



Aquatic Feasibility Consultation Report

Round 2 Community Consultation



Version: 1 – Date: March 2026

Introduction:

Break O’Day Council is currently investigating the potential development of an aquatic facility within the municipality.

As part of this process, Council commissioned an Aquatic Facility Feasibility Study, prepared by OTIUM Consultants, to explore the potential costs, benefits and operational considerations associated with the development of a new facility.

Following the release of the Feasibility Study, Council undertook a second round of community engagement to provide residents with the opportunity to review the information presented and provide feedback on the proposal.

The Round 2 Community Engagement Survey sought to better understand community views regarding the potential development of an aquatic facility, including community priorities, willingness to support further investigation, and expectations regarding potential costs and facility use.

A total of 861 responses were received, representing a strong level of community participation.

The results of this engagement will assist Council in understanding community perspectives and will inform Council’s consideration of the next steps in assessing the feasibility of an aquatic facility for Break O’Day.

Aims of Consultation:

The Round 2 community engagement process was designed to build on the information presented in the Aquatic Facility Feasibility Study prepared by OTIUM Consultants and to provide Council with a clearer understanding of community views regarding the proposal.

The key aims of the consultation were to:

1. Provide the community with information regarding the estimated costs, operational considerations and potential funding models associated with an aquatic facility.
2. Ensure the community had an opportunity to review and respond to the findings of the Feasibility Study.
3. Understand the level of community support for Council progressing to a detailed Business Case to further investigate the project.
4. Explore community views regarding the potential financial implications of the project, including willingness to support a permanent rate increase.
5. Understand the community’s capacity and willingness to pay for entry fees or facility use.
6. Identify how residents may use the facility, including expected attendance and preferred facility features.
7. Provide respondents with the opportunity to share additional comments, suggestions and concerns through open-ended Responses.

The consultation aimed to provide Council with a clear understanding of community sentiment while ensuring residents had access to information regarding the potential costs and considerations associated with the development of an aquatic facility.

Consultation Process:

Survey

The community survey formed the primary engagement tool for Round 2 consultation associated with the Aquatic Facility Feasibility Study.

The survey included a combination of multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions designed to gather community views regarding the potential development of an aquatic facility. Questions explored topics including community support for the proposal, location considerations, anticipated facility use, and potential financial implications such as entry fees and willingness to support a rate increase.

The survey was originally opened on 2 December 2025 and was subsequently extended to allow additional time for community participation. The survey closed at close of business on 27 February 2026.

A total of 861 responses were received.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and Responses were anonymous.

Survey Availability

To maximise accessibility, the survey was made available through a number of channels.

The survey was available online via the Break O’Day Council website, with direct links provided through Council communication channels.

A QR code linking directly to the survey was included in promotional materials and social media posts to enable easy access from mobile devices.

Supporting information was also provided online, including:

- 3-minute explainer video
- Two-page Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document
- Community Focussed Executive Summary
- Economic and Social Benefits Assessment
- “Can we afford it “ Financial Assessment

Hardcopy information materials, including posters and FAQs, were made available at a number of community locations including:

- Fingal and St Helens Neighbourhood Houses
- St Helens Online Access Centre
- St Marys Library
- St Helens Library
- Break O’Day Council Office
- St Helens Child and Family Centre

Hardcopy surveys were also available on request. Three completed hardcopy surveys were returned to Council and were manually entered into the survey results.

Promotion

The survey was promoted through a range of Council communication channels and local media to ensure broad community awareness.

Promotion included:

- Publication of information and survey links on the Break O’Day Council website
- Six social media posts on Council’s Facebook page between 19 December 2025 and 21 February 2026, generating more than 20,000 views
- Inclusion in the Council Community Newsletter (November/December 2025 and January/February 2026 editions)
- Distribution of a media release on 2 December 2025 to regional media outlets including *The Examiner*, *The Mercury*, *North-East Advertiser*, ABC Radio, WIN News and Star FM
- Publication of an article in *The Examiner* on 9 December 2025
- Local radio advertising on Star FM, broadcast three times daily between 10 December 2025 and 26 February 2026
- Promotion through the Mayor’s regular columns in *The Valley Voice* and the *North-East Advertiser*
- Direct email distribution to Council’s electronic newsletter mailing list (700+ recipients) on 2 December 2025
- Distribution of an additional email to community groups and networks, encouraging them to share the survey within their communities on 2 December 2025.

Council also worked with the East Coast Aquatic and Wellbeing Group and other community networks asking for their assistance in sharing information about the survey and reports.

Additional Engagement Opportunities

In addition to the formal survey process, information relating to the feasibility study and the survey was made publicly available through Council’s communication channels to support community understanding of the proposal.

