



AGENDA APPENDIX
Council Meeting
Wednesday 22 July 2015

AGENDA ITEM FOR SEPARATE DISTRIBUTION TO COUNCILLORS AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM DUE TO DOCUMENT SIZE.

THE ITEM IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE COUNCIL WEBSITE OR BY CONTACTING COUNCIL ON 03 5662 9200.

E.3 FOSTER POOL REVIEW

Appendix 1 – A Vision for the Foster Swimming Pool 2014

A Vision for the Foster Swimming Pool 2014



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Executive Summary

The Foster Pool Working Group identified the following key elements of a vision for the future of the Foster pool:

- The Management of the pool should be handed to a newly constituted Foster Pool Association Inc (FPA) who would become responsible for all management issues in relation to the pool including fundraising to upgrade the facilities.
- A fundraising subcommittee would be established to guide the sourcing of additional funds and income for the pool. Council would be requested to support the fundraising activities of the FPA.
- Council would be requested to continue to subsidise the operation of the pool at an agreed annual amount indexed to CPI. Subject to proven increases in the operational performance of the Foster pool as a consequence of improved facilities Council would be requested to consider a further indexation to facilitate extensions to season and operating hours.
- The FPA to work towards efficiently upgrading the heating of the pool probably through a solar/heat pump system with Council to be requested to contribute to costs as part of the process of handing over the facility to the new FPA management in good operating order.
- The FPA to explore season opening and operation hours with a view to boosting attendance
- The heating and shading/wind protection for the pool are high priorities.
- There is significant support for the continuation of the pool from the local schools, health care workers and University of the Third Age (U3A). Each of these groups would use the pool more intensively given an upgrade to heating and other facilities.

• Vision for the Future of the Foster Swimming Pool

The Foster Pool Working Group welcomes the opportunity to respond to the South Gippsland Shire Council's request to present the Group's exciting vision for the future of the Foster Pool. In the pages that follow we will outline our view for the future under the following broad headings:

- Key issues for the future
- Management and governance
- Pool development
- Funding
- Communications and publicity
- Community engagement

A recent JWS Research customer satisfaction survey¹ undertaken for the Council indicated majority support by respondents for maintaining the existing number of pools in the shire. The 'Our Say' website also registered over 720 votes, the most votes of any idea put forward by residents in the South Gippsland shire, further adding weight to the proposition that ratepayers in Foster want the pool to be kept open and its facilities improved. The Foster Pool Working Group trusts that the Council will give careful consideration to the following plan for the future in light of this community feedback.

Key Issues for the Foster Pool

Brief history

The Foster pool in its current form was established over 25 years ago by the local community using volunteer labour and funds. The pool was managed from 2002 by the Committee of Management and during this period the annual accounts were within budget each year. In 2010 Council recommended to the Section 86 committee that contractor operations be engaged².

In the 2011/2012 season the day to day management of the pool was devolved to the YMCA.

In 2012 the Council endorsed a *Strategic Direction for Aquatic Facilities in South Gippsland* plan. Following the 2012/2013 season the Foster pool triggered two points in the Strategic Plan that resulted in a call for a review of the Council's continuing support for the Foster aquatic facility².

¹**Council's JWS Reseach Customer satisfaction survey.** "The results indicated that 49% of respondents had utilised a Council swimming pool in the past 12 months (from the time of the survey in February 2014). In response to the question regarding willingness to incur a rate rise versus closure of swimming pools, 30% of respondents agreed to "probably increase levy on rates" and 31% of respondents agreed to "definitely increase the levy on rates". Presented with the options of "probably" or "definitely" closing one of more pools, the response to each option was even at 13%. At the Council Meeting of 25 June 2014 it was resolved that Council utilise the results relating to Council's swimming pools, in any future considerations regarding Council's swimming pools."

²Ref: Minutes COM meeting 10/01/2011: "Ian (Murphy) advised that before 2011/2012 season a contract will come out to run the pool which would take the current responsibilities off the Committee.....which would become an advisory committee"

³For a detailed response to this review refer to the document presented by the Foster Pool Management Committee to Council in April 2014.

Demographics

Foster is the major service centre for the eastern part of the South Gippsland Shire and has a key role to play in service provision into the future. Its 2011 population of 1677 is projected to grow by 25% over the next 20 years. Nearly 20% of the Foster population is 14 years and younger compared to 18.6 % for Victoria as a whole. At the other end of the age spectrum nearly 40% of the population is aged over 60 compared to around 20% for Victoria as a whole according to the 2011 census. The Foster median age is 54 compared to 37 in the state. So Foster has a very significant older population as well as a substantial younger one.

In addition, Foster welcomes a large influx of tourists during the summer months attracted to the town as the nearest substantial shopping centre to the Wilsons Promontory National Park. It is clear, therefore that the Foster Township has the potential to significantly increase community use and engagement with the Pool.

Pool Heating.

A survey of the Foster community undertaken early in 2014 indicated that the key reason that usage of the Foster pool has declined in recent years has been the need to heat the pool to an acceptable level. Established guidelines (e.g. FINA, American Red Cross; Vic & SA Government standards) indicate that for general use a pool should be heated to 28C degrees and for use in Aqua therapy the temperature should be 32C. The future of the Foster pool rests on the provision of adequate heating provided efficiently most probably through a solar based system. The Toora pool is heated by an oil burner & solar mats however, as we will demonstrate, heating at Foster can be achieved predominantly through contemporary solar heaters of greater efficiency.

Shading and wind protection

In order to encourage increased use of the pool protection from the sun and wind is required. This can be accomplished in several stages over the medium to longer term. A barrel arch PVC membrane structure over the main outdoor pool is envisaged. This would provide protection year round and would extend the seasonal opportunities for pool usage. Quotations from *Shadeliving*, Appendix 3, indicate that the cost involved would be around \$200,000. The Foster Pool Working Group recognises that this is a significant funding option but given a targeted fund raising approach is confident this could be achieved in the medium to longer term. In the shorter term less ambitious shading options will be explored.



Toora pool barrel arch membrane similar to that proposed for Foster

Season length and opening hours

The season length at Foster is short in comparison with other pools in the area. In future the aim will be to extend the season so that swimming lessons, the school programs, and water aerobics can be conducted over a longer period. Similarly opening hours will be extended to include the early morning lap swimmers and evening barbecues and events during the summer months. Certainty in opening hours is essential so that users can rely on the pool being open for their use and for scheduling of classes.

Staffing

The Royal Lifesaving Society Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation for low patronage pools indicate that a minimum of one lifeguard and one staff member for administration/sales is required. Contract operators generally have a higher staffing level therefore efficiencies can be achieved through staffing options that may include forming a roster of volunteers for the sales/administration role of operating the pool while maintaining the standards of RLSA lifeguard guidelines. Examples of rostered volunteer staffing include the Museum and Community House and indeed engagement with other groups in the Foster community will be fostered to facilitate this.

