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PHONE 8391 1388 FAX 8391 2312

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LABOR SELECTS COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT



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POLLS APART

THREE SURVEYS SHOW SHARKIE A CLEAR LEADER

By Lisa Pahl

Liberal candidate Georgina Downer is less popular than the Party's disgraced former Mayo MP Jamie Briggs when he lost the seat at the last election, polls have shown.

Three surveys conducted last week

paint a bleak picture of Ms Downer's chances in her fight to win the electorate back for the Liberals at the July 28 by-election.

The results show Ms Downer is battling to overcome a negative image as well as growing support for the seat's former incumbent, Centre Alliance MP Rebekha Sharkie.

All three polls - two ReachTell polls for Seven News and the Australia Institute taken last week and a YouGov Galaxy poll on June 7 - show Ms Sharkie with a commanding lead of 58% to Ms Downer's 42% on a two-party preferred vote.

Mr Briggs won about 45% of the two-party preferred vote to Ms Sharkie's 55% at the 2016 Federal Election when

she ran under the Nick Xenophon Team banner. That election saw a 16% swing away from Mr Briggs, who fell from grace over a late-night Hong Kong bar scandal.

The YouGov Galaxy poll of 515 voters shows Ms Downer is also attracting 37% of the overall primary vote, slightly less than the Liberals' 37.8% at the 2016 election.

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A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

By Elisa Rose

Federal commitments made during the Mayo by-election must focus on long-term economic impact - not just the populist vote - one of the region's peak development advisors believes.

Regional Development Australia Hills, Fleurieu and KI chief executive Damien Cooke has welcomed the Federal Government's \$10m pledge to an indoor aquatic centre in Mt Barker in the lead up to the July 28 by-election.

But while the pool will bring community benefit and short-term economic gain, he believes Mayo desperately needs Federal backing for projects that will have long-term economic impact - including a rail bypass and fast transport through the region.

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Regional Development Australia Hills, Fleurieu and KI chief executive Damien Cooke believes the most important Federal Government pledges will be those that drive strong long-term economic growth in the region.

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