The explainer video, FAQ document and feasibility reports were made available online to assist community members in understanding the project, including potential costs and funding considerations.

Elected Members were also provided with the relevant information and materials to assist them in responding to community enquiries and discussions regarding the proposal.

Participation

The survey received 861 responses, representing a strong level of community participation.

In addition to the structured survey responses, respondents provided more than 750 written comments across the open-ended questions, offering detailed feedback regarding the proposal.

This level of engagement indicates significant community interest in the potential development of an aquatic facility and the considerations associated with the project.

Limitations of the Survey

While the survey generated a strong level of participation, it is important to recognise that community surveys represent the views of those who chose to participate and may not reflect the views of the entire population.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and responses were anonymous. As with most community consultation processes, respondents may have stronger views on the topic than those who did not participate.

The results of the survey are therefore intended to provide insight into community perspectives and priorities, rather than to represent a statistically representative sample of the entire Break O'Day population.

The findings of this consultation should be considered alongside other relevant information, including technical assessments, financial analysis and broader strategic planning considerations, when evaluating the potential development of an aquatic facility.

Individual responses may reference more than one topic or theme.

Key Findings

The Round 2 community engagement survey received 861 responses, representing a strong level of community participation. This high level of participation demonstrates a level of community interest in the proposal and the future of aquatic facilities within Break O'Day.

Survey results indicate a range of perspectives within the community, including both support for further investigation of an aquatic facility while others have concerns regarding potential financial impacts and long-term sustainability.

Key themes emerging from the survey responses include:

Community Interest in an Aquatic Facility

A proportion of respondents expressed support for the potential development of an aquatic facility, highlighting opportunities for recreation, physical activity, community wellbeing and learn-to-swim programs.

Financial Considerations

Financial implications were the most frequently raised issue across written responses. Respondents commonly referenced potential impacts on rates, affordability for households and the importance of ensuring any facility is financially sustainable.

Location and Accessibility

Location was a significant topic of discussion, with respondents emphasising the importance of selecting a site that provides equitable access for residents across the municipality.

Funding Opportunities

Some respondents highlighted the importance of securing State or Federal Government funding to assist with the development of an aquatic facility and reduce potential financial impacts on ratepayers.

Facility Design and Use

A smaller number of responses provided suggestions regarding facility features such as heated pools, lap swimming lanes, learn-to-swim areas and spaces for recreational and therapeutic use.

Overall, the responses reflect a community that is engaged in the discussion and interested in ensuring that any future decision regarding an aquatic facility carefully considers both the potential benefits and the financial implications for the municipality.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Question 1:

WHAT TOWNSHIP DO YOU LIVE IN?

853 Responses

Responses were received from residents across the Break O’Day municipality.

The majority of respondents identified as living within the St Helens / Stieglitz / Binalong Bay area, representing 56.4% of Responses (481 respondents).

The next largest group of respondents were from Scamander / Beaumaris (17.1%), followed by St Marys / Cornwall (8.7%).

Smaller numbers of Responses were received from other areas of the municipality including:

- Fingal / Mathinna / Mangana (5.0%)
- Falmouth / Four Mile Creek / Seymour (4.8%)
- Pyengana / Goulds / Weldborough (2.7%)

A further 5.3% of respondents selected “Other”, indicating they lived outside the listed townships or in smaller localities.

Population vs Survey Representation Table

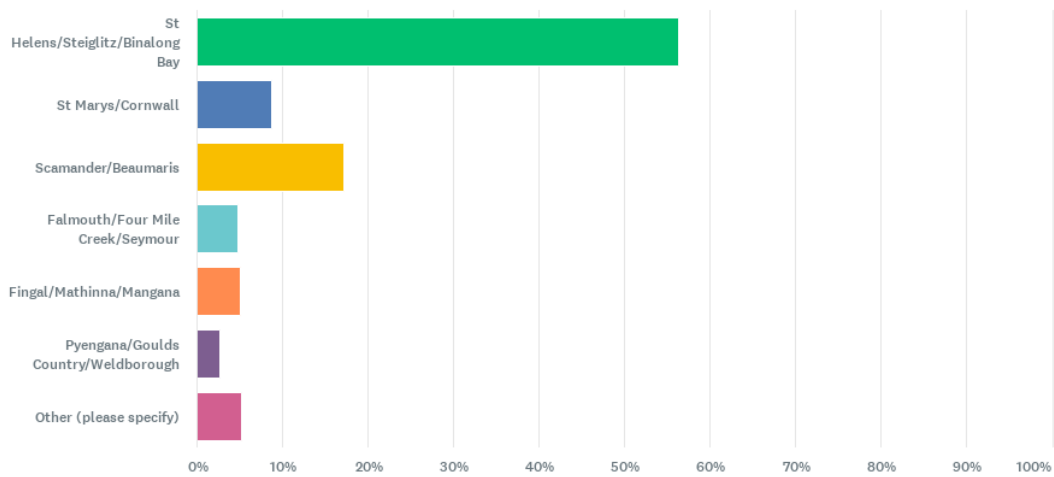
Township Group	Estimated Population (2021 ABS Census Data)	% of Total Population	% of Survey Responses
St Helens / Stieglitz / Binalong Bay	3,275	48.4%	56.4%
Scamander / Beaumaris	1,165	17.2%	17.1%
St Marys / Cornwall	820	12.1%	8.7%
Fingal / Mathinna / Mangana	600	8.9%	5.0%
Falmouth / Four Mile Creek / Seymour	350	5.2%	4.8%
Pyengana / Weldborough / Goulds	226	3.3%	2.7%
Other / Outside Area	—	—	5.3%
Total	6,770	100%	100%

