disservice. If elected as Mayor I will ensure I am fully briefed within the first few weeks to ensure I can then give strong and concise leadership around decisions of this nature.

TAURANGA DESERVES BETTER LEADERSHIP