Management and Governance

The Foster Pool Working Group has considered several options for the future management structure of the pool. These are outlined in Appendix 1.

Current management structure

South Gippsland Shire Council currently operates the pool area under a licence from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI). Council has also been appointed by DEPI as the Committee of Management of the area. There is an existing Instrument of Delegation for a Section 86 Committee to run the pool, but in recent times the Section 86 Committee has been acting in an advisory and fundraising capacity only.

The YMCA was contracted by Council in 2011 for a period of three years for the management and operation of the Foster Swimming Pool. Prior to this the pool was managed by the Foster Pool Section 86 Committee with pool staff supplied via an employment agency. A new tender was recently won by the YMCA to manage most of the pools in the shire, including the Foster Pool for the forthcoming three seasons.

Recommended management structure

Our recommendation is a model where Council remains the holder of the licence of the Crown Land Reserve but subject to appropriate approvals sublets the Committee of Management role to an incorporated body known as the Foster Pool Association (FPA). This Foster Pool Association Inc. would have the full management responsibility of the pool which would include ensuring that the pool is managed under the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSA) Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (GSPO) rules.

Any financial risk would be mitigated by the Foster Pool Association setting parameters which would establish the basic financial framework. Parameters would include (but not be limited to):

- Council agreeing to fund a per annum subsidy commencing at a rate approximate to the three year average of the current YMCA subsidy.
- Council remaining responsible for the FPA's cost of insurance and Crown Lands lease payments.

The 2015/2016 season is the preferred operating period to commence the FPA management.

Other recommendations

- An amendment to the Planning schedule to the existing Zone of Public Park and Recreation could be considered by Council to reflect that the "swimming pool and any use pertaining to a pool should be allowed without a planning permit".
- Acknowledgement from Council that it will assist the FPA with an agreed indexed annual funding amount; that it will honour previous capital works commitments and hand over the pool and infrastructure in good operating order to the new FPA management; and will support applications by the FPA for funding from other institutions and authorities for ongoing development of the pool.
- Operating hours, season length, pool temperature and specialised community user group access would be the responsibility of the FPA which would make decisions based on resource efficiency and the needs of the community.
- Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation should be followed for low patronage pools. (i.e. a minimum of one lifeguard with a volunteer for administration/sales)
- Management of the pool and any hirer will be required to have an agreement or contract which clearly establishes the responsibility of both, signed by both parties.

Pool Development

Heating and Equipment

Heating the pool to an optimum temperature in the most economical method is the top priority in the short term. The Foster Pool Working Group has reviewed a range of options with consideration given to the capital infrastructure costs; ongoing running costs and labour inputs for operations and maintenance. The alternative options reviewed include Solar, Gas, Electric, Heat Pumps, Bio Gas, Turbines (wind) & Geo Thermal with the conclusion being that a predominantly solar system with heat pump back up (gas or electric) will be the most suitable method. The Working Group believes that the costs involved are not high and are achievable in the short term. Quotations have been sought from several companies for solar pool heating including *Sunbather, Heliocol, Heat Seeker, Solartech, Sustainable, Asosa and Suntube. Suntube Rigid Panelling.*

To accommodate sufficient collectors and maintain efficient orientation, it is proposed that a steel structure is built on the northern side of the Foster Pool. This structure would be approximately 43m long, 10m wide and 3m high and could provide an additional shaded area. The current estimated cost of this structure and the solar panelling and associated infrastructure would be in the region of \$200,000. Being the single most beneficial improvement for the pool the FPA would request that Council consider contributing to this infrastructure in the process of handing over of the pool in good operating order to the FPA.

Note that a combined polycarbonate structure could be designed to have the strength to support the solar panels and provide shading for the pool similar to the photo below. This structure would be more costly than PVC barrel arch described below but given the total costs of the heating and shading proposals a combined structure would probably be more cost efficient than if each element of the proposed improvements were undertaken separately. If a decision is made to combine the two objectives of heating and shelter into a single stage rather than separately over a few years then a combined structure would be logical. It is also worth noting that whatever design/cost outcome the proposed FPA would determine in this regard the costs would rest with the FPA and that Council & ratepayers would not necessarily be called upon to contribute. This report is not designed to provide a definitive plan but indicates research that establishes that suitable models exist and are within the fundraising capacity of the community provided there is in principle Council support for the FPA fundraising activities.



An example of a shading area that could also include solar panels on the roof

Shading options

To retain heat and exclude weather conditions a roofed structure enclosing the pool is being considered to extend the length of the swimming season. It could have either open sides, permanent sides or removable sides.



Shading at the Toora pool similar to that envisaged at Foster in the medium term

A Roofed Structure option is being considered. This could be a barrel arch PVC membrane or a steel structure with a colourbond or polycarbonate roof. (Appendix 2)

- **Option 1: Barrel Arch PVC Membrane over Steel Structure**

This structure is similar to the one pictured at Toora Pool above. The company Shadeliving have submitted a budgetary quotation for a structure 32 x 22 metre barrel arch PVC membrane structure on 3 metre high posts for \$175 – 200,000 plus GST. As a second stage optional Clear PVC Blinds around entire surface could be installed for \$40 – 50,000 plus GST. A further optional extra would be a Ziptrack system with hand crank \$70 – 80,000 plus GST. A quotation for this option is attached as Appendix 3.

The advantage of a PVC membrane is that it is translucent and lets the light through and the noise level doesn't reverberate. The structure is not strong enough to support solar heating panels.

- **Option 2: A Steel Structure with Colorbond/polycarbonate roof could also be considered.** This would be a steel structure, hot dipped galvanised, on posts 3 metres high with colorbond/polycarbonate roof. Two companies have been approached for quotations that have yet to be submitted.

Aqua Therapy pool

The site where the current children's pool is located could be re-developed into a dedicated Aqua Therapy pool so that the pool could cater for the needs of older patrons and those with arthritic conditions. This would require a pool temperature that is 4 degrees above that of the main pool. Such a development would reach a wider clientele and will be a much needed facility in the town. The provision of such a pool facility is a goal for the medium to long term and represents the final stage of redevelopment for water activity associated infrastructure.

Young children's pool

In the event of the development of the Aqua Therapy pool the young children's pool would be moved to a new position on site and include an updated shape and slope to assist young children to develop their confidence in water.

Funding

The Foster Pool Working Group is keenly aware of the need to engage in an energetic and sustainable fundraising program for the pool and sees this a crucial step in the future of the pool. Nevertheless, the Working Group recognises that in a small community there are limited resources and there is much competition for funds for a number of worthwhile causes. In light of this two key approaches will be used.

