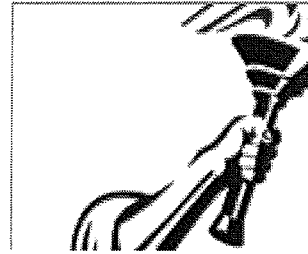


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PRESS RELEASE

Last-Minute Reprieve for Seaton Pool?

Tory Councillors are today calling for the imminent demolition of Seaton Pool to be stopped – because the **Government** has issued new proposals. Planning Minister Baroness Andrews from the Department for Communities and Local Government has announced that sports buildings will require planning permission before they can be demolished. She said *“Sports buildings play a vital role in ensuring our communities are active, healthy and enjoyable places to live. That is why local authorities should have the power to prevent their demolition in certain cases to conserve these important assets”*.

The effect of the guidance is to propose a change to the "general permitted development order" so that demolition of sports facilities requires planning permission, which is currently not the case. This allows bodies such as the Sports Council to make formal representations. Although the guidance has so far been issued in consultation form only, it nevertheless has formal status as a "material consideration" and signals the government's intentions.

Conservative Group Leader and Shadow Leader of the Council, Cllr. Vivien Pengelly, said: *“Although the Seaton Pool site is owned by the South West Regional Development Agency, they have to take account of planning requirements and the Government is now changing these. Seaton must not be demolished for the convenience of the RDA when Plymouth is currently in chaos over its plans for public swimming. I am calling on the Sports Council to make representations immediately.”*

Fellow Seaton campaigner and Conservative Councillor Dr David Salter, Shadow Cabinet Member for Health, said: *“Even though David Cameron himself supported Plymouth's Life Centre bid, sadly we didn't get the funding. Now Plymouth is in danger of sleepwalking into losing even the few public swimming facilities we still have. We must stop Seaton being demolished until an adequate replacement is both planned and funded.”*

A new swimming pool could cost in the region of £1.5million and the Conservative Group believe the money generated from the sale of the Plymouth Argyle freehold should be used for this purpose, together perhaps with monies from the sale of the Ballard swimming pool which are currently held in trust.

Ends: 15th August 2006

Notes to Editors:

The Department for Communities and Local Government consultation document can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=2221>

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1501905>

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