

Why did the Lyndoch board act? And why they must go



All in this together: the toxic world of Lyndoch Living can only be cleansed with a clean sweep.

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

Lyndoch staff were today sent a message from board chair Sue Cassidy announcing that CEO Doreen Power is on "annual leave".

The chair may be hamstrung, legally, by what she can say at this point, but "annual leave" only creates confusion and uncertainty for staff.

The same statement was made to the local paper and explains nothing.

This is how Lyndoch has rolled for the past four years: full of uncertainty, mistrust, confusion and "who do we believe?".

So, in the face of this "who do we believe?", I again defer to my rock solid sources – who have never let me down these past four years while we have navigated a lonely and torrid

river toward the truth□.

I can tell you this: Ms Power went to work yesterday and was gone from her office by 4pm, apparently lugging two large bags. They were not suitcases packed for a trip to Port Douglas.

Also in the building yesterday afternoon were board Chair Ms Cassidy and Treasurer Kane Grant who met with the CEO.

They were not checking on her holiday plans.

What I understand is at that meeting, the CEO was given the option to resign, or an independent investigation would be launched into the many allegations surrounding her “management style”.

The board would then use the results of this investigation to make a decision on her future.

Such an investigation would protect the board from any claims by Ms Power of unfair dismissal, because – as we know – the board has fully supported the CEO and everything she has done.

Ms Power now has a choice while on “annual leave”: resign and, most likely, be paid out for the remainder of her contract OR remain on leave and be mired in a full-blown investigation.

But why did the board act NOW? Why not last week? Or last month? Or last year?

My sources tell me there was movement from □health worker unions and WorkSafe that was about to hit the board with a sledgehammer.

Worksafe and the State Health Minister have been watching Lyndoch closely, and my sources tell me that Wednesday, the day before Ms Power was confronted by the board members, another long list of complaints had been formally lodged with Worksafe by a lawyer.

There can only be so many complaints and allegations about over-work, intimidation, bullying, toxicity and pressure to “do certain things”, before the hammer swings.

The board has legal obligations around staff safety which it must uphold or it may face serious penalties as individuals, including fines and jail.

The State Minister also has a duty of care, as Lyndoch Living is contracted by the State Government to run its state-funded beds at Lyndoch.

This explains a lot.

We all know the seven board members didn't wake up yesterday morning and suddenly decide the CEO was not the same person they had backed all the way for seven years.

Just three weeks ago, the board refused to let our local MP speak confidentially at its board meeting about the CEO.

But yesterday, after our local MP spoke about the CEO in Parliament on Tuesday, they were all action stations.

Turn out they could be all running for the life boats because with WorkSafe now heavily on the case, it's either the CEO, or it could be them.

Trouble is, the board has lost community trust and credibility.

We lost faith in them a year ago, not only because they have continually backed the source of all the toxicity and troubles, but they have treated the community with contempt.

They must go.

All of those responsible for enabling the culture that has almost killed Lyndoch cannot be a part of its healing and its renewal.

The next Lyndoch AGM is in October: all board positions should be advertised now, for a complete spill and a new start.

We, as a community, deserve nothing less than a clean sweep.□