

Questions On Notice:

Glenorchy War Memorial Pool and responses from Glenorchy City Council meetings – January 2024

Council Meeting – 29 January 2024

Response to previous public questions taken on notice

Question without notice – Leanne Rose, Glenorchy

Q2: Where specifically in the 50 metre pool was it leaking 300,000 (sic) litres of water a day (e.g., the lining, the mastic seal, the pipes or the pump) and where was the water running to?

A: [Mayor] I am sure this question has been answered before. The question was taken on notice.

Response: When it was operational, the pool needed to be continually filled to ensure it had sufficient water volume. Water metering showed that this amounted to 35,000 litres a day, which is significantly more than could be attributed to water loss through evaporation or splashing.

The exact location of leaks has not been determined, however the reports received state that the excessively wide joints are prone to failure. The water had been leaking into the water table and surrounding environment.

Public Question Time

Question on notice – Bradley McDougall, Claremont (received Wednesday 10 January 2024)

Q1: Were councillors instructed to read the Lacus Report in its entirety and had every councillor read the report in its entirety before voting to close and not repair the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool.

Response:

The Lacus Report was Attachment 1 to a Council officer's report about the pool, provided to elected members as part of the agenda papers for the Council meeting on 31 July 2023.

The Council also received a briefing from consultants, KnowLedge Asset Management Services, at a Council workshop on 3 July 2023 on the implications of the pool condition assessment.

The 31 July 2023 Council Officer's report indicated that the General Manager had made the decision on 4 July 2023, in his capacity as "person controlling the business or undertaking (PCBU)" under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012, that the Glenorchy Pool not reopen for the coming pool season and that the pool remain closed until further notice. The recommendation endorsed by the Council was to note the report and General Managers decision.

Question on notice – Natalie Larter, Montrose (received Monday, 15 January 2024)

Q1: What is the cost of the feasibility study being undertaken by MI Global Partners, to assess options for 2a Anfield Street?

Response:

Council received a \$200,00 grant from the State Government to fund the feasibility study. The contractual terms with the consultant are commercial in confidence.

Question on notice – Karen Forster, Montrose (received Sunday, 21 January 2024)

In the tender document for feasibility study of the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool site it stated: "While the site is not presently listed on the Local or Tasmanian Heritage registers, it holds historical and sociocultural heritage value. This recognition stems from its identification as a potential candidate for local listing during the Municipal Heritage Study conducted by Ian Terry and Paul Davies in 2004/2005." The tender document further states: "to further inform future site options, the Client has initiated a separate project/contract to commission an independent site-specific heritage assessment". Questions in the interests of transparency: At the time of writing of the tender document it was stated that a separate project/contract to commission an independent site specific heritage assessment.

Q1: To whom has this contract been awarded?

Response:

Brad Williams, Praxis Environment.

Q2: Can ratepayers have an assurance this assessment is NOT being undertaken by the GCCs own Heritage Officer, who although eminently qualified, is not independent?

Response:

Yes.

Q3: Why hasn't the Glenorchy Municipality History Group been consulted about this matter especially considering two Aldermen are members of said group?

Response:

The work commissioned was a technical assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified cultural heritage practitioner.

Question on notice – Nicole Vout (received Sunday 21 January 2024)

Q1: GCC has dismissed the option to repair the Glenorchy Pool based on a noninvasive site inspection that did not call for permanent closure and demolition (Lacus, page 4) therefore I wish to ask again, for you Mayor, and all the Alderman, to move a motion to vote, to do further testing and assessment of the pool and to include in MI Global Partners scope the option to repair the pool, given other Councils have successfully repaired and refurbished their pools (eg. Western Australia's Geraldton pool) for amounts a lot less than what the GCC have estimated?

Response:

Glenorchy City Council has appointed a consultant, MI Global Partners, to investigate options for the pool site, including the redevelopment of the pool facility. These options will then be presented to council for consideration.

Given this is occurring, Council will await the findings of the MI Global investigation into options before making any further decisions on the future of the pool site.

