

ITEM A LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNCIL'S AQUATIC ASSETS

Between the 1950s and 1970s there was an enormous growth in the number of swimming pools constructed across Australia, which has culminated in many of these pools now being at the end of their useful life. A report from Royal Lifesaving Australia found that approximately 500 (or approximately 40 per cent) of public swimming pools in Australia require replacement in the next 10 years. Wollongong City Council owns and manages 9 supervised public swimming pools, the majority of them constructed over 40 years ago: Continental Pool (1928), Thirroul Pool (1940), Dapto Swimming Pool (1965), Helensburgh Swimming Pool (1969), Corrimal Swimming Pool (1973), Western Suburbs (1977), Berkeley Swimming Pool (1980), Beaton Park Pool (1983) and Port Kembla Pool (2000). Council also owns and manages nine unsupervised tidal ocean rock pools.

The current *Future of our Pools Strategy* is coming to its conclusion and therefore the next iteration needs to be considered as we address the challenges of aging assets. It is important for the community to understand the challenge in managing ageing swimming pools particularly given increasing annual maintenance costs. These are among our most costly assets which are made available at minimum cost or free to our ratepayers.

RECOMMENDATION

I therefore recommend that –

- 1 In light of recent challenges with our ageing aquatic assets in the lead up to the current swim season and in preparing for the 2024/25 budget, Wollongong City Council considers allocating resources to update the Future of our Pools Strategy.
- 2 Wollongong City Council calls on the NSW Government to work with local government to address funding challenges and strategies for the replacement and upgrade of aquatic infrastructure due to higher standards and community expectations.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.