*Population figures are based on Council estimates. Minor variances between the total municipal population and grouped township figures reflect smaller localities and rural areas not captured within the defined township groupings.

A comparison of survey responses with the distribution of the municipality’s population indicates that participation broadly reflects the population profile of Break O’Day.

While the St Helens area is somewhat over-represented, this is consistent with it being the municipality’s largest population centre. Representation from other township groups is generally proportionate, with only minor variation across smaller communities.

Q1 What Township do you live in?



Question 2:

ARE YOU A BREAK O'DAY RATEPAYER?

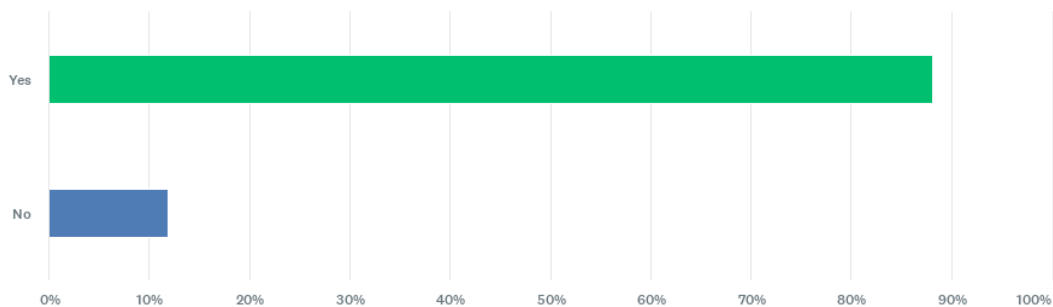
840 Responses

The majority of respondents identified as Break O'Day ratepayers.

- 88.1% (740 respondents) indicated they are ratepayers.
- 11.9% (100 respondents) indicated they are not ratepayers.

This indicates that the survey Responses largely reflect the views of residents who contribute directly to Council rates. It should be noted that survey Responses are self-reported.

Q2 Are you a Break O'Day ratepayer?



Question 3:

HAVE YOU READ THE DRAFT REPORT, SUMMARY REPORT, FAQ OR WATCHED THE EXPLAINER VIDEO?

837 Responses

Respondents indicated a strong level of engagement with the information provided.

The most commonly accessed materials were:

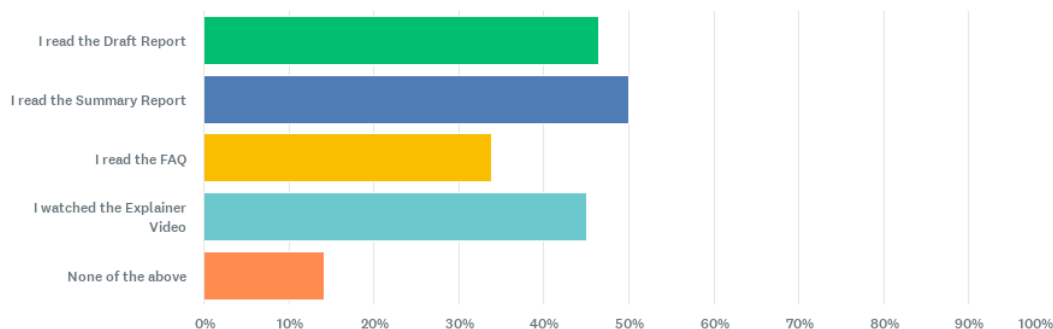
- Summary Report – 50.1%
- Draft Report – 46.5%
- Explainer Video – 45.0%

A further 33.8% of respondents reported reading the FAQ document.

