

## Some Facts

The decision to close Seaton Pool was made by 10 Labour councillors at a Cabinet meeting on 29th November 2005. They based their decision on a report which contained fundamental errors. This has been the subject of complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman. Not one Labour councillor has publicly expressed concern at the closure.

Here are a few facts about Seaton Pool which people should know.....

- The Council claim that the RDA own Seaton Pool and will not renew the lease because they want to develop the site. However, the RDA have not ruled out a long term lease and say that it was Council's decision to close the pool. Correspondence between Plymouth City Council and the RDA (obtained under the Freedom of Information Act) indicates that, until recently, the RDA were discussing improvements to the Pool and considering expanding it into a Sports Centre.
- The Council claim that it will cost £1 million to keep Seaton Pool open. However, there is no evidence to substantiate this figure. There is also no evidence to suggest that there is an immediate need for closure. It is clear that no detailed survey work has been carried out and no attempts have been made to re-evaluate the £1m figure.
- The Council say that Seaton Pool generates a £160,000 loss every year. However, swimming pools are provided in the public sector because they need subsidising. Seaton Pool does not generate any more loss than equivalent facilities and £160K is a tiny fraction of the Council's budget. Other Councils in Devon & Cornwall have converted their pools into Charitable Trusts. This lowers the running costs by providing tax exemptions and also allows the Council to apply for Government grants. The Council have been asked to investigate this and have refused without explanation. There are other ways in which the Council could innovate to reduce the operating costs but they have also refused to consider these.
- The Council's own surveys show that there is a lack of public swimming facilities in Plymouth. The Local Plan (which contains planning policies for the whole city) contains policies which would prevent the RDA from developing Seaton Pool unless they built a new swimming pool in the same locality. The Council do not intend to use this power.
- The Council admit that opportunities for public swimming will reduce once Seaton pool closes. This is because the other swimming pools will have to accommodate the clubs displaced from Seaton. People who are used to swimming after work or at weekends (either at Seaton or at Central Park) will find their opportunities are severely reduced. The quality of public swimming is bound to reduce due to cramming.
- The Council intend to focus new jobs & employment in the Derriford area. Workers can access Seaton Pool in the mornings, during lunch-hour and in the evenings after work. When the pool shuts, it will be necessary to drive to Central Park to swim. This will either add to congestion/pollution or (more likely) act as a deterrent to swimming at all.
- Plymouth has an obesity problem. Consultants from Derriford Hospital have petitioned the Council about the pool closure because they are worried about the health impacts.