

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/south-east/administrator-unveils-plan-for-frankston-dolphins-football-club-to-overcome-financial-woes/news-story/bed2ba3cc0ef3dfbb23c5e7f6d004aa7>



Former Melbourne Storm boss Ron Gauci says Frankston Dolphins Football Club can survive.

## **Administrator unveils plan for Frankston Dolphins Football Club to overcome financial woes**

Christian Tatman, Frankston Standard Leader  
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THE Frankston Dolphins Football Club can survive its dire financial woes and kick on in the VFL, a packed meeting has been told.

“We are not putting mission impossible on the table. It’s all doable,” former Melbourne Storm boss Ron Gauci said.

Speaking to supporters, members and players at Frankston Park last night, Mr Gauci — who has

been called in to help save the club — said it was essential the right people were put in the right positions.

He noted that community support was vital for the club, which is about \$1.5 million in debt, to continue.

In a passionate speech, coach Pat Hill said players and coaching staff wanted to see more support.

“If everyone stands up behind us, we are all on board,” he said.

He made the comment after several people questioned whether players would stick with the club or quit.

Several Dolphins legends including former president Alan Wickes said it was essential supporters showed the same spirit that enabled the club recover from a grave financial position in 1977 before going on to win the Division 2 premiership the following year.

Administrators last night outlined a plan for the club to survive including boosting membership by 25 per cent and increasing sponsorship by \$100,000.

Paul Burness, from Frankston firm Worrells Solvency and Forensic Accountants, told the meeting the Dolphins owed \$970,000 to unsecured creditors, \$160,000 to players and coaching staff and \$412,000 to creditors claiming to be secured.

Mr Burness said the \$412,000 largely related to a kitchen fit-out.

He said the club, which has \$80,000 cash in the bank, had substantial utility debts.

Mr Burness said part of the debt included \$733,000 owed as licence fees and service charges for the club’s former poker machines.

He indicated he would meet creditors to organise an offer of partial payment on the basis that the remainder of the debts were waived.

Mr Burness said both increased membership and attendance at games were essential to ensuring the club’s survival.

The meeting also heard:

\* Uncertainty over the club’s future was affecting the number of bookings at its new function centre;

\* The AFL would not provide financial support, but Frankston Council — which is owed \$68,000 in lease payments — was looking to provide “rent relief”;

Mr Burness later told the *Leader* he would meet shortly with creditors and a “save Frankston Dolphins” rally was likely to be held afterwards.

He would not be drawn on whether players and coaching staff would be paid.

Mayor James Dooley, who attended the meeting, would not commit the council to waiving what it was owed.

“We will take direction from the administrator on the best course of action.”

Frankston state Labor MP Paul Edbrooke said that as a supporter and a sponsor, he was keen to continue assisting the Dolphins.

“I expect to see some accurate figures provided by the administrators soon so that we can continue discussions,” he said.

He would not be drawn on whether he would lobby the State Government to waive the \$733,000 owed on the pokies.