14.1% of respondents indicated they had not reviewed any of the information materials.

Overall, the Responses suggest that a large proportion of respondents engaged with at least one of the materials provided before completing the survey.

Q3 Have you read the Draft Report, Summary Report, FAQ or watched the Explainer video? (Select all that apply). You can find these documents and more information on our website [HERE](#):



Question 4:

WHAT AGE GROUP ARE YOU IN?

850 Responses

Survey Responses were received across all age groups.

The largest age groups represented were:

- 55–64 years – 24.1%
- 65–74 years – 20.3%
- 35–44 years – 17.9%
- 45–54 years – 17.4%

Younger respondents represented a smaller proportion of Responses, including:

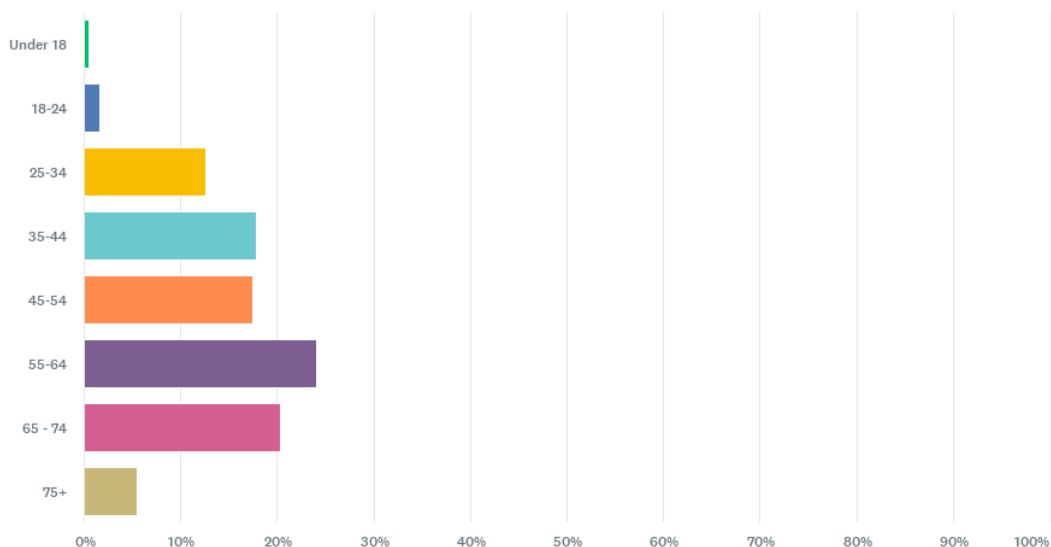
- 25–34 years – 12.6%
- 18–24 years – 1.6%

Respondents aged 75 years and over represented 5.5% of Responses, while under 18s represented less than 1%.

Overall, the responses reflect participation across a broad range of age groups.

While younger age groups are represented in smaller numbers within the survey, this broadly reflects the demographic profile of Break O’Day, which has a median age of 56 years, significantly higher than the Tasmanian and national averages.

Q4 What age group are you in?



Question 5:

WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

851 Responses

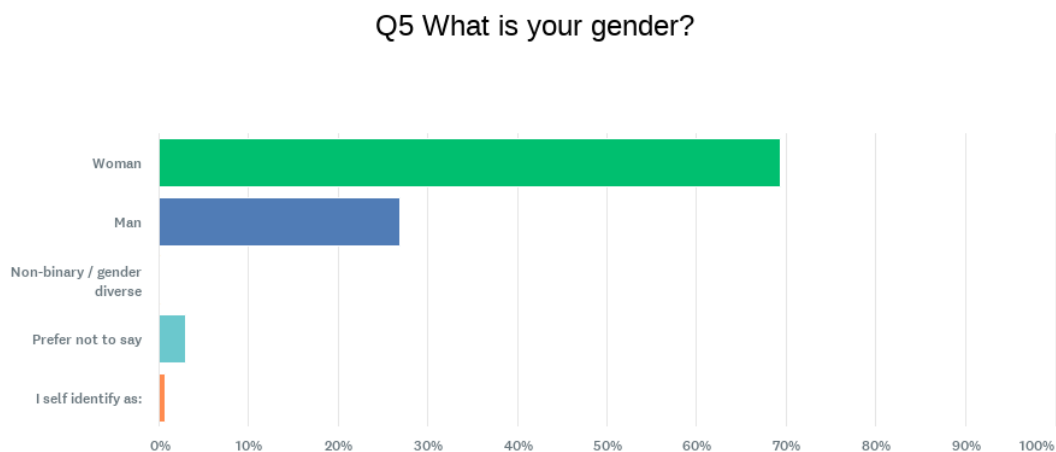
The majority of respondents identified as women.

