



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Ruapehu District Council**

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**Date:** Thursday 15 September 2011

#### **COUNCIL RESIGNS FROM AVONLEA TRUST BOARD AND THROWS SUPPORT FULLY BEHIND NEW RUAPEHU 'INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES' PROPOSAL**

Ruapehu District Council (RDC) has resigned its position as a Trustee organisation on the Avonlea Trust Board along with Mayor Sue Morris as a Trustee, and has confirmed its commitment to supporting the Waikato District Health Board's (WDHB) new Integrated Health Services (IHS) proposal.

Mayor Morris said that Council had not taken the decision to end its 27 year involvement with the Avonlea Rest Home lightly but for some time we have held grave concerns over the quality of the governance and financial decision-making of the Avonlea Trust Board (the Trust).

"Council had made it very clear to the Avonlea Board that we held significant concerns for the financial risk that would be created by the Trust in progressing with its plans for an extension to Avonlea without consulting the community," she said.

"The WDHB has announced its firm intent to develop a new Integrated Health Service (IHS) and facilities at the Taumarunui Hospital site that will include aged care services of some 30 to 50 beds which the Trust has been reluctant to acknowledge."

"The Taumarunui Community Health Forum has endorsed the proposal and council is supporting the Forum."

"A business case for the Integrated Health Service has been developed and is currently going through due process with the WDHB with the intention of presenting the approved model to the Community Health Forum meeting in November."

Mayor Morris said it was very unfortunate that the Avonlea Board has put the community Trustees in this position but their failures of governance has made remaining on the Trust far too risky.

"Council firmly believes that the Ruapehu Integrated Health Service proposal provides the answer to many of the issues confronting the provision of health services in rural communities."

“Modern, state-of-the-art facilities are a prerequisite to providing the right atmosphere and environment to attract and retain health professionals and ensure the sustainability of high quality health services for our communities.”

“This proposal will put an end to the need for so many Taumarunui residents needing to leave town to receive specialist and other health care.”

Mayor Morris noted that it had been apparent for some time that our local health services have been under considerable strain and she believed that the Integrated Health Service proposal will provide many of the answers to the issues we are facing as a rural community.

The Integrated Health Service will see the establishment of aged residential and palliative care services that will be integrated with the existing Taumarunui Hospital.

Mayor Morris added that Council had also resolved to establish a Reference Group under the Mayor’s Taskforce for Development to work alongside the WDHB and the National Health Board to make the Ruapehu Integrated Health Services proposal a reality.

“I would encourage everyone who can to come along to the Community Health Forum meeting being held at 11:00am on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November at the Senior Citizens Club, Morero Terrace, Taumarunui, to be fully informed about this exciting new proposal.”

“The meeting will be promoted in local media closer to the time.”

SUE MORRIS  
**MAYOR JP**

SM : PRW