- The first will be to source funds as far as possible from outside the immediate community. There are numerous funding sources from state and federal bodies as well as industry based grants and philanthropic bodies. These sources will be explored for major infrastructure grants.
- A second approach will be to actively engage in income generating options. The Working Group will seek to embed the pool in the activities of the local community so that the space is used by a wider variety of clients and generate income through the provision of a fun space for community activities year round. Sales of coffee, ice cream, sandwiches at the pool side will be another option to be explored as well as sales of bathers, goggles etc.

A paper indicating the type and range of funding options to be explored is contained in Appendix 3 and will include grants applications, membership drives, income generation, events, facilities hire and sponsorship.

Communications and Publicity Strategy

A multi-channel approach is planned that will communicate directly with residents and stakeholders via many channels including local media, social media, email and a dedicated website.

- Website, A dedicated Wordpress based website will be created (<http://fosterpool.org.au>).

This website will initially focus on informing residents about the status of the pool campaign and will link to the current pool website managed by the pool operator. In the longer term it is envisaged that this website will become the main Foster pool website, containing details of events and opening hours, contact form and a blog. In the current season, the website may include a pool open/closed indicator that will indicate when the pool is likely to be closed or open based on the expected temperature at Leongatha.

- Social Media
 - Facebook: The current Facebook page will be maintained actively by members of the FPA as a way of directly engaging and informing other local Facebook users.
 - Twitter: A Twitter account will be created for the Foster pool as a way of directly engaging and informing other local Twitter users. Twitter will be useful for providing real-time broadcasting of events and pool opening / pool temperature etc.
- Email
 - Mailing List: Pool users can register to receive a monthly newsletter and regular updates regarding pool opening hours and events via e-mail.
 - Registration options will be available via the Foster pool website <http://fosterpool.org.au>, via a link from the Foster Community website and via a checkbox on their pool membership form.
 - MailChimp (<http://mailchimp.com>) software will be used to maintain and manage the list of subscribers.
- Other. In addition to digital and social media, communication with the community will also take place via more traditional channels:
 - Leaflets: For major events leaflets will be handed out to businesses in the main street for display in their windows or for pick up at their counter.
 - Newspaper articles and advertising: Robert Best, the proprietor of *The Mirror*, believes the Foster Pool is very important to the community and has pledged his support. There will be articles about events at the pool, promotional flyers as inserts in the paper and free advertising.
- Signage: The current 'Golf Club' road sign on Hoddle Road mentions the Foster Pool in small lettering and many visitors to the area miss it. It is recommended that Council fund new signage at the earliest opportunity in order for the swimming pool to be more prominently displayed throughout the town.

The pool's ICT and marketing efforts will be administered by the FPA in co-operation with local ICT supplier(s) providing services free of charge as a community service.

Community engagement

School programmes

Life in the South Gippsland Shire provides many opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy a wide range of aquatic recreation. Our stunning national parks, beaches and rivers combine with a culture of camping, fishing and beach holidays to provide residents and visitors alike with myriad opportunities for swimming, surfing and boating. In this context, it is more important than ever to ensure that our children are aware of water safety and leave school with enough experience and skills to fully enjoy all our area has to offer.

All local schools in this area provide opportunities for students to learn water safety skills and develop efficient swimming techniques, through use of the local pools. The newly-developed Australian Curriculum, which all local schools must follow, states that:

"Outdoor activities provide a valid environment for developing movement competence, promoting a sense of wellbeing, enhancing personal and social skills, and developing an understanding of the concept of risk versus challenge."

"Healthy, active living benefits individuals and society in many ways. This includes promoting physical fitness, healthy body weight, psychological wellbeing, cognitive capabilities and learning.

In order to meet these curriculum requirements, Foster Primary School has provided an intensive 2-3 week program involving students from Prep to Grade 6, in conjunction with Foster Swimming Pool. The program focuses on water safety and stroke development in order to prepare students for the summer holidays, where most if not all will spend recreational time in beaches, pools, or dams. The program culminates in a school swimming sports carnival, held at the Foster Pool, at which students of all abilities are encouraged to display the skills they have gained. During the summer holidays and through Term 1, students chosen for the interschool swimming team use the Foster Pool for training. At all points the availability of the Foster Pool for training and coaching is crucial to their success.

Students at the South Gippsland Secondary College are offered the opportunity to use the pool from Year 7 to Year 12. The Sports and PE program includes a Year 7 and Year 8 program, encompassing two sessions per week for five weeks, covering swim testing and activity sessions. Additionally, a surf lifesaving unit is run in December. The Foster Pool is also used for swimming squad coaching, trials for interschool sports, and skill development electives for the higher years. Some squad training happens during lunchtime.

For both schools, the closure of the Foster Pool would mean a drastic re-evaluation of the entire swimming education program. Bussing to another pool is not a viable option due to time constraints and the additional cost to schools and families. Lack of a swimming program is not only contrary to Department of Education regulations, but would mean that school-age children would be unprepared for many normal summer holiday activities.

Schools need an extended season and assured opening hours so that all programs offered by schools could take place over a longer time period and be more effective in teaching the skills students need to survive in water and to enjoy the benefits of living in this area.

Health Programmes

With swimming recognised by health experts as a healthy, low-impact activity that has many physical and mental health benefits and can be continued throughout life, the importance of the Foster Pool to the health of the community is self-evident.

The pool also has enormous potential as a venue for rehabilitation and for therapy for people with chronic conditions, particularly if it can be heated to a suitable temperature. This point is made by staff (see Appendix 5) working in Foster's highly respected health precinct, which includes South Gippsland Hospital, Community Health Centre and Foster Medical Centre and draws clientele from all over the Corner Inlet region.

Physiotherapist Taryn Comben states that a heated swimming pool in Foster would address the current inequity in access to aquatic therapy intervention as the pool would be close enough for clients to be supervised by local health staff. She recommends individual and group exercise sessions funded by individuals through co-contribution fees.

Chronic disease management nurse Jacinta Lamb agrees, and points out that Foster is already at a disadvantage due to its remote location and lack of transport options. Many frail elderly who require aquatic therapy cannot drive (to SPLASH in Leongatha, for instance) and there is no taxi service in Foster.

As well as the many people who use the ancillary health services at the hospital and community health centre and could benefit from aquatic therapy if Foster Pool was heated, there are the residents of residential aged care facility Prom Country House, which currently has 60 beds and will be expanding.

U3A Programmes

The committee of the Prom Coast U3A (University of the Third Age) based in Foster has given unanimous support for the redevelopment and improvement of Foster Pool. This is significant support because U3A, only started three years ago with 32 members, currently has more than 250 members and given the rapid increase of retired people in the community hopes to achieve up to 1000 members within ten years.