- 69.3% identified as women
- 26.9% identified as men

A small number of respondents selected:

- Non-binary / gender diverse (0.1%)
- Prefer not to say (2.9%)
- Self-described gender (0.7%)

These Responses indicate a range of gender identities represented within the survey Responses.



Question 6:

HOW OFTEN WOULD YOU ATTEND AN AQUATIC FACILITY?

842 Responses

Responses suggest that many respondents anticipate regular use of a facility if developed.

The most common Responses were:

- At least twice per week – 30.6%
- Weekly – 20.9%

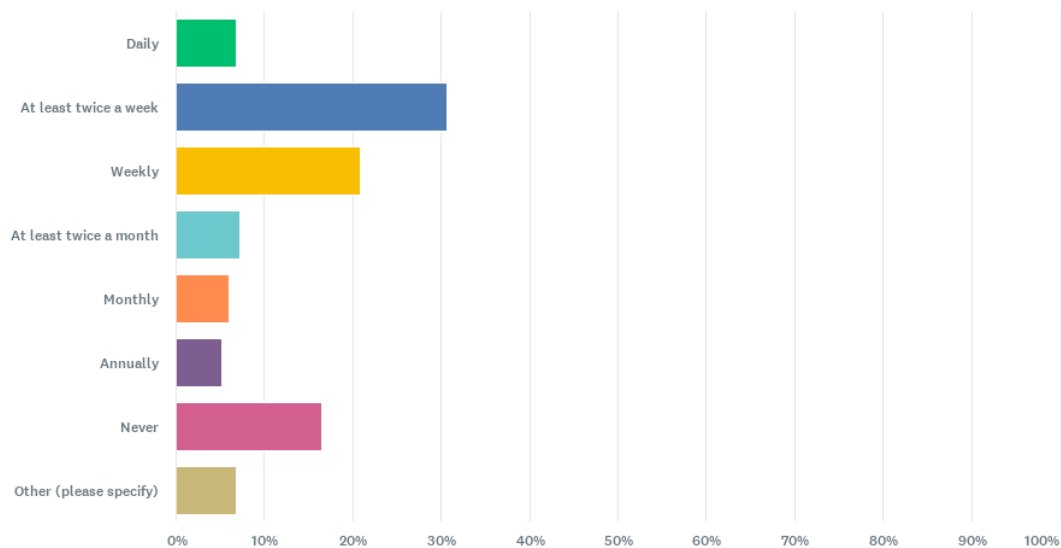
Smaller proportions indicated they would attend:

- Daily – 6.8%
- Twice per month – 7.2%
- Monthly – 5.9%

A number of respondents indicated they would attend annually (5.2%) or never (16.5%).

Overall, more than half of respondents indicated they would expect to attend the facility weekly or more frequently.

Q6 How often would you attend an Aquatic Facility?



Question 7:

WHAT FEATURES AT THE AQUATIC FACILITY WOULD YOU USE?

842 Responses

Respondents identified several features they would expect to use.

The most commonly selected features were:

- Lap swimming – 57.5%
- Aquatic exercise classes – 45.8%
- Warm water therapy services – 38.0%
- Learn to swim programs – 21.6%

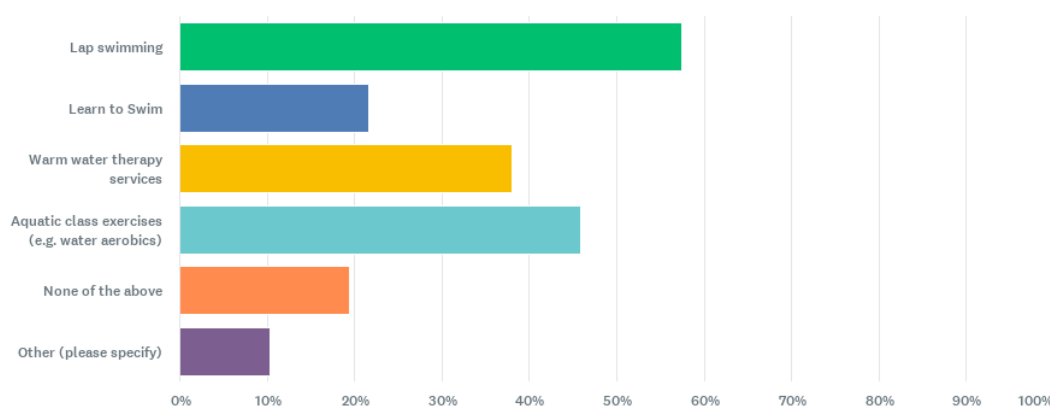
Approximately 19.4% of respondents indicated they would not use any of the listed features.

