

Monday 27th July 2020

Council Candidate Criticises Election Deferral Proposal

Whipstick Ward candidate Dave Fagg has criticised a proposal by the Municipal Association of Victoria to defer the Victorian local government elections.

The MAV has called on the Victorian Government to follow NSW's lead in deferring local government elections for 12 months. However, Mr Fagg said that such a move would weaken local democracy.

"Deferring local government elections is a backward step. We need to push forward despite the challenges that Covid-19 brings. Local democracy can't stop because of the pandemic. It is possible that we will be in exactly the same position in 12 months' time with regard to Covid-19. What then? Would we defer for another 12 months?"

Mr Fagg acknowledged Covid-19 created some obstacles, but did not think these warranted a deferral. He reminded residents that local council elections were held by postal vote, and therefore were safe to take part in.

He also addressed the MAV's concerns about candidates being able to campaign effectively.

"I have been able to hold street stalls with social distancing, and social media provides another way to engage with candidates. In addition, residents can always email or call me to discuss issues."

Mr Fagg has conducted a poll on deferring local council elections on his campaign Facebook page, and 75% of respondents called for the elections to remain on track for October 2020.

"The response to my poll demonstrates that people want to have their say even during this pandemic period. This is consistent with my street stalls and online community survey, which indicate that Bendigo residents want local solutions to local issues.

"In this unusual time, council elections are something that we can do continue to do safely."

#Ends

Mr Fagg is available for media interviews and photo opportunities upon request.

Contact details:

Dave Fagg

Phone: 0421 764 699

Email: dffagg@gmail.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/davefaggcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/davefaggcouncil)

Website: davefagg.com.au