If the pool was heated and sheltered, U3A envisages at least 20 per cent of its members would participate in programs at the pool, such as swimming, learn to swim, hydrotherapy, water aerobics, water safety and resuscitation. Potentially, about 8 one-hour classes could be offered to U3A members each week, especially if marketed appropriately. (See Appendix 4 for details).

Foster Golf Club

The Foster Golf Club, which is situated immediately next door to the Foster Pool, provides significant opportunities for partnering within the short and longer terms.

Options to be explored include:

- Membership integration
- Green fee reciprocal access for tourist golfers
- Golf Club corporate sponsorship as a specialist user group
- Integration/establishment of coffee shop/kiosk facilities

How do we want Council to assist?

The short term operational objective is to obtain a commitment from Council for the continued pool operation under a revised governance/management structure and for clear subsidy parameters for the next 5 - 10 years to allow FPA to undertake the longer term objectives.

- From the 2015/2016 season the Foster Pool Working Group requests that the Council approve the management structure indicated earlier in this report whereby a Foster Pool Association Inc. (FPA) takes over management of the pool and that Council hand over the pool facilities in good operating order honouring previous capital works commitments.
- Secondly, this group would negotiate with Council for an agreed annual indexed subsidy to assist with the operation of the pool.
- Thirdly, in principle support from Council for funding/grant applications made by the FPA would be required for funding from certain sources.
- Finally, the FPA and representatives from Council would need to meet regularly so that a cooperative and mutually respectful dialogue could be maintained.

Table 1:Timeline for the implementation of the Vision for the Foster pool
Short term: First and second year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate management structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Fundraising Subcommittee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise funds for selected Heating option
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Heating plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Friends of Foster Pool' to be established to provide volunteers to assist at the pool during the open season.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming club to be re-established
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of season and opening hours to be established and publicised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity campaign for the pool to be developed and to be implemented on an annual basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viable staffing structure to be adopted and implemented including appropriate training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of progress and a short report to be undertaken each year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and progressively introduce a range of co-operative activities, memberships and facilities with Foster Golf Club.
Medium term: Third and fourth year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising subcommittee to focus on raising funds for shading and wind protection for the Pool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial option for shading and wind protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative activities with the golf club and schools to be developed and implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative activities with health care professionals to be developed and implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income generating options to continue to be actively explored
Long term: Fifth and sixth year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aqua Therapy Pool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of young children's pool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising committee to focus on provision of the aqua therapy pool and ongoing income streams

Appendices

Appendix 1: Management and Governance

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APPENDICES

- A. Current Instrument of Delegation for Section 86 Foster Swimming Pool Special Committee dated 7/12/2005
- B. Foster Pool review March 2014
- C. Relevant Minutes of Council Meeting 16 April 2014
- D. South Gippsland Shire Aquatic Strategy
- E. Royal Life Saving Society Australia Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation
- F. Planning Property Report
- G. Land Report
- H. Planning Scheme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The motion passed by Council at its 16 April 2014 meeting was:

1. Continue to operate the Foster Pool at a reduced level of service for the 2104/15 season by increasing the opening temperature to 26 degrees, reducing the season length and reducing operating hours during the school term; and
2. Defer any future non-essential expenditure at Foster Pool and review the strategic direction for aquatic facilities in South Gippsland in 2014/15.
3. Work with the Foster community to explore options for alternate management of the Foster Pool and an options paper be presented to Council for consideration by December 2014.

This report presents the findings of the authors into options for alternate management of the Foster Pool.

1. Management Model

- 1.1 Our recommendation is a model where the South Gippsland Shire Council remains the Holder of the licence of the Crown Land Reserve but subject to appropriate approvals sub lets the Committee of Management role to an incorporated body known as the Foster Pool Association.
- 1.2 This Foster Pool Association Inc. will then have the full management responsibility of the pool which will include ensuring that the pool is managed under the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSA) Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (GSPO) rules when operational for access by the general public.
- 1.3 There would need to be a firm commitment by all parties to the financial parameters set by the Pool Committee
- 1.4 There would need to be firm commitments by members of our community with the appropriate skills to undertake the positions on the Foster Pool Association Inc.

2. Financial Risk

The financial risk should be mitigated by the Foster Pool Committee setting parameters which will establish the basic financial framework.

- 2.1 Acceptance of these parameters by all parties is a prime requirement prior to progressing any discussions on the future of the Foster Pool.
- 2.2 Parameters should include (but not be limited to) the South Gippsland Shire Council agreeing to fund an indexed subsidy per annum
- 2.3 An acceptance by SGSC that an increase in community user group numbers as a result of improved facilities may result in a consequent increase in the dollar quantum of the subsidy
- 2.4 SGSC remain responsible for insurance and Crown Lands lease payments

3. Other Recommendations of this Report

3.1 Planning Scheme

An amendment to the Planning schedule to the existing Zone of Public Park and Recreation should be amended to state "swimming pool and any use pertaining to a pool should be allowed without a planning permit."

3.2 Future Capital Needs

- 3.2.1 Unless a very strong FPA Inc. committee is established the pool is doomed to closure as soon as any capital works is required.
- 3.2.2 We need acknowledgement from Council that it will adhere to its Strategic Direction for Aquatic Facilities in South Gippsland Shire Policy document.
- 3.2.3 Acknowledgement from Council that it will assist the FPA with an agreed indexed annual funding amount and with supporting applications for funding from other institutions and authorities for ongoing development of the pool.

3.3 Operational Needs

- 3.3.1 Operating hours, season length, pool temperature and specialised community user group access would be the responsibility of the FPA which would make decisions based on resource efficiency and the needs of the community.
- 3.3.2 GSPO Guidelines should be followed for low patronage pools. One lifeguard with a volunteer for administration/sales.
- 3.3.3 Management of the pool and any hirer are required to have an agreement or contract which clearly established the responsibility of both and signed by both parties.

1. Current Property

1.1 Property Description

South Gippsland Shire Council Strategic Direction for Aquatic Facilities February 2012 describes the Foster Outdoor Swimming Pool as a local service facility. The Foster Pool is a seasonal facility servicing the local community and surrounding districts during the warmer months of the year.

The facilities provide for lap swimming, school swim programs and children's play.

The surrounds provide a family friendly outdoor environment where social events can be held.

1.2 Current Improvements

The Foster Outdoor Swimming Pool has a 25m X 6 lane pool and a toddlers pool with well maintained surrounds. There is a pump house and solar mat heating. These improvements were rated as Fair in the Aquatic Strategy.