Q2: Mayor, It's our understanding you have recently met with the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure, Senator Carol Brown and been made aware of the THRIVING SUBURBS PROGRAM, making available \$200 Million to Council's to address shortfalls in PRIORITY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE in Urban and Suburban Communities. Can you assure the Ratepayers of Glenorchy you will be applying for this funding in relation to the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool. And, Mayor, can you guarantee the Community that If via the MI Global Consultancy there is a desire from the Community to retain, repair, or refurbish our pool, or better still acquire a new Aquatic Facility, that you will honour that wish by the Community and as Mayor will seek this funding from the Federal Government's Thriving Suburbs Program which is now available to repair or replace our pool with a new Aquatic Facility?

Response:

The Thriving Suburbs Program was announced by the Federal Government in May last year, committing \$200 million over two years for locally-driven urban and suburban infrastructure and community projects.

Program guidelines, eligibility criteria and applications have not yet been released. However, it is noted this program is a national program, and a redeveloped pool would likely require anything up to 25 per cent of the program's total available funding.

Council is not ruling out any avenue for financial support in relation to the future of the pool site. Council has already applied for funding from the Federal Government as part of its budget process. To this point, those requests have not been successful.

Council has also included a redeveloped facility in its funding priorities document, which has been submitted to the State and Federal Governments for consideration in their 2024-25 budget preparation and will be provided to parties and candidates for consideration prior to the next state election.

Council will need to consider the findings of the MI Global investigation into options for the future of the pool site before it can determine the purpose and amount of any specific funding request and identify appropriate grant programs.

Q3: Mayor, will you apply for any round of funding that will enable Glenorchy to retain an Aquatic Facility, if via the MI Global Consultancy there is a desire from the Community to retain, repair or refurbish our pool or better still acquire a new Aquatic Facility?

Response:

Council will need to consider the findings of the MI Global investigation into options for the future of the pool site before it can determine the purpose and amount of any specific funding request and identify appropriate grant programs.

Council is not ruling out any avenue for financial support in relation to the future of the pool site. Council has already sought funding from the Federal Government as part of its budget process. To this point, those requests have not been successful.

Council has also included a redeveloped facility in its funding priorities document, which will be provided to parties and candidates for consideration prior to the next state election.

Q4: Mayor, can you please advise why in a Public Forum Alderman Jan Dunsby made the comment our pool is, 'beyond repair'?

Response:

What an individual elected member states is a matter for the elected member, however, it is well-established that the pool facility has reached a point in its operational life where it either requires replacement or redevelopment.

The pool does not currently meet a number of modern standards, including disability access and appropriate privacy screening in bathroom and changeroom areas. In addition, the facilities have a number of safety hazards which pose a risk to public and staff safety. As has been stated previously, any short-term repairs would see the pool closed for this season and next season, and only add another few years of operational life before consideration of redevelopment or replacement would again be required. Council does not consider this to be a cost-effective solution, which is why it is instead exploring longer term options now.

Q5: Mayor, can you please advise the Community of details of the 'additional' briefings given to Aldermen by Marcus Lightfoot of Lacus and Michael McCosker of Knowledge Asset Version: 1, Version Date: 22/01/2024 Document Set ID: 3336642 Management that led to the above statement by Alderman Jan Dunsby, that would lead Aldermen to believe our pool is 'beyond repair', contrary to what the Lacus says, the report that Council used Ratepayer money to commission?

Response:

The Council received a briefing on the implications of the pool condition assessment from the consultants that commissioned the Lacus Report at a council workshop on 3 July 2023. The details of this briefing are publicly available in the powerpoint presentation published on Council's website, via this link <https://www.gcc.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Glenorchy-PoolPresentation-Client-Final-ELT-Final.pdf>

Q6: Mayor, can you please advise the Community of details of the 'additional' briefings by GCC staff as stated by Alderman Dunsby, that led Alderman Dunsby and possibly other Aldermen to believe our pool is 'beyond repair', contrary to what the Lacus says, the report that Council used Ratepayer money to commission?

