Dear Christine,

I support your organisation, its goals and aims. Based  on your principles of “resisting the homogenization and globalization of towns around the globe” and “protecting the environment”, I aim to fight to preserve Strathalbyn’s (in particular) and the whole Alexandrina Council’s area heritage, beauty and uniqueness. At the same time I want to see the town flourish and will support sustainable and appropriate development which is not at the expense of existing businesses.

Technology and all that ‘modern’ living has brought us has been embraced by all who love labour saving devices and convenience. However it has come at a huge cost to the environment and for waste management because we became producers and consumers without any thought or responsibility for the consequences.

In order to move people in the right direction with regard to rubbish and recycling, and to get them participating, I feel we need education to provide understanding, a better knowledge of the waste problem which should provide motivation to participate. People need information about what they are using. Coffee shops should make coffee in a cup provided by the customer and if takeaway cups are used they should be bio-degradable from a replenishable source. No more plastic straws, plates, coffee cups etc. No Styrofoam coffee cups.

Recycle facilities need to be readily available and easy to use. Retailers who sell products should be responsible for knowing their product and for recycling them. A scheme of a deposit refund for all recyclable items would be high on my list. People respond well to incentives and convenience. I am not an advocate of negative re-inforcement and feel that, given easy accessable opportunity to recycle, most people will respond well.

Another big issue is the amount of packaging thrown in bins due to changing shopping habits with online shopping being delivered. It is time (world wide) to produce re-useable packaging with deposit on return. The post office is making a lot of money and needs to take responsibility back for recycling the packaging and for the production of reusable postage packages.

I understand that you are interested in the views of candidates but recycling is a very big field and answering your specific questions is difficult.

Never-the-less for near future changes I would put forward in Council:

1.     The phasing out of plastic which can be replaced with bio-degradable items from a replenishable source. I want facilities and incentives provided by all coffee shops for people to provide their own re-useable coffee mugs. Shops to sell only biodegradable bags.

2.     The fortnightly bin collection, which is designed to make more people recycle and to save money, would be greatly enhanced if the green bin was not collected in the same week. If the green bin could be collected in the alternative week to the blue bin then people could have a weekly collection of their ‘smelly’ food stuffs which could go into either bin.

3.     On the incentive and encouragement side I want Council not to charge for green waste being delivered to the dump. After-all it is the raw product for making garden soil and mulch which is then sold.

For long term plans as a Councillor I would search out the knowledge and plans by the experts and see how their ideas could be incorporated in the Alexandrina Council area.

One problem with recycling is the cost of water and electricity which often makes the recycled product dearer than new products and damaged the environment as well.  This and many other aspects to this complicated problem of recycling need to be addressed and I fear are out of Local Council’s control.  However a culture of support would be encouraged and fostered.