Fair rating is where components are generally in good condition with some evidence of minor failure or deterioration in local spots. Components would require some planned maintenance to prevent further deterioration and to return to very good condition.

There is an entrance building/kiosk and toilets/change rooms. These improvements were rated as good in the Aquatic Strategy.

Good rating is where all components are in very good condition with limited signs of wear. Components do not require any special attention.

1.3 Planning Scheme

Zone: Public park and Recreation Zone

Schedule to above – Nil

Overlays 6 N^o.

Outcome: The use of a swimming pool is not stated as allowed without a permit, but not prohibited. In general terms any works require a planning permit.

Recommendation:

Council consider amending the schedule to the zone to reflect the 'swimming pool and any use pertaining to a pool should be allowed without a planning permit.'

2. Current Management Structure

South Gippsland Shire Council operates the pool area under a licence from Department of Environment and Primary Industry.

DEPI guidelines say that community use tenants (such as Council), who under the terms of their lease provide solely community or social benefits pay a minimum rent based on cost-recovery reflecting the preparation and administration of the licence. Annual minimums will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are appropriate. So Council is paying a minimum licence fee at present.

South Gippsland Shire Council has also been appointed by DEPI as the Committee of Management of the area.

The powers given under the Act enable the Council as the Committee of Management to:

- manage and develop the reserve
- undertake financial transactions, including borrowing money (with the Victorian Treasurer's consent) and entering contracts
- enter tenure arrangements, such as leasing and licensing, for part or all of the reserve, subject to Minister's approval
- employ people

The Council as the Committee of Management can sub license the land. All sub-licences must be consistent with the purpose of the head licence and only those that satisfy the licensing principles for Crown land are to be permitted. The continuation of the pool operation would meet these requirements. The Committee of Management would also need to obtain the written consent to sub-let from the Minister before the tenure is entered into.

Council has foreshadowed a problem if it were to give up the licence entirely and another management entity was made the Committee of Management by DEPI. Council believes that prior to relinquishing its responsibilities as the Committee of Management, DEPI would require the land to be returned to green field condition.

Demolition and site works to return to a green fields situation have been estimated by Council at \$170,000 excluding GST and with project management and contingency the total cost would be \$200,000 excluding GST.

There is an existing Instrument of Delegation for a Section 86 Committee to run the pool. This is dated 7/12/2005. The responsibilities are outlined below but it would seem that of recent times the Section 86 Committee has been acting in an advisory and fund raising capacity only.

The YMCA was contracted by Council in 2011 for a period of three years for the management and operation of the Foster Swimming Pool. Prior to this the pool was managed by the Foster Pool Section 86 Committee with pool staff supplied via an employment agency.

Following a tender process YMCA has been appointed operator for four of the Shire’s outdoor pools for the coming season. Despite appeals from the Section 86 Committee, Council refused to consider the option of the Foster Pool being excluded from this tender process and reverting to Committee management.

We regret that the previous and proposed (new) contracts have been asked for but not provided by Council.

3. Types of Committees which could run the pool

Three types of Committee could be considered as prospective Managers of the Foster Pool:

- An incorporated Committee operating as a Committee of Management with a sub licence from the Council
- A Committee of Management established by Department Environment and Primary Industry
- A Section 86 Special Committee established under an Instrument of Delegation by the South Gippsland Shire Council

4. Pros and Cons of various Management structures

The following table sets out the pros and cons of various management structures which could be considered.

Structure	Pros	Cons
4.a DEPI incorporated COM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement of COM to run the land under regulations of DEPI and as the community wishes • COM pays rent to DEPI • COM could manage employment of managers of the pool as per GSPO • Strict performance indicators set for employees • Cap on costs could be implemented • Personal liability covered by incorporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council may renege on any operational funding • Council may renege on any future capital funding • We would want to be sure of DEPI insurance • DEPI or Council may not want the structure • DEPI appoints the members of the COM and this could be a negative or a positive • No direct involvement of Council • If Council stops being the nominated COM does the site have to be returned to a greenfields site prior to any action • Is there an increased risk to patrons with following GSPO guidelines
4.b Incorporated Foster Pool Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of FPA to run the pool as the community wishes • Hire out of pool • FPA could manage employment of managers of the pool as per GSPO • Strict performance indicators set for employees • Cap on costs could be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council still has to pay the lease • Needs the agreement of the Minister to sub-let the land • Costs of incorporation • Would we have to pay own public liability insurance or would be covered under DEPI or Council? • Council may renege on any operational funding • Council may renege on any

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implemented Personal liability covered by incorporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> future capital funding This is a big responsibility but the Prom Coast Childrens Centre has taken this step Need good people on Board Is there an increased risk to patrons with following GSPO guidelines
4c. Section 86 with revised Instrument of Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Committee is under umbrella of Council – covered by Council insurance, Council ABN Join the group of Section 86 Committees which play an integral part in managing Council owned or controlled properties and facilities A management regime could be implemented by the Committee regarding employment as per GSPO guidelines Strict costs regime could be implemented by the Committee There is a process of review by Council which provides for continuation of community engagement in running the pool but which minimises risk to committee members and also does not overburden them Would receive support and communication between Council and the Committee Covered under Council OH & S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any decision taken by Section 86 is a decision of Council and this can be a positive or a negative We would need Council to give a wide ranging Instrument of Delegation Council may renege on any operational funding Council may renege on any future capital funding Council would still have to pay the lease Committee would need to comply with the Instrument of Delegation and report to Council OH & S Council Co-Ordinator would need to visit the pool to review and provide recommendations in respect of any significant OH & S risks Need good people on S86 committee Is there an increased risk to patrons with following GSPO guidelines
4.d Council with full responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No management involvement by community which could be a positive or a negative Would rely on Council following its Aquatic Strategy where it is committed to keeping all the pools in the Shire open providing they meet key performance indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council can say no community interest or involvement in management so can just close the pool Only influence on Council would come from community outrage Council could justify increase in rates

5. Management Risks to be faced

5.1 Financial Risks

The Foster Swimming Pool Review identified:

1. The Foster Pool has historically operated within budget until the 2012/13 year. The apparent reason for the budget overrun was that this season included more hot days than most seasons leading to the Pool being open on more days but without a significant increase in attendance.
2. It could be expected in the future that attendance at the Foster Pool could be as low as 5,000 in a poor weather season and up to 10,000 in a good season
3. The long term cost to maintain and operate the Foster Pool is anticipated to average approximately \$100,000 per year at the current service level;
4. Based on this figure the net cost to Council per user would be expected to range between \$10 per person in a good season to \$20 per person in a poor season; and
5. The total cost to demolish the Foster Pool and return it to a green field site would be approximately \$200,000.