Response:

The Council received a briefing on the implications of the pool condition assessment from the consultants that commissioned the Lacus Report at a Council workshop on 3 July 2023. The details of this briefing are publicly available in the powerpoint presentation published on Council's website, via this link <https://www.gcc.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/GlenorchyPool-Presentation-Client-Final-ELT-Final.pdf>

Q7: Mayor, will you overturn the vote to close and not repair our pool on the 18/12/2023 as it appears some Aldermen have not understood and are confused regarding information included in the Lacus and in briefings by Consultants and GCC staff, to reach conclusions our pool is 'beyond repair'?

Response:

The briefing from the consultants clearly articulated "The need to comprehensively review return on investment using a life cycle model is essential in making a medium to long term financial decision" in relation to the major overhaul and renewal option and "Elected members will need to inform themselves with a Life Cycle Cost Model to determine future costs and upkeep" in relation to a complete replacement option (see pp 20 & 21 of powerpoint presentation).

Therefore, it is in the best interests of the community to await the findings of the MI Global investigation into options before making any further decisions on the future of the pool site.

Q8: Mayor, why have all Aldermen not read the Lacus report in full? How can Aldermen make informed decisions and vote to close and not repair our pool if they have not,

therefore making their vote invalid, as it is not a fully informed vote on such an important matter?

Response: Council is provided with information in a range of mediums in order to provide for all levels of comprehension, which is critical to ensuring an inclusive environment for democratically elected members.

How elected members consume information and ensure they make fully informed decisions is a matter for each individual elected member.

Q9: Mayor, why does Alderman Alderton state to retain a pool in Glenorchy all of Community have to want one? Why does this particular Asset require ALL of Community support when other assets such as MAC, bike trails, skateparks etc do not have to receive such scrutiny?

Response:

What an individual elected member states is a matter for the elected member.

Council has engaged MI Global to investigate options for the future of the pool site, including redevelopment of the pool and alternative options. Community consultation is a cornerstone of this project, to inform Council on the views of the broader community.

The project will also provide detailed information on the lifecycle cost of a replacement facility.

At an estimated cost of \$30 million (much greater than other Council owned assets), Council wants to understand the financial viability and sustainability of a replacement facility, to help inform decision making.

Council also wants to ensure the initial and ongoing cost to ratepayers is provided as information to help inform community feedback on a replacement facility. Given the significant cost, it is only fair that ratepayers understand what the cost implications would be for them, so they can provide an informed view on what they want and are prepared to pay for a replacement facility.

Q10: Mayor, from what Official Document does Alderman Alderton ascertain that only 2% of the Community want a pool in the Glenorchy Municipality as Council have failed to canvas the Community on this subject or provide a Public Meeting on this subject?

Response:

What an individual elected member states is a matter for the elected member.

Council has engaged MI Global to investigate options for the future of the pool site, including redevelopment of the pool and alternative options. Community consultation is a cornerstone of this project, to inform Council on the views of the broader community.

Council held a Community Yarn on 17 October 2023, a public forum in which the pool was the main focus, including a presentation from the Mayor on the pool and a question and answer session, with more than 60 community members in attendance.

Q11: Mayor, why was the Future Directions Survey extended from a closing date of Friday 15th December to Sunday 17th December, therefore reducing the time available for staff and Aldermen and General Manager to collate, review and consider the responses before the December Council Meeting on Monday 18th December, where the vote to close and not repair our pool was taken without consideration or mention of said responses, many of which I believe would've requested to retain, repair our pool?

Response:

The Future Directions Survey aims to help inform the development of Council's annual budget. The results are presented and discussed at budget workshops and council meetings as appropriate, to help inform decisions on the annual budget.

The closing date was extended to enable more residents and ratepayers a chance to have their say on the priorities for Council's annual budget.

Q12: Mayor, considering Future Direction Survey responses were not reported on at the 18th December 2023 meeting, if yourself, staff and Aldermen are not going to consider and analyse Community responses, prior to voting on such an important issue of closing and not repairing our pool, what is the point of funding a Future Directions Survey?

Response:

The Future Directions Survey aims to help inform the development of Council's annual budget. The results are presented and discussed at budget workshops and council meetings as appropriate, to help inform decisions on the annual budget.