A further 10.3% selected “Other”. Comments within the “Other” Responses generally referenced:

- family recreation and leisure swimming
- children’s play areas
- rehabilitation or physiotherapy use
- broader recreational use of the facility

These Responses suggest a range of potential uses beyond the core activities listed in the survey.

Q7 What features at the Aquatic Facility would you use?



Question 8:

WHAT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PAY AS AN ENTRY FEE?

The most commonly selected entry fee range was \$5–\$10, selected by 56.3% of respondents.

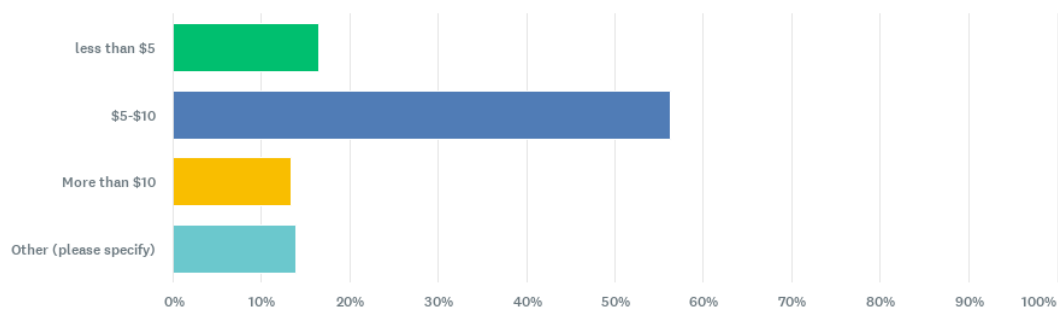
Other Responses included:

- Less than \$5 – 16.5%
- More than \$10 – 13.3%

A further 13.9% selected “Other”, indicating alternative pricing expectations or suggesting different fee structures.

Overall, the Responses indicate that most respondents expect entry fees to fall within the \$5–\$10 range.

Q8 What would you be willing to pay as an entry fee to the facility?



Question 9:

WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO SEE A PERMANENT RATE INCREASE TO SUPPORT THE FACILITY?

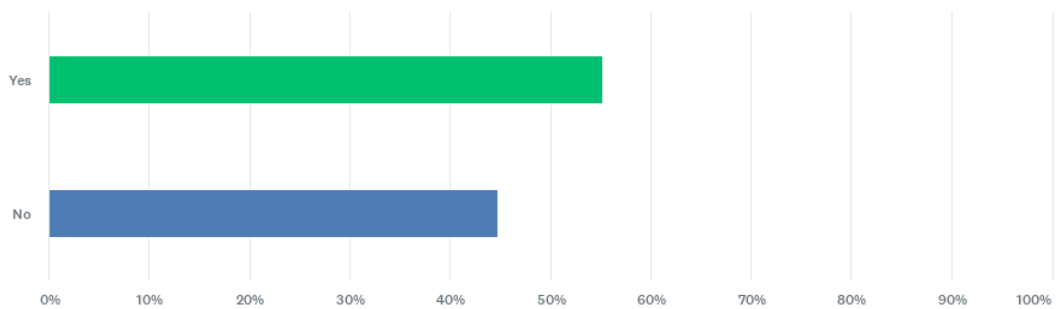
844 Responses

Responses to this question indicate a divided community view.

- 55.2% indicated they would be prepared to support a permanent rate increase
- 44.8% indicated they would not support a rate increase

These results suggest a slight majority of respondents indicated a willingness to consider a rate increase to support the facility.

Q9 Would you be prepared to see a permanent rate increase on your annual rates notice to cover the cost of constructing and operating the pool?



Question 10:

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO PAY ANNUALLY ON YOUR RATES NOTICE?

459 Responses

Among respondents who provided an answer, the most commonly selected option was:

- \$178 per year – 56.9%

Other Responses included:

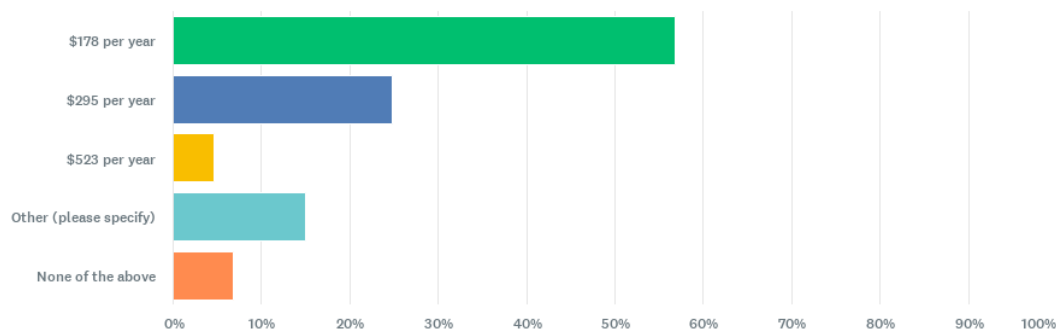
- \$295 per year – 24.8%
- \$523 per year – 4.6%
- None of the above – 6.7%

A further 15.0% selected “Other”.