Discussion Points arising from financial risks are :

1. The whole documentation is stacked against the Foster community to get the subsidy of say half of the current subsidy of \$19.62/ visit.
2. The refusal of Council to let the Toora Pool contractors run the Foster pool for 12 months to see if they can implement efficiencies is very significant
3. The bench marking report is based on attendance figures that may include other activities other than swimming and needs review
4. Council not letting the Foster Pool Committee see the existing and proposed contract for operation is not very good for community trust in Council
5. The non-inclusion on the cost per visit for the Splash pool in Leongatha for swimming only would be of great interest

Recommendations:

It is the firm view of the authors that to mitigate these risks:

4. The Foster Pool Committee sets parameters which will establish the basic financial framework for the management of the pool. Acceptance of these parameters by all parties is a prime requirement prior to progressing any discussions on the future of the Foster Pool.
5. Parameters should include (but not be limited to):
 - 5.1 That the SGSC agree to fund an annual subsidy per annum
 - 5.2 That SGSC accepts that any self-funded capital improvements to the pool may also increase user numbers and a consequent increase in the quantum dollar value of the annual subsidy
 - 5.3 That SGSC remains responsible for insurance cost
 - 5.4 That SGSC remains responsible for the Crown Lands Lease payment

5.2 Future capital needs

Unless a very strong FPA Inc. committee is established the pool is doomed to closure as soon as any capital works is required. Council has already determined to defer any future non-essential expenditure at Foster Pool and review the strategic direction for aquatic facilities in South Gippsland in 2014/15.

Recommendation:

1. We need acknowledgement from Council that it will adhere to its Strategic Direction for Aquatic Facilities in South Gippsland Shire Policy document
2. We need acknowledgement from Council that it will assist with funding applications and/or finding sources of funding for heating the pool on a sustainable basis – This is a priority.

5.3 Operational Risks

1. In terms of future management the guidelines for management and operation are important to consider as they impact on the management model and profitability of the pool.
2. But this means that the South Gippsland Shire has to permit full operational control of the pool under the recommended management model
3. Operators of a pool are charged with a responsibility for public and occupational health and safety and they work within a diverse web of standards, state legislation and industry best practice. The Royal Life Saving Society publishes Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (GSPO) which are primarily designed for application in municipal facilities.
4. The current contract appears to have two lifeguards when only one is required for a low patronage pool subject to strict guidelines as outlined in RLAA GSPO. A volunteer could do daily administration/sales and one lifeguard for safety.
5. It is also important to consider the guidelines for hire of the pool as this also can impact on the management model and profitability.
6. The decision of Council to operate the Foster Pool at a reduced level of service for the 2104/15 season by increasing the opening temperature to 26 degrees would seem to impact on attendance figures

Recommendation:

1. Operating hours and temperature opening hours should be the responsibility of the FPA. Hours should be realistic and fit the needs of the community
2. GSPO guidelines should be followed for low patronage pools. One lifeguard with a volunteer for administration/sales.
3. Management of the pool and any hirer are required to have an agreement or contract which clearly established the responsibility of both and signed by both parties.

6. Management Model Recommended

1. Our recommendation is Model 4. b as outlined above. In this model the South Gippsland Shire Council remains the Holder of the licence of the Crown Land Reserve but subject to appropriate approvals sublets the Committee of Management role to an incorporated body known as the Foster Pool Association Inc.
2. This Foster Pool Association Inc. will then have the full management responsibility of the pool. The management responsibility encompasses staff employment and ensuring that the pool is managed under the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSA) Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (GSPO) rules.
3. There would need to be a firm commitment from all parties to the financial parameters set by the Pool Committee

There would need to be firm commitments from members of our community with the appropriate skills to undertake the positions on the Foster Pool Association Inc..

Appendix 2: Foster Swimming Pool Roofed Structure and Shading quotation

1st November 2014 Leonie Clyne

To retain heat and exclude weather conditions a roofed structure enclosing the pool is being considered to extend the length of the swimming season. It could have either open sides, permanent sides or removable sides.

Roofed Structure options being considered:

Barrel Arch PVC Membrane over Steel Structure

This structure is similar to the one at Toora Pool. The company Shadeliving have submitted a budgetary quotation for a structure 32 x 22 metre barrel arch PVC membrane structure on 3 metre high posts for \$175 – 200,000 & GST.

Optional Clear PVC Blinds around entire surface \$40 – 50,000 & GST

Ziptrack system with hand crank \$70 – 80,000 & GST

See attached quotation and photos

The advantage of a PVC membrane is that it is translucent and lets the light through and the noise level doesn't reverberate. The structure is not strong enough to support solar heating panels.

Steel Structure with Colorbond/polycarbonate Roof

Steel structure hot dipped galvanised on posts 3 metres high with colorbond/polycarbonate roof. Two companies were approached for initial enquiry.

- SupaWeld Traralgon:
They have constructed similar open sided structures over basketball courts and we are still awaiting reply.
- Safety Steel Dandenong:
They are definitely not interested as in their opinion there are too many problems with the effect of chlorine on the metal, and the structure should be engineered and air conditioned as per the pool 'Splash' in Leongatha.
This structure could support solar heating panels.

Polycarbonate Roof

Quotation pending from Light & Space Roof Systems.

Quotation from Shadeliving

Re: Foster Outdoor Pool – Budgetary Quotation for Barrel Arch PVC membrane structure

Our Reference No: 8410

We are pleased to provide our formal budgetary estimate for the provision of a barrel arch PVC membrane structure for over the over the main outdoor pool as detailed below. Shadeliving has in excess of 15 years experience in the tension membrane industry is a Registered Building Practitioner in the category of shade structures (CB-L 23706). **Preliminary Proposal:**

Budgetary Estimate:

Optional extras:

Supply and installation of a 32 metre x 22 metre barrel arch PVC membrane structure on 3 metre high posts, with the inclusion a gutter beam down both sides and the arched gable ends being filled in.

\$175 to \$200,000 + GST.

Clear PVC blinds around entire structure

- Hand roll with side zips – **Approx \$40 to \$50,000 + GST**

- Ziptrack system with hand crank – **Approx \$70 to \$80,000 + GST**

Steelwork Specification;

Structural grade circular hollow section steel with a hot dipped galvanised finish.

Membrane Specifications:

Waterproof PVC Fabric

- Ferrari 802S2 architectural grade PVC fabric with a PVDF coating
- High frequency welded seams and edge pockets

Preliminary Inclusions:

Independent engineering design and certification (Regulation 1507).

Building Permit by Shade Living.

Allowance for all works to be carried out in accordance with OH&S regulations and requirements

Removal of spoils from site.

Preliminary Assumptions and Exclusions:

Clear site access for plant and equipment.

