

4. WHARENUI SPORTS CENTRE – EXTENSION TO FOYER AND OFFICES

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The purpose of this report is to provide information with regard to the deputation by the Wharenui Swimming Club for support for extensions to the Wharenui Sports Centre in Elizabeth Street, Riccarton.

The Wharenui Swimming Club has been the lessee of the Wharenui Recreation Centre (gymnasium) following its construction in 1989 by the former Riccarton Borough Council. The gymnasium building is linked to the Wharenui Swimming Pool, which has been significantly upgraded by the Christchurch City Council in the past 10 years. When the new plant room was built in 1998 the small weights training area used by the club was relocated up to the mezzanine floor in the gymnasium. The use of the mezzanine floor for this purpose has been very successful and has enabled the club to build up memberships and access to both the pool and fitness areas of the facility. The increased use of the gym has meant that the mezzanine floor no longer meets the needs of the community in terms of disabled access, as the only access is by way of stairs. There have been no other alterations to the gymnasium area of the facility since initial construction.

The Wharenui Swim Club has recently rebranded the facility as the Wharenui Sports Centre. This has provided a catalyst for a membership drive and subsequently has increased the demand for use of the facility. The problems being faced by the club in terms of staff accommodation and foyer space have been a limitation since the facility was built and a strong Learn to Swim Programme requires facilities to process patrons in a suitable environment.

The proposal for extensions to the Wharenui Sports Centre by the Wharenui Swimming Club is justified in terms of the problems experienced by staff and customers. The provision of suitable disabled access to the mezzanine floor would ensure the long term benefit to the facility and the community.

The Leisure Unit capital budget does not have any capital funding for this project until Year 6 (2009/10) where unspecified sums are brought forward. There are no sums large enough from other non-committed projects that could be substituted for this project.

- Recommendation:**
1. That Leisure Unit staff undertake a needs and space analysis to determine requirements of extensions to the Wharenui Sports Centre including the provision of disabled access to the mezzanine floor.
 2. That funding for the proposed extension be referred to the Annual Plan Subcommittee for inclusion in the 2004/05 Long Term Council Community Plan process.