

Pool to remain closed due to safety concerns

Glenorchy Mayor Bec Thomas said she would seek an urgent discussion with both state and federal governments about the future of the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool which will remain closed for the coming season due to safety concerns.

Mayor Thomas said the council's general manager has determined the pool will stay closed until further notice after a consultant's report into the ageing facility found a number of issues – some of which pose a health and safety risk.

“Like many such facilities around the country built in the 1960s, the Glenorchy Pool has served its community extremely well over the last 60 years, but it has reached a point where it is deteriorating and is no longer safe for the community to use.

“While we will consider our options, the scale of the work required is not something the Glenorchy City Council would be able to afford on our own.

“Therefore, I will be seeking urgent meetings with the state and federal governments about what assistance they may be able to provide, or indeed, what potential futures they may see for the site in partnership with council. Council will keep the community informed on what options are available.”

Mayor Thomas said while council had yet to formally consider the report, permanent closure of the pool could happen, particularly if funding could not be secured for it to be redeveloped.

“The business case for the pool, as it is, is not particularly strong. As an outdoor pool it has a limited season, with many people preferring to use Hobart's Aquatic Centre which is a more modern facility just 10 minutes up the road.

“Last season, fewer than 100 people used the pool every day on average, with an annual cost to Glenorchy ratepayers of about \$400,000.

“Preliminary estimates are that to redevelop the pool to modern standards would be a project in the vicinity of \$30 million.”

Ms Thomas said the condition report identified a number of serious issues with the pool that meant the council had no choice but to keep it closed.

These included faults in the pool shell which was causing the pool to leak, structural issues with the concrete grandstand, an urgent requirement for the electrical switchboard to be upgraded and replaced, as well as major works for the chemical dosing area and complete refurbishment of toilets and changeroom areas.

“The consultant report found that a number of faults were in critical need of repair and posed safety risks if action isn't taken. As a result the general manager has had no option but to keep the pool closed until further notice.”

“Unfortunately, this is not a quick fix, and as council, we need to be certain we are making appropriate investment in our community facilities. This means considering not only the up-front cost of re-developed infrastructure, but also demand and ongoing financial sustainability and the whole-of-life asset cost.

“We understand some people have strong connection to the pool, and as a memorial facility it holds significance to the city. However, we also need to be realistic about the size and scope of the work required to keep a facility like this operational.”

Mayor Thomas said the council would receive a report into the pool, including options moving forward, at its next council meeting.

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