

## **Chair Report to the AGM of the Board of Trustees Lake Taupo Hospice Trust Inc**

**From: Alan Vane – Chairman**

**To: Board of Trustees**

**Dated: 21 November 2023**

1. It is my great pleasure to deliver what will be my ninth and last chair report to this AGM.
2. For those of you who do not know, I, along with three other present trustees, are not seeking reappointment as trustees for the years ahead. The time is right for new and dare I say younger faces to guide Lake Taupo Hospice Trust into the future.
3. There is a saying in the Māori world that you do not know where you are going unless you know where you have come from. To that end therefore, I would like to spend a few minutes reflecting on the journey that has been over the last nine years.
4. When I was first appointed as Chair of Trustees in 2014, Lake Taupo Hospice operated out of a residentially zoned house in Sunset Street, Taupo in overcrowded conditions. A fledgling second-hand retail shop operated out of a couple of garages on the site. Even in those days, central government funding of Hospice Services around New Zealand, and in particular for Lake Taupo Hospice, did not or was not going to cover costs of delivering the community-based Hospice services that Lake Taupo Hospice wanted to deliver. There was therefore heavy reliance on volunteers. Indeed, I formed and expressed the view that Lake Taupo Hospice in 2014 was still largely a clinically led, enthusiastic group of volunteers, but even by then, the world was changing.
5. Residential neighbours at Sunset Street started to complain to the Taupo District Council about the effects of Hospice operations at Sunset Street and the Council in response started to investigate the lawfulness of operations there – signalling the need to investigate alternative sites. Societal demands on individual's time were resulting in the face and nature of volunteering beginning to change. Central government funding of Hospice operations was not increasing at the same rate that costs were increasing, resulting in the prospect of service reductions – and that insufficient funding continues today - approximately 30% of costs only of operating Lake Taupo Hospice today are now funded by central government. At a societal level, competition for charitable money was starting to and has intensified, evidenced today by the fact that there are now at least four charities operating second-hand goods retail stores in the Taupo District competing for the charitable dollar.
6. Change was needed, and the need for that change was being generally experienced by Hospices across New Zealand. Nationwide, there began an evolution from clinically led Hospices to management-led Hospices, and Lake Taupo Hospice participated in that evolution.
7. At Lake Taupo Hospice, a CEO was appointed, and a paid management team evolved including a Finance Manager, a Volunteer Manager, a Retail Manager, and Clinical Services Manager. A move away from Sunset Street to Huka Falls Road occurred with the extraordinary generosity of Richard and Patience Izard. As part of

that, commercially viable second-hand goods retail operations were established at Totara Point Shopping Complex, and in Turangi, which have proven to be highly successful and have far exceeded expectations.

8. Year on year, as the proportion of government funding has declined in real terms, net profit from retail operations has increased to fill the gap – despite the increased competition among charities – and credit to that has to be given to Mark, our Retail Manager and his large, enthusiastic, and dedicated team of volunteers – without whom Lake Taupo Hospice would not have been or be in the financial position it has, in order to maintain the delivery of community-based Hospice services to the Taupo District Council without reduction in service levels.
9. But, at some point in time, the ability of Lake Taupo Hospice retail operations to fully fill the gap between costs and central government funding will likely lessen.
10. While at a national level Hospice NZ is diligently pursuing an Equity and Sustainability Project with central government, with the goal of obtaining central government funding for Hospice services around New Zealand, the reality is that there is likely to remain a significant shortfall between central government funding and costs of individual Hospices delivering Hospice services.
11. TO the extent that retail operations might not fully fill that gap, and recognising the competition that exists for charitable donations, the Board of Trustees of Lake Taupo Hospice Trust over the last several years has investigated and continues to investigate alternative funding sources. To that end, Lake Taupo Hospice has over the last several years employed a marketing manager who today is called the Community Relations and Sponsorship Manager. That role includes responsibility for events promoted by Lake Taupo Hospice, the most successful of which has been #Fabulous. Not only do such events raise significant sums of money for Lake Taupo Hospice, but they significantly raise public awareness of Hospice and the services which it provides. The added value to the sustainability of Lake Taupo Hospice which events provide cannot be underestimated.
12. Most recently, the evolution from being a clinically led organisation to a management led organisation has been further advanced by the folding of the Lake Taupo Development Trust into the Lake Taupo Hospice Trust, so that there is now one trust speaking with one voice on all matters affecting Lake Taupo Hospice and one trust providing for the strategic direction of Hospice services in the Lake Taupo District. That has been accompanied this year by a transfer of Lake Taupo Hospice operations to a special purpose charitable company, called Lake Taupo Hospice Limited, which is wholly owned by the Lake Taupo Hospice Trust Inc.
13. Throughout all of that evolutionary change, the clinical team at Lake Taupo Hospice has continued to provide top class palliative care services to the Lake Taupo community, ably supported by the Bereavement Team, and more recently by our support workers. The skill, expertise, and dedication of the clinical team over the years is gratefully acknowledged. Everyone involved in Lake Taupo Hospice is and should continue to be very proud of you, as is the Taupo community. Thank you on behalf of them.
14. Similarly, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who continue to selflessly contribute their time and resources to Lake Taupo Hospice - you are the saviours of Lake Taupo Hospice, because without you, the viability of Lake Taupo Hospice to continue to provide the services that it does will be threatened. Apart from that, your continued good humour makes Lake Taupo Hospice a happy place to be involved in.