No allowance has been made for a Town Planning Permit if required, however the proposal should be exempt (to be confirmed).

Bored pier footing is suitable for soil conditions.

Clear digging of the footings to the required size.

Soft, filled or rocky ground will often result in additional excavation and labour costs which will be passed on to the client.

Appendix 3: Fundraising plan

FUNDRAISING PLAN TO KEEP THE FOSTER POOL OPEN AND TO SUPPORT IT'S ONGOING VIABILITY		
<p>GOAL: Our initial goal is to raise funds to enable the installation of suitable technologies to raise the water temperature of the pool to the level recommended for general use, 28 degrees. Subsequently we aim to raise funds to appropriately shade the pool area and to provide ongoing funding to support the ongoing viability of the pool.</p>		
Strategies		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure government and philanthropic trust grants 2. Attract regular donations from the current and past pool community 3. Seek the financial support of the broader local community 4. Host fundraising events 5. Raise funds through increased attendance, facilities hiring and other earned income 6. Use the Crowd-Sourcing online strategy to raise funds for specific aspects of the overall project 		
1. Secure government and philanthropic trust grants		
Actions	Who	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research/identify potential grants: For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OurCommunity.com; ▪ Philanthropy Victoria; ▪ SGSC, ▪ State & Federal governments e.g. ▪ Putting Locals First Program ▪ Local Infrastructure Program ▪ Jack Brockhoff Foundation ▪ Gardiner Foundation funding for strengthening dairy industry communities ▪ Bald Hills Wind Farm wish to support the community by sponsorships ▪ Esso (Barry Beach Marine Terminal) is also a possibility as a community-minded sponsor. • Develop a timeline and program of grant applications so that grant applications are completed in a timely manner by the due date closely matching the grant criteria to the application. • Appoint a member of the Foster Pool committee to be responsible for notifying the committee of impending grants and organising for appropriate applications to be made. 	Carol/Linda	Jan 2015
2. Attract regular donations from the current and past pool community (Friends of Foster Pool)		
Actions	Who	When
2.1 Create a database of current and past pool community including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolphins swimming club members • Schools • Sporting clubs • Regular lap swimmers 	Linda/Pool Committee	Jan 2015

4. Host fundraising events		
Actions	Who	When
<p>4.1 Recruit an 'events committee' to generate income through fundraising events, e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raffle, garage sale, duck race, and swim-a-thon! • Water polo • End of season water polo – with dogs! • A 'sink or swim' comp for less seasoned swimmers • Swim with dogs fundraiser • Golf Day charity events, etc. • Charity footy events • Charity cricket events • Cake stalls, Raffles, etc • Parties and dances • Work with Boy Scouts/Cubs to raise funds through offering car wash services in town and at key events (or similar) • Get together with neighbours, hold a street garage sale with proceeds to the Pool • Other fundraising activities could include bike rides, coffee mornings, fun runs. 	Events Committee	2015
5. Raise income through sales and other earned income		
Actions	Who	When
<p>5.1 Charge and conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge an optional fundraising premium for adult and junior swimming lessons • Conduct fundraising lifesaving workshops and training • Squad training • Aqua aerobics classes for old and young • Foster Cubs Jamborees • Cinema nights • BBQs & movie nights • Pool parties • Host schools' break-up parties • Encourage businesses to hold a pre-Christmas end of year pool party at the pool • Host birthday pool parties and other special events • Form a 'Polar Bear' Club to swim in cooler weather • Find profitable ways to utilise the pool in the off-season, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stock the pool with trout and hold a winter Trout Fest: http://www.spec.com.au/blog/2005/10/18/pool-fishing-plan-coleraine-pool-to-be-stocked-with-trout/ See also: http://esvc000435.wic043u.server-web.com/artf/TIYP.html • Develop and sell 'I support Foster Pool' merchandise ... T-shirts, caps, bumper stickers, pens etc., available in a variety of outlets. • Hire out facilities for events <p>5.2 Stimulate interest in swimming to increase paid membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute swimming squads 	FPC Events Sub Committee	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forge alliances with sporting clubs • Water aerobics • Swimming lessons • Lifesaving lessons • Swim-a-thons • Hold 'mummy and me' swimming classes that teach parents how to teach children to swim • Compete in inter-town swimming competitions <p>5.3 Sell good food and coffee poolside.</p>		
6. Generate income through Crowd-Sourcing		
Actions	Who	When
<p>Crowd-sourcing is potentially a fruitful opportunity.</p> <p>6.1 Develop a compelling case for support, including video footage to generate interest online in the project. A compelling 'story' for potential supporters who have no prior connection with Foster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local talent to write a script and create a video to support the online appeal • Develop a campaign with pozible.com and indiegogo.com • Promote locally and on social media 	<p>Peter Burgess and fund raising Member of the Foster Pool Committee</p>	<p>2015</p>

Appendix 4: Letters of Community Support

U3A programmes

Foster Swimming Pool: a response from U3A Prom Coast

The Committee of U3A Prom Coast Inc. has unanimously supported the proposal for redevelopment and improvement of the Foster swimming pool.

If the pool was upgraded to include facilities like heated water, enclosed pool area and supervision we would be willing to support the pool by offering U3A courses and activities at the pool.

These activities would be specifically for retired people and would include

- Swimming for exercise
- Learn to swim
- Hydro therapy and water aerobics
- Water safety and classes in resuscitation
- Other activities identified by U3A members.

U3A Prom Coast currently has about 252 members and was started just 3 years ago with a humble 32 members. With a rapid increase in the numbers of retired people in our community, including “Baby Boomers” and retirees from the city seeking a sea-change or a tree-change, we anticipate our numbers could grow rapidly. Within 10 years our goal is to have at least 1,000 members.

The focus of the courses and activities that our U3A offers to members is about “Life Long Learning” with an emphasis on healthy lifestyles, particularly on maintaining physical and mental health.

Adding some U3A activities which require the use of a heated local swimming pool would be encouraged. Ancillary classes in water safety, resuscitation and CPR would also be included.

If the pool was heated and had appropriate shelter we envisage about 20% of our members would be likely to participate and thereby gain benefit from our programs. This is an extremely conservative estimate since our class participate rates are often influenced by the degree of promotion of our courses which limited budgets can afford. Potentially we believe that about 8 one-hour classes could be offered each week, especially if we market the activities appropriately.

We have also circulated a message to our U3A members seeking their opinions about using the pool and suggestions for other U3A activities which members would be prepared to enrol in if the pool facilities were upgraded.

Our U3A Committee of Management discussed the issue of using a pool for classes at its 14 October meeting and a decision in support of the Foster pool development was recorded in the Minutes.

