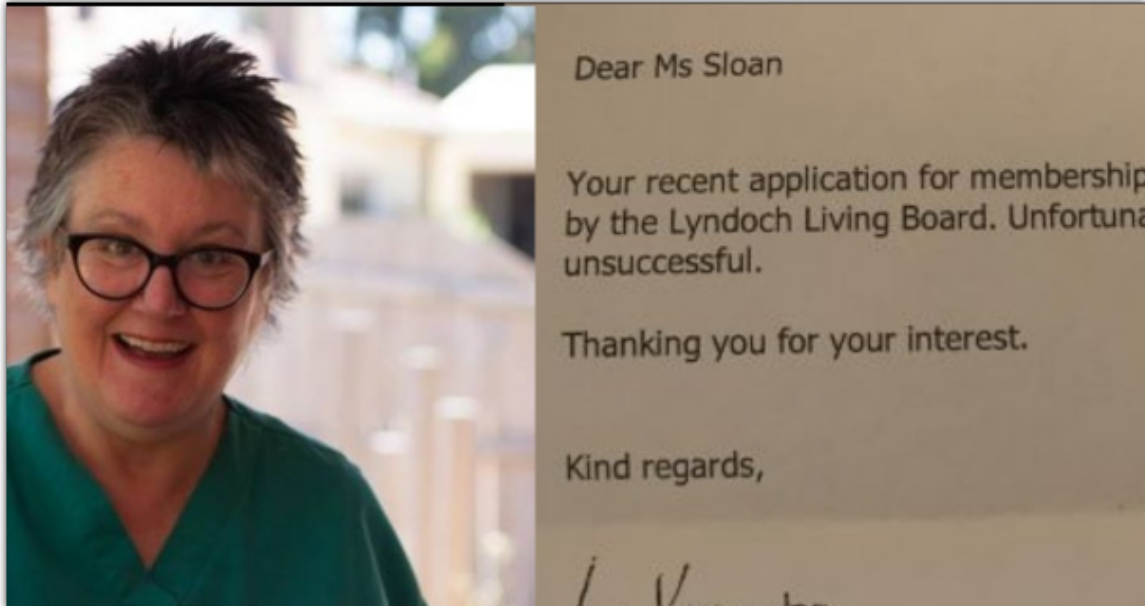


Lyndoch board kicks community to the kerb with mass rejections



Kate Sloan has worked in the South West Health Care emergency dept for 20 years, but is among those whose membership application has been rejected by the Lyndoch board.

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

And so it comes to this – the Lyndoch Living board has kicked the community to the kerb with a mass rejection of membership applications.

The official letters began arriving in the post today.

Among those rejected was Kate Sloan, (pictured).

Kate has worked in the emergency department of South West Health Care for 20 years, including 13 years as nurse unit manager.

She has been a registered nurse since 1986 and an endorsed

nurse practitioner for 14 years.

Kate also has post-graduate qualifications in emergency nursing, health management and forensic nursing.

She has hospital certifications in critical care and midwifery.

Kate wrote all of this on her Lyndoch membership application form, even though there was no box for such detail, to show the board that she might have something to offer as a member.

But Kate was considered not good enough.

She was not considered worthy of becoming a mere member, let alone ever considering becoming a board member.

The decision to reject Kate was made by Chair Sue Cassidy (hairstylist), Kerry Nelson (former CEO Mpower), Andrew Paton (WCC director City Growth), Ron Page (dairy industry), Kane Grant (Sinclair & Wilson accountant), Lorraine Mielnik (retired nursing lecturer) and retired academic Prof Rob Wallis*.

No reason has to be given, and the board provided none.

Kate is not alone.

From what is unfolding so far, all 115 applications from the community membership drive last month have been rejected.

The Lyndoch board has – so far – not found one single person from the applicants that they consider worthy of joining Lyndoch.

Not one.

In my view, this board no longer represents the community.

From its actions over the past 12 months and particularly now, it has proven it has disconnected completely from the

community that created and nurtured Lyndoch Living for more than 60 years and which still owns it.

That is disgraceful.

Instead of standing up and speaking up, the board is a part of Lyndoch's determination to avoid community scrutiny.

It is an accomplice – not an ally – as it watches the community lose control of a community owned asset.

Again, in my view, this is disgraceful.

The community is no longer needed or wanted on a rocket ship that has its nose turned toward the ground and is losing senior nursing staff at a time when it needs them most.

Perhaps, as some have been speculating, it's all a path to Lyndoch being privatised.

I used to think that was outlandish and would never happen. Now, I'm not so sure.

Because, until now, I believed that the community would never LET it happen.

I have come to realise the community has no – official – power to stop it.

The board has complete control over who it lets in, and who it keeps out, and you are being kept out.

And so come the next Annual General Meeting at Lyndoch on 26 October, there will be no invitation for you to join in.

I doubt you will even be told the date, which is why I am publishing it here.

There will be no questions from anyone outside of Lyndoch itself.

Anyone who hopes to nominate for the board, can't, because you have to be a member first.

The AGM will be an entirely closed shop and, if you are lucky, you might get to watch it on Youtube a week later.

Despite the odds, I am not giving up on Lyndoch without a fight.

Because Lyndoch doesn't belong to Sue, Andrew Prof Rob, Kane or Kerry. It doesn't belong to the Lyndoch CEO or executive, and it sure as #\$@\$ doesn't – yet – belong to BUPA.

It belongs to Warrnambool.

As a journalist, I can write about this as The Terrier.

But as a member of the community who has a strong connection to Lyndoch, like so many of us do, I will be once again writing to MPs Roma Britnell, Dan Tehan and Minister Luke Donnellan and asking for their intervention.

The community has done all it can to fight for our aged care home: we need help.

In the meantime, if you have had your application rejected and are willing to be mentioned here, please get in touch.

* The chair and board was contacted earlier today for comment. It had not responded by deadline.