

## **Millom Pool**

There has been much recent comment on social media, the local press and in the community about the planned demolition of Millom Pool. As a school, we recognise the importance of having a swimming pool in the local community. Swimming is an important life skill and there are no alternative pools close by. Our pupils benefited from the pool both in terms of the school curriculum and the provision of lessons in the evenings.

The pool has been closed since July 2017. This decision was taken following the survey undertaken by Cumbria County Council. The survey report highlighted significant health and safety concerns, as well as improvements to the pool plant which were required. Given the health and safety concerns raised in the report, the pool could not be reopened without substantial capital investment and in the interests of keeping our students and other young people in the community safe the pool remained closed.

The report highlighted the need to spend in the region of £300,000 to repair the pool to a state in which it could be used safely. These repairs would not necessarily provide a long term solution as the state of the building would require continued investment to maintain the facility. Recognising that school cannot fund repairs to the pool, the council considered whether it would fund these repairs but decided that it could not do so given the other demands on its schools maintenance budget.

The Headteacher met with the Millom Pool Committee. This is a group of people from the Millom community with an interest in providing a pool for Millom. The group includes representatives from Copeland Borough Council, the local MP, Millom Town Council and other interested parties. At the meeting of this group in January, the condition survey and costs of repair were discussed in detail and the position of the school in not being able to fund the repairs was reported. It was made clear at that meeting that if no concrete proposals for addressing the necessary repairs were forthcoming then the pool would be demolished in the summer holidays. The idea of relocating a pool onto another, more accessible part of the site was also discussed. At the following meeting in March it was evident that little progress had been made in securing funding or support to improve the condition of the existing pool. It was confirmed that planning permission to demolish the pool in the summer holidays would be sought and that the committee would look at a new pool on a more accessible site.

The school is fully supportive of the local community's desire for a swimming pool in Millom. If the community can come up with a fully costed, sustainable plan for a new pool then we are open to a discussion around giving up part of the school site in support of this.