

# **PE2018/M: Recognise the value of swimming pools and provide financial relief to help keep pools open**

## **Tim Eagle MSP written submission, 7 April 2025**

It remains clear to me that swimming pools like all sports and leisure facilities are a vital part of our communities. Scotland is fortunate to have a stunning array of beautiful beaches and lochs that local people enjoy throughout the year. Ensuring there are opportunities to learn to swim and enjoy a range of water-based activities is for me an essential.

It pained me during my time as a Councillor that sport and leisure was often seen as a way to save money, yet correctly funded and promoted it has the potential to be a great deliverer of change. Swimming is a low impact sport which can help build muscle and repair joint injuries. It helps with fitness, reducing weight and even small sessions can help reduce blood pressure.

Sport and leisure, which very much includes swimming pools can be an enabler if correctly resourced, taking pressure of our NHS, promoting teamwork and community resilience.

I was delighted to hear for myself the chatter amongst young people following the Scottish National & Open Age Group Swimming Championships (SNAGS) in Aberdeen 5-9th April 2025 and my congratulations to all those who took part. Swimming pools across Scotland welcome amateur swim clubs many times each week, often coached by parents, where our young people work hard to compete in meets across the country culminating in the SNAGS event. So many young people having worked so hard and many who will through their successes go on to represent Scotland in the UK.

Yet these groups deliver so much more, in some pools like the community of Buckie, the swimming club also run a weekly training club to help others learn to swim. Every week secondary school aged children volunteer to help support swimming classes for the youngest in our society. Those experiences, that voluntary work is amazing to see.

From parent and baby classes to fitness classes for the elderly, our swimming pools have much to offer, a saving on a budget line is not one of them!

The petition 'PE2018: Recognise the value of swimming pools and provide financial relief to help keep pools open' has my full and unwavering support. We must come to realise more the value sport and leisure can offer our society and us as individuals; our swimming pools are a vital part of this offer.