Kind regards,

Dr. Neil Shaw,

President and on behalf of the U3A Committee of Management



Taryn Comben
Physiotherapist
South Gippsland Hospital &
Community Health Centre
PO Box 104
FOSTER 3960
Ph: 56 839 780 | Fax: 56 821 028

20th October 2014

To Whom it May concern,

As the physiotherapist at the South Gippsland Hospital (SGH) I am writing to add my support to the growing number of people advocating to keep the Foster Swimming Pool in operation.

The benefits of the swimming pool might be obvious for the younger generations, including the opportunity to learn how to swim and enjoy fun in the sun; however swimming pools are important facilities for people throughout the lifespan.

It is important to encourage regular exercise from a young age; however it is also important that older people, particularly those who suffer from chronic diseases such as osteoarthritis and diabetes, participate in physical activity in order to avoid the adverse health outcomes associated with their condition.

Here in Foster, in our aging community, it is particularly important that we as a society advocate and encourage people to get active, or else our already over-stretched health service will be under unfathomable pressure. Although we should be encouraging people of all ages to utilise the pool for general exercise and recreation, the swimming pool is also an essential facility for rehabilitation.

Hydrotherapy, or aquatic therapy as it is now known, has many benefits for a diverse range of people; the properties of water create an environment that is more favourable for many people to exercise in, compared to exercising on land. For example aquatic therapy has shown to improve function for people with problems including pain, muscle spasms, decreased strength and range of motion.

As the water causes people to become buoyant; the pool offers a unique environment, particularly for people after having an orthopaedic operation or fracture, to improve their

strength and mobility whilst complying with their weight-bearing limitations. The buoyancy of the water also allows people to exercise at a high-intensity, without the pain that can be caused by high-impact land-based exercise such as running.

If the water is warm (30-34degrees Celsius), there are additional benefits; the warm water acts as a muscle relaxant and helps with pain and muscle spasms. It can therefore help to improve function for many people, including people with osteoarthritis, low-back-pain, chronic pain, cerebral palsy and spinal cord injury.

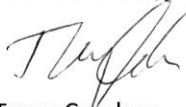
The SGH Community Health Centre cannot currently offer aquatic therapy to clients due to the lack of an appropriate facility. It is not appropriate to encourage clients requiring physiotherapy intervention to embark on unsupervised exercise programs at other regional pools as most clients require specific guidance and instruction to exercise correctly and safely. Furthermore, some clients don't have the motivation to exercise independently.

The only option for clients is therefore to travel to Leongatha and access therapy through the Gippsland Southern Health Service. However, most clients are unable to drive, due to their frailty or mobility issues, requiring the additional cost of arranged transport or the option of not accessing this form of therapy at all

A heated swimming pool in Foster would address the current inequity in access to hydrotherapy intervention. As well as individual programs it would also enable South Gippsland Hospital to facilitate group aquatic therapy sessions. This would address the other aforementioned barriers to exercise including transport, financial costs and motivation, and therefore improve the health outcomes of many clients in our local community. The group exercise sessions would be funded by the individual through the co-contribution fee.

Although poor health outcomes can be detrimental for the individual, poor health outcomes have a flow on effect for society, as health resources are required to care for them. It seems ludicrous to lose an asset in a community that is already under-resourced, and therefore I strongly urge you to use whatever means possible to ensure that this invaluable facility can continue to be utilised by our community.

Yours sincerely,



Taryn Comben

Physiotherapist

South Gippsland Hospital and Community Health Centre

To Whom it May Concern,

Please find this letter as a vote of support of the notion of an upgrade of the Foster Pool for the use of aquatherapy on behalf of the organisation that I represent, Prom Country Aged Care (PCAC).

Our organisation's presence in Foster has recently doubled in size with the opening of Prom Country House, our new \$11.5M aged care facility situated within the Foster health precinct. Since the move to the new facility, our occupancy rate's average has been 99.8%. This rate is within the top 5% benchmarked in the country. This, coupled with a waiting list of over 50, has prompted us to apply for more bed licences for additional rooms to be built on to our 9 O'Connell Rd premises, which we will find out about at the end of this year. These facts are presented to highlight the demand for aged services within the Foster region.

Aquatherapy (or hydrotherapy) has been used for a number of years to assist people within their later years with a range of issues from arthritis pain management to rehabilitation from falls. In researching the potential use of aquatherapy resources, given our current resident mix, our Physiotherapist, TarynComben believes we would have 63% (38) of our residents that would be able to use the facility that would benefit from it. From our organisations financial point of view, part of PCAC's revenue is provided to us by Medicare via the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) which in its most basic terms provides aged care facilities with funds based on the amount of care a resident is given depending on their state of health. If PCAC were to introduce aquatherapy to these amount of residents stated at least once per week (held in 7 separate classes during the week), it would provide our organisation with an additional \$1,900 per week in gross revenue, not to mention the physical and mental improvement of health of our residents.

In looking at the demographic data of our local government region, Foster has the equal highest mean age rate (54), along with the fastest population growth rate of people over 60, making the location of Foster a strong candidate for aquatherapy services in the South Gippsland Shire.

Please contact me on the below details should you have any additional queries.

Warm Regards,



Rhett McLennan

CEO – Prom Country Aged Care

Email – rhett.mclennan@promcountryagedcare.com.au



SOUTH GIPPSLAND HOSPITAL

PO Box 104
87 Station Road
Foster Vic 3960

ABN 35 364 836 505

Jacinta Lamb
Chronic Disease Management Nurse
Community Health Centre
South Gippsland Hospital
22nd October, 2014.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the continued operation of the Foster Swimming Pool. In my role as Chronic Disease Management Nurse at the South Gippsland Hospital Community Health Centre I see many people in our community that are recovering from serious illness or operative procedures. I see clients who have been newly diagnosed with a chronic illness and are keen to make "lifestyle changes" to improve their prognosis. I also see clients who have numerous chronic illnesses and require exercise to maintain strength to enable them to remain in their own homes rather than entering aged care.

I am a strong advocate of the health advantages of swimming and local access to swimming pools. It is important to encourage regular exercise for older people, particularly those who suffer from chronic diseases such as osteoarthritis, heart disease, diabetes, cancer and other debilitating conditions to participate in physical activity in order to avoid the adverse health outcomes associated with their condition. A heated pool is an appropriate facility for this demographic of cliental.

Foster is an already disadvantaged area due to its remote location and lack of transport options, being one of the few townships of substantial size in Victoria to not have a local taxi service.

Please accept this letter in your consideration to retaining the Foster pool and hopefully providing much needed upgrading of heating the pool to keep all year round access to our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jacinta Lamb', written over a horizontal line.

Kind Regards
Jacinta Lamb
Chronic Disease Management Nurse
Registered Nurse Division 1