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Postbag

Activity needed in obesity fight

CHILDHOOD obesity in Plymouth has doubled in the past 10 years, according to results of a survey of 3,300 primary age children from Plymouth's Public Health Development Unit reported by the BBC News website.

In the Herald of April 9, 2004, I noted that a survey of 20,973 Plymouth children aged from five to 14 in the years 1994 to 1996, published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health (2000), showed that back then Plymouth had a rate of childhood obesity two-and-a-half times the national average. I have been calling for another survey since 2003 (Herald, November 27, 2003). Now these truly shocking results have been obtained, surely the city's Cabinet must reconsider their decision to close Seaton Pool at the end of this month?

In the full council debate on March 6, I said, "All efforts should be made to find the money to keep the pool open or to relocate it nearby." I've even written to Tony Blair asking for £4million for this after he criticised Liberal Democrat-led Chesterfield Borough Council during Prime Minister's Question Time on January 18 for closing public swimming facilities.

Why can't (or won't) Plymouth's Cabinet be more active, too, in the search for money now that our children so desperately need these facilities?

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