

Group probes contract

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER 19 SEP 2006

Steve Drill

OAKLEIGH pool campaigners are demanding answers to questions about the pool's management and marketing from Monash Council.

Community Life Action Group vice-president Julie Clearwater has lodged a Freedom of Information request with the council about Belgravia Leisure's contract to run the Oakleigh pool.

Campaigners want to know how much the council paid Belgravia Leisure and whether the contract

included a responsibility for marketing the pool.

She hopes to use the information to prove the pool had been mismanaged and allowed to become run-down.

Ms Clearwater said she expected her request, which was sent on August 30, to be rejected.

"They probably say they can't release the details because the terms were confidential," she said.

The Victorian Freedom of Information Act 1982 allows people to request specific information from any government agency.

The future of the Oakleigh pool rides on a series of public consultations in October.

The council reconsidered its plans to close the pool in August.

Residents must now convince a council steering committee that reopening the pool is the best option for the site.

Ms Clearwater said good management could have helped keep the pool open. "The staff were friendly but the grounds weren't cared for and the changerooms weren't cleaned as often as they should have been," she said.

Belgravia Leisure also has a contract to run the Oakleigh Recreation Centre, which is next to the pool.

The committee will meet afternooon to discuss the pool's future and is waiting on council officers to provide estimates for the cost of repairing the pool.

Belgravia Leisure contracts manager Steve Phillips did not return the *Leader's* calls.

Monash Council spokesman Trevor Hawkins said Ms Clearwater's request was being processed.



Blaire Bunter, Bridget Maguire, Madeline Bunter and Abbey Morris with their pool petition.

Picture: MARTIN REDDY 112WG7

Students support campaign to keep pool open

FRUSTRATED students have joined the fight to save the Oakleigh pool and brought hundreds of other teenagers along for the ride.

Year 12 student Emily Maguire and five friends from Oakleigh's Sacred Heart Girls' College have collected more than 500 signatures calling for the pool to remain open.

"We were all quite frustrated by what the council was saying and disregarding everyone's opinion," Emily said. "The council asked what youth wanted so we decided we'd tell them."

Emily, her sister Bridget, Andrea and Abbey Morris, and Blaire and Madeline Bunter organised the petition.

They will deliver the petition to Monash Council at tonight's meeting.

The council voted to close the pool at its June meeting but reconsidered its stance on August 29.

But it will consider reopening the pool after public consultation in October.

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Light up Oakleigh streets

THE lack of efficient street lights in the Oakleigh area does not make me or my family feel very safe; one day it is going to cause a fatality.

There is no functioning light at the corner of Dallas Ave and Warrigal Rd, which is a very busy intersection with cars cutting through to get off Warrigal Rd.

If a dog or cat were crossing the road in this area, it wouldn't stand a chance, not to mention a person.

There are other street lights down the road but they are not bright enough. I have mentioned this to my local MP but nothing has been done about it.

If one goes for a walk at night in the Hughesdale area, the lack of sufficient lighting is apparent in many streets and this poses a threat to the safety of those who may be walking their dog at night, or walking home from work or the shop.

This matter needs to be addressed immediately by Monash Council and I would encourage residents who feel the same way as I do to make their views known.

OAKLEIGH Sally-Anne Vega,
Hughesdale.
MOWASH LEADER
Shame on council

AS A long-time resident of Oakleigh, I am disgusted with Cr Denise McGill's stance on the pool.

Cr McGill quotes low attendance figures as the reason for closing the pool. It is blatantly clear that our council has let the pool deteriorate to such a level that people don't use it.

That is the real reason why only 11 people swam on January 1. I would

Have your say

Readers can write, fax or email to the Leader letters page.

■ Write: 1 Chapel St, Blackburn, 3130

■ Fax: 9875 8344

■ email: monash

@leadernewspapers.com.au

Preference is given to short, typed letters. We reserve the right to edit letters. Letters must carry full name, address and phone number.

challenge Cr McGill to compare this figure with the number of people who swam at the Harold Holt Swim Centre in Malvern on the same day.

Harold Holt has the same-size pools as Oakleigh but the big difference is that Stonnington Council has invested in its pools.

If you want further proof how Monash Council views the Oakleigh pool take a look at the council website – a pathetic two or three lines and a postage stamp-sized picture advertising the pool.

Again make the comparison with Stonnington and how it advertises the Harold Holt and Prahran pools on its website – pages of information and large photos. It is just another indicator of Monash's dereliction of its responsibilities.

I would have expected that Cr McGill, as our representative, would be looking after Oakleigh's interests.

She should be taking the council's highly paid senior management to task for failing to keep the pool properly maintained.

19 SEP 2006 Barney Wursthorn, Oakleigh.



Letter of the Week

This week's winner receives an environmentally-friendly shopping bag.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the paper or its staff.

Extend transport network

I AM in favour of the construction of more train lines and public transport infrastructure generally, especially where it will benefit groups like students and senior citizens, who are vulnerable and becoming immobilised in the suburbs given the rising cost of petrol.

While I understand that funding for train lines does not come from a bottomless hip pocket, in a post-peak-oil world, we must prioritise the shift to sustainable transport options through alternatives to fossil fuels.

The most democratic and economic of these options is to extend Melbourne's public transport network and further encourage its use through low fares and carefully planned timetables.

Monash University is an enormous institution; a hub for many thousands of students, staff and academics.

The viability of a train line is easily assessed by a brief visit to the university's busy bus loop.

There should be no discussion of choosing one expansion (that is, the third track on the Dandenong-Caulfield line) over another when a system-wide extension of infrastructure is needed.

Loki Campbell Type, Clayton.