

**EVENING**  
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**THE VOICE OF**  
**PLYMOUTH**

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# Planning for the future

**F**EW topics have sparked as much public furore and debate in Plymouth as the question of swimming pool provision. The closure, and subsequent demolition, of Seaton Pool brought the issue of leisure activities in general, and the availability of swimming facilities in particular, into sharp focus. The exciting, highly-ambitious plans for the £50million Life Centre at Central Park, which would have provided Plymouth with much-needed, world-class leisure opportunities – including Olympic standard diving and swimming facilities – offered a tantalising glimpse of what our city could have, if only the cash could be found. Yet the Big Lottery Fund's

rejection of Plymouth's £25million bid for funding represented a slap in the face for everyone who threw their weight behind our Let's Build It campaign to give everyone in Plymouth something of which they could be proud and which would bring incalculable health benefits. Whether the Life Centre will ever be built, in its original proposed form or a watered-down version, remains to be seen. But what is crystal clear is that many people now across the city are feeling short-changed on the provision of leisure facilities, with the lack of swimming pools one of the most glaring examples of this. Our reports on Pages 4 and 5 show that, despite what some believe, there are

places where people can still enjoy the delights and health benefits of swimming. We urge everyone to make the most of them and encourage youngsters to learn to swim as early as possible. The announcement that the city's masterplan setting out proposals for new swimming pools will not be ready for another month will be seen as a setback to all desperate for news on what the future holds. But our view echoes that of council leader Tudor Evans, who said that this short delay will not ultimately affect long-term plans for the future. The people of Plymouth have made it clear what they want. The challenge now to the council is to deliver it within strict financial constraints.