

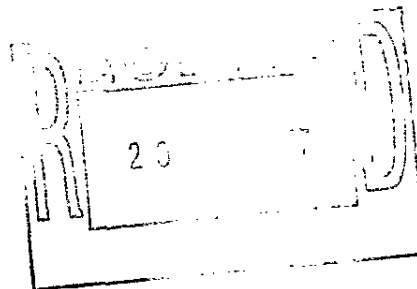
Leighton Andrews AC/AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog dros Adfywio  
Deputy Minister for Regeneration



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-064  
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/00065/07

Val Lloyd AM  
National Assembly For Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA



19 December 2007

Dear Val,

**Petition: North Torfaen Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre**

Thank you for your letters of 28 November to myself and the Minister for Heritage concerning the North Torfaen Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre. This is a facility owned and run by Torfaen County Borough Council. Decisions on the future of that facility are a matter for that local authority and local residents with concerns will no doubt wish to raise those matters directly with that authority.

The Heads of the Valleys Programme is a 15 year regeneration strategy developed in full partnership with five local authorities, (Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau-Gwent and Torfaen), and other local stakeholders to tackle the root causes of economic inactivity and other key issues in the area within the context of the Wales Spatial Plan. The Heads of the Valleys Programme will respond to considered bids from local authorities and stakeholders on the basis of the business plans submitted. It was not envisaged that the role of the Heads of the Valleys Programme would be to maintain swimming pools.


I understand from the Minister for Heritage that local authorities in Wales have shown the positive aspect of allowing 'cross-boundary' co-operation to support our Free Swimming Initiative for children and young people and for those aged 60+. As a result, he has been assured that both Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire County Councils will allow both groups free access to their swimming facilities, regardless of residency. Furthermore he understands from the County Borough Council that alternative leisure facilities are available for residents and former users of the Centre at the Pontypool Active Learning centre, Cwmbran Stadium, the Bowden Active Living Centre and Fairwater Leisure.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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As for assistance from the Sports Council, the Minister for Heritage has asked his officials to discuss this matter with them in order that they can consider any support that can be provided.

I hope this clarifies the current position.

Yours sincerely  


**Leighton Andrews AM**  
**Deputy Minister for Regeneration**