15. Finally, a big thank you to present and past fellow trustees for your dedication, commitment, common sense, expertise, skill, and support that you have provided to Lake Taupo Hospice and to me over the last nine years. I have been honoured to lead such an outstanding group of people. So much for the past. What of the future?
16. Last AGM, I reported on the Equity and Sustainability Project initiated and being undertaken at national level by Hospice New Zealand. That has continued during 2023 and will likely continue into 2024. It is worth repeating what I said last year in that regard, that the goal of the Project is to be able to present to central government for adoption a new funding model for palliative care services across New Zealand that is equitable across all communities in New Zealand and sustainable for Hospices that will provide those services. At a broad conceptual level, the idea is that Hospices should be paid the same across New Zealand for the same services. To achieve that, it is proposed that core services be identified and defined, and that Hospices will be paid the same for those core services regardless of where they are situated in New Zealand. The smaller community Hospices such as Lake Taupo Hospice, Rotorua, and Eastern Bay of Plenty are advocating that in addition to core service funding, in order to provide equity and promote sustainability, there be additional payments made over and above the core service funding for rurality/remoteness, ethnicity, deprivation, and age i.e. to take account of matters specific to particular Hospices which do not apply to all. The working group within Hospice NZ which is progressing the Project have developed the concept of Hospice Regional Alliances.
17. That is occurring in the context of regionalisation of health services pursuant to reforms introduced by the Labour Government. Whether those reforms remain if the political environment changes, as the present outcome of the election indicates, remains to be seen. For the present though, the regional alliance proposals continue to be rolled out.
18. Present indications are that there should be cause for optimism by Lake Taupo Hospice about the outcomes for it of the Equity and Sustainability Project and the regional alliance proposals which in part implement it.
19. The Equity and Sustainability Project however is also being undertaken in the context of the tsunami of patients which is heading the way of Hospices across New Zealand as a result of the baby boomers hitting the health system all within a relatively short period of time.
20. That is going to challenge Hospice services generally and specifically with respect to funding and workforce capacity and capability. Innovative ways to deliver the present level of services are likely to be needed.
21. The outgoing Board of Trustees believes that the evolutionary changes which I have earlier described in this Report have and will position Lake Taupo Hospice well to face and find solutions to the challenges of the future, and in consequence, the Board of Trustees feels confident and optimistic about a successful future for Lake Taupo Hospice.
22. All that said, it remains for me to sincerely thank all present and past persons involved with Lake Taupo Hospice over the last nine years in making Lake Taupo Hospice the special place and organisation that it is, and I'm sure will continue to be – our clinical team, our management team, our volunteers, our benefactors and supporters, and our Board of Trustees.

23. All of you are to be applauded for your dedication, hard work, skills and expertise, professionalism, collegiality, friendliness, and tolerance of change. On behalf of the Taupo community in all its many facets, thank you, thank you. I have enjoyed the journey.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'AFS Vane', positioned above a horizontal line.

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**AFS Vane**  
**Chairman Lake Taupo Hospice Trust Inc**