

Councillor floats vote for Monash

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER
16 JANUARY 2007

Steve Drill

A MONASH councillor has questioned the strength of the Save Oakleigh Pool campaign and called for a city-wide poll to decide the dilapidated pool's future.

The poll could cost \$500,000 and has drawn criticism from some pool supporters, as well as Monash Mayor Tom Morrissey.

Council has set a May deadline for a decision on the 50m pool, which was closed permanently in June last year.

Swimmers went elsewhere to beat hot mid-January temperatures last week while the closed pool sat filled with murky green water.

But Cr Craig Shiell told the *Leader* he feared the 1950s outdoor facility would be a white elephant, after a council report predicted ratepayers could be lumped with a \$350,000 bill each year due to lacklustre attendance and restrictive opening hours.

"I think we need a referendum city wide. If we are going to spend \$5 or \$10 million on a pool, I think the people from the other wards need to have a say," Cr Shiell said.

"People want heated facilities, even on 35C and 40C days. At MARC (Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre), 95 per cent of people still use the indoor pool."

The Victorian Electoral Commission runs elections or polls on behalf of councils across the state.

OUR POLL



Do you want to save the Oakleigh pool?

Text "WGYES" or "WGNO" to 0402 967 387

OR

Click on www.leadernews.com.au and follow the links.

A VEC spokesman said there had never been a poll on a single council decision before and such a poll would cost \$500,000.

Save Oakleigh Pool spokeswoman Julie Clearwater said the community-wide support for the pool should be enough to sway the council.

"They didn't have a poll before they spent \$17 million on MARC. I think it's a waste of money," Ms Clearwater said.

MARC, which features an indoor 50m pool, outdoor 50m pool, wave pool and hydrotherapy pool, opened in December 2001.

Cr Morrissey said a poll was too expensive and unnecessary.

"I couldn't ever let that go through my lips, even as a motion at a council meeting," Cr Morrissey.

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In brief

OAKLEIGH MONASH Pool future LEADER 16 JAN

OAKLEIGH pool supporters need to get their pens scribbling before written submissions on the pool's future close on February 26. Monash Council wants feedback from residents about what they would like to see happen to the outdoor 50m pool, diving tower and toddlers' pool. Forms can be picked up from all Monash libraries and can be returned in a reply-paid envelope.

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