Responses within the “Other” category commonly suggested:

- Family memberships
- Concession memberships
- Casual visit pricing rather than annual membership
- Alternative pricing structures based on usage

Q10 How much would you be prepared to pay annually on your rates notice if we went ahead with construction of a pool? Please tick all that apply)



NOTE: Questions 11, 12, 13 and 15 were open-ended questions. Responses to these questions have been reviewed collectively and are analysed in the written responses section later in this report.

Question 14:

BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, DO YOU SUPPORT COUNCIL PROGRESSING TO A DETAILED BUSINESS CASE?

804 Responses

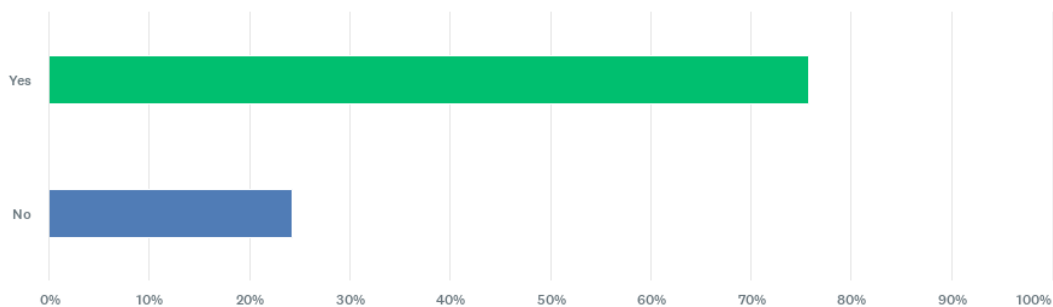
The majority of respondents indicated support for progressing to a Business Case.

- 75.8% of respondents indicated support
- 24.2% indicated they do not support progressing to the next stage

These results suggest a clear majority of respondents support further investigation of the proposal through a detailed Business Case.

Progressing to a Business Case would involve further technical, financial and planning analysis before any decision regarding construction of a facility.

Q14 Based on the information that you have read, do you think that Council should progress to the next stage and develop a Business Case for a potential facility?



Ratepayer Responses

As part of the analysis, survey responses were also reviewed to identify the views of Break O’Day ratepayers specifically.

A total of 740 respondents identified as ratepayers, representing 88.1% of all survey participants. The following summary highlights key findings from responses provided by ratepayers.

Ratepayer Participation by Township

Ratepayer responses were received from across the municipality, with the largest proportion of responses coming from the St Helens / Stieglitz / Binalong Bay area (54.6%), followed by Scamander / Beaumaris (17.8%) and St Marys / Cornwall (10.0%).

Smaller numbers of responses were received from other areas including:

- Fingal / Mathinna / Mangana – 5.4%
- Falmouth / Four Mile Creek / Seymour – 4.9%
- Pyengana / Goulds Country / Weldborough – 2.6%
- Other locations – 4.7%

These results indicate that ratepayer responses were received from communities across the municipality.

Anticipated Use of an Aquatic Facility

Responses from ratepayers indicate that many would expect to use an aquatic facility if developed.

Approximately 30% of ratepayers indicated they would attend the facility at least once per week, with others indicating less frequent attendance or seasonal use.

Preferred Facility Features

Ratepayers identified several features they would expect to use within a facility.

The most commonly selected features were:

- Lap swimming – 56.5%
- Aquatic exercise classes – 47.0%
- Warm water therapy services – 38.2%
- Learn-to-swim programs – 19.3%

Approximately 20.5% of ratepayers indicated they would not use the listed features, while a smaller proportion suggested additional recreational uses.

Entry Fee Expectations

Among ratepayer responses, the most commonly selected entry fee range was \$5–\$10 per visit, selected by 54.5% of respondents.

Other responses included:

- Less than \$5 – 17.3%
- More than \$10 – 13.6%
- Other pricing suggestions – 14.6%

These responses suggest that many ratepayers expect entry fees to fall within a moderate price range.

Willingness to Support a Rate Increase

Responses from ratepayers indicate a divided community view regarding the introduction of a permanent rate increase to support the facility.

