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NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release

WAIHI HOME OWNERS OFFERED DEAL

Hauraki District Council tonight released details of a package to be offered to 27 private residential property owners affected by risk from the old abandoned mine workings.

Mayor Basil Morrison told more than 80 people at a meeting at Waihi that Government and the Newmont Waihi Operations had agreed to fund the package.

The market value of the 27 properties is around \$3 million.

Approval for Government's contribution to the package came from a meeting of a cabinet sub-committee in Wellington earlier in the day.

The first group of property owners to be offered the package are within the high, medium and low risk zones of the Royal and Empire Lodes and includes several properties on the margins of these zones.

Mr Morrison said the package provided the property owners an opportunity to accept full market value for their homes.

The market value would be based on valuation of properties prior to the release of the Risk Assessment report commissioned by the Council.

Property owners could also choose to have their homes relocated elsewhere in Waihi.

In addition to the physical cost of relocation, the owners would also receive an ex-gratia payment of \$2,000 and a further \$500 towards legal expenses, as provided for under the Public Works Act.

Mr Morrison said residents in the medium and low risk zones could also choose to remain in their homes and accept the risks involved.

The final option was for owners to reject the package and to consider independent action.

Properties sold are to be transferred into the ownership of the mining company with a longer term view of being incorporated for recreational purposes into the final mine closure plans.

The affected property owners are expected to receive individual offers shortly.

Mr Morrison acknowledged the help of Associate Minister on Energy, Harry Duynhoven, appointed by Government to manage negotiations with the District Council and the mining company.

He also thanked the mining company for its willingness to contribute to the package.

Meanwhile, council's general manager, Langley Cavers, said exploratory drilling is continuing above the Edward Lode where a further 33 properties are possibly affected.

Nineteen of these properties are in the high to medium risk zones, 12 of which are residential with 6 in private ownership. Five business properties are also involved.

Mr Cavers said that the future of these properties would not be known for several weeks.

For further information call:

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