

8/3/06
EVENING HERALD

CALL FOR NEW POOL IS SUNK

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by **ROB PREECE**

Herald Reporter

PLYMOUTH City Council has no firm plans to provide a replacement for Seaton Pool when it closes next month.

Conservative councillors fear that residents in northern areas, such as Southway and Derriford, will be unable to swim when the pool shuts as the city's other venues are too far away.

At a meeting of the city council on Monday, they tabled a motion calling on the authority to specifically improve facilities in the north, as well as Central Park.

But an amendment proposed by the Labour administration was approved instead, which set out a more general pledge to boost facilities across the city.

The decision means that



CLOSURE: Seaton Pool

there are no firm plans to provide a replacement pool in the north of the city after Seaton closes.

Tory opposition leader Vivien Pengelly, who presented the original motion, said the council should look to provide community pools in addition to the proposed £50million Life Centre at Central Park.

She said: "We all want and need a 50-metre pool in Plymouth, but at the same time community pools are being closed down.

"Easy access to the remain-

ing facilities are essential due to maximising the benefits that swimming provides."

The debate comes after Labour Cabinet members agreed to close Seaton, which is located on the Plymouth International Business Park at Derriford and owned by the South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA).

Cabinet members heard that the crumbling facility, which is costing the council £160,000 a year, would require at least £1million in funding to bring it up to scratch.

Councillor Dr David Salter, seconding the motion, said: "I believe the decision to close Seaton Pool was taken with inadequate and, in many respects, false information.

"All efforts should be made to find the money to keep the pool open or to relocate it nearby."