- 53.9% indicated they would support a rate increase
- 46.1% indicated they would not support a rate increase

Annual Contribution

Among ratepayers who provided a response to the annual contribution question, the most commonly selected option was:

- \$178 per year – 58.3%

Other responses included:

- \$295 per year – 25.5%
- \$523 per year – 3.6%
- Other suggestions – 14.4%
- None of the above – 5.9%

Progressing to a Business Case

When asked whether Council should progress to a detailed Business Case, 73.5% of ratepayer respondents indicated support for further investigation, while 26.5% did not support progressing to the next stage.

Assessment of Written Responses

Written responses from the open-ended survey questions were reviewed and analysed to identify recurring topics and themes raised by respondents.

Comments were grouped according to common issues raised across the survey rather than analysed separately under each question. This approach was used to reduce repetition and provide a clearer overview of the key themes emerging from community feedback.

Where themes were identified, representative comments have been included to illustrate the views expressed by respondents. All comments have been de-identified to protect privacy.

Individual responses may reference more than one theme.

To assist interpretation, themes are described using qualitative frequency indicators based on how commonly they appeared across the responses:

- Most frequently raised – a dominant theme raised by many respondents
- Commonly raised – raised regularly across responses
- A number of respondents – raised by several respondents
- A smaller proportion of respondents – raised occasionally
- A small number of respondents – raised infrequently

Community Feedback – Themes from Written Responses

More than 750 written comments were received across the open-ended survey questions.

To improve clarity and avoid repetition, written responses have been analysed collectively to identify recurring themes expressed by respondents across the survey.

Comments were grouped according to common topics raised by respondents. Individual responses may reference more than one theme.

The following themes represent the most commonly raised issues within the written feedback.

Financial Considerations

Financial considerations were the most frequently raised theme across written responses.

Many respondents referenced concerns regarding potential impacts on rates, affordability for households and the long-term operational costs associated with an aquatic facility.

Several respondents indicated they would support the project only if financial impacts were carefully managed or external funding could be secured.

“I support the idea in principle, but not if it results in a significant rate increase.”

Location and Accessibility

Location was another commonly raised topic.

Respondents frequently emphasised the importance of selecting a site that is accessible to residents across the municipality and provides equitable access to the facility.

Many comments highlighted the importance of ensuring the facility is located where it can serve the largest possible portion of the community.

Some alternative sites mentioned include: St Helens Foreshore, the block opposite Council and Scamander Sports Complex.

Example comment:

“Location will determine whether the facility benefits the whole community.”

Community Health and Recreation Benefits

A number of respondents highlighted the potential benefits of an aquatic facility for community health, recreation and youth development.

Comments frequently referenced the importance of swimming facilities for physical activity, learn-to-swim programs and community wellbeing.

Example comment:

“Facilities like this are important for community health and for young people.”

Funding and External Contributions

Some respondents emphasised the importance of securing State or Federal Government funding to support the development of the facility.

These comments suggested that external funding could assist in reducing the financial burden on ratepayers.

Example comment:

“Council should pursue strong State or Federal funding before proceeding.”

Facility Design and Features

A smaller number of responses provided suggestions relating to the design or features of a potential facility.

Suggestions included heated pools, lap swimming lanes, learn-to-swim areas and spaces suitable for recreational and therapeutic activities.

These responses highlighted the importance of ensuring that any future facility meets a range of community needs.

Additional Comments from “Other” Responses

Several survey questions included an “Other” response option, allowing respondents to provide additional comments or suggestions that were not captured within the predefined answer options.

These comments were reviewed and grouped according to common topics raised by respondents.

The most frequently referenced themes included:

Alternative Pricing Models

Some respondents suggested alternative pricing approaches such as family memberships, concession pricing, or usage-based entry fees rather than a fixed annual contribution.

Additional Facility Uses

A number of comments referenced potential additional uses for an aquatic facility, including family recreation, children’s play areas, rehabilitation services and community health programs.

Seasonal or Flexible Facility Options

Some respondents suggested exploring seasonal operations, staged development or alternative facility models to reduce operational costs.

Access and Equity Considerations

A number of comments highlighted the importance of ensuring the facility remains accessible and affordable for residents across the municipality.

These responses provided additional context and suggestions which complement the broader themes identified through the survey.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps of this consultation provide valuable insight into community views regarding the potential development of an aquatic facility within the municipality.

The findings will be considered alongside technical, financial and planning assessments as Council determines the next steps in evaluating the feasibility of the project.

Progressing to a detailed Business Case would involve further investigation of capital costs, operational requirements, funding opportunities and long-term financial sustainability before any decision regarding the construction of a facility is made.

