Fight4Lyndoch rally statement: Hon Bev McArthur

Description

Statement from Bev McArthur MP – Member of the Legislative Council for Western Victoria Region.

I am sorry I cannot join you all in person today, but I am delighted to have this opportunity to pass on my message of support for this important rally.

I know how proud Warrnambool is of Lyndoch Living, and how central it has been to the community over the decades.

That pride – and affection – comes in part from the history of Lyndoch. It was established by local people, and community ownership and engagement has been an essential part of its successful growth in the decades since.

In my experience of life and of politics, the best outcomes always come when local communities come together to look after assets, and to deliver services and activities.

Services delivered directly by Government, or by organisations which divorce themselves from the community, cannot replicate it.

The right mix of voluntary and community-led concerns makes for a more resilient and self-reliant society. It's a spirit we have always had in regional Victoria, and one we should fight to keep.

Community ownership brings a real feeling of responsibility.

And that is what I feel this from all involved in the rally today and the wider campaign. Responsibility. Your effort isn't just about pride in a local asset, it comes from a real sense of concern to preserve and strengthen it.

So I congratulate all those concerned in organising the event today, and all of you attending.

I support the community's efforts to ensure Lyndoch Living remains a strong and respected aged care provider.

I understand the anxieties that recent months and years have brought.

Questions have been asked about the quality of care provided to residents, and about the number of quality and experienced staff who continue to leave Lyndoch.

The financial viability of the 10-year master plan and the new medical clinic also concern me.

And the decision not to allow members of the community to become general members of Lyndoch seems to encapsulate all of these problems.

These were local people, whose only motivation is to support and strengthen Lyndoch Living.

The exclusion is short-sighted. It is counterproductive.

And worst of all, there seems to have been no further response to these worries. There is still no evidence that they are being tackled.

So I entirely understand the profound worry you have, for the renewal of Lyndoch' Living's accreditation standards in August, and for its longer term financial future.

I raised the issues involved in the State Parliament last year, with my colleague Roma Britnell.

Unfortunately we found little willingness on the part of the State Government to become involved.

But we will certainly not let this drop. I call upon the Minister to meet the community to discuss these concerns.

And I urge the board of Lyndoch Living to try to repair the damage done to relations with local people.

The idea of formally constituting a community reference committee, made up of residents, families, and other people from the community with an interest in Lyndoch seems a good one to me.

This is not an empty idea. It is a serious proposition which deserves a response, and I will do what I can to pursue it in the months to come.

Finally, we all know how important Aged Care is, and what a difficult challenge it is to provide it well. It's not just about medicine, or about money, it needs a society wide solution.

Lyndoch Living has done a great job over the decades, and I pay tribute to all who have worked there – and to those who work there today with such dedication.

I know we are all grateful. And today really demonstrates that. This campaign is so heartening because it shows that so many of you are willing not just to show your gratitude with words, as is so often the case, but to come together and take action.

Thank you for coming. I strongly believe that your pride and community responsibility will ultimately safeguard Lyndoch, and preserve it for future generations.

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