

Officer responsible Leisure Unit Manager	Author Peter Walls
Corporate Plan Output: Suburban Pools	

The following report was before the 8 September meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of some unbudgeted expenditure that is required if the Templeton Pool is to open for this summer season.

BACKGROUND

As with other suburban pools, the Council supports the Templeton Pool by meeting operating costs and also the ongoing maintenance of the pool. In this financial year we have budgeted \$12,000 towards the operational costs and nothing for the asset maintenance of the Templeton Pool. The Council also provides ongoing training for the lifeguards with the local pool committee being responsible for the day to day supervision and management of the pool.

Over the last two seasons some concern has been expressed by the local committee about the amount of water being lost from the pool over the summer season. This has been investigated and it has been found that there is a major leak in the top part of the pool. It appears that when the filter system was first installed a section was added to the top of the pool and this new concrete section was not effectively reinforced or tied into the existing concrete. It has now begun to crack away creating a major problem in the top part of the pool. This irregular cracking around the entire pool, ranges from approximately 150 to 300mm in width and has resulted in several sections breaking away.

The indicative cost of the pool repairs is \$20,839. This includes re-concreting and linking the new concrete into the old concrete with re-enforcing. It will cost an additional \$5,200 to repair and replace pipes for the filter system. In addition the old sand filter is due for replacement and this was to be budgeted in the 2000/2001 financial year at a cost of approximately \$6,500.

TEMPLETON CENTRE INDOOR POOL

There is a small indoor pool (15 metres long) based at the Templeton Centre which has been used by the Templeton Swimming Club over the winter months for several years. With the relocation of most of the residents from the Centre, Healthlink South closed this pool in June 1999.

Currently the pool and other buildings on the Templeton Centre site, along with the land are on offer to Ngai Tahu, with future proposed developments being subject to some planning issues.

The cost to operate this pool is approximately \$7,000 per month (\$84,000 pa), not including wages. Healthlink South also advised that there is about \$30,000 of deferred maintenance required on the pool and building.

Healthlink South have a new development planned for the Maddisons Road/Kirk Road corner but the proposed pool will be a small therapeutic pool for residents only.

As can be seen from the above information this pool, which is located a considerable distance from the Templeton township, would be a very expensive option to maintain and operate.

FUTURE OF THE TEMPLETON POOL AND OTHER SUBURBAN POOLS

The Templeton Pool is very old and will continue to cost the Council significant sums to maintain to an operational standard. As for other suburban pools, the life expectancy of this facility must be considered as limited with the probability that the new 12 month operation leisure pools will very quickly make the suburban pools across the city redundant, other than on very hot summer days.

The future of Templeton Pool and the other suburban pools must be carefully evaluated as they have limited patronage and will continue to cost the Council a significant amount of money to maintain and to operate in future years. In the long term the pool review proposed that the pool at Sockburn be upgraded/re-located and that the Papanui facility also be upgraded. In view of recent planning decisions it would seem that the provision of 12 month swimming facilities in the Hornby/Sockburn and Papanui areas should be considered in the next five to ten year plan.

Should this occur then the Templeton Pool (if a replacement for Sockburn were located in Hornby) would be limited. Also, if a facility were built in the Papanui area then the future of both the Belfast Pool and the Edgware Pools should also be evaluated.

Following 12 months' operation of the new Centennial Leisure Centre it is proposed to assess its impact on both the Woolston and Edgware Pools. The outcome will be reported back to the Committee.

Bearing in mind the probable time frame for any proposed future developments and the operational and maintenance costs associated with the Templeton Centre Pool, it would seem appropriate that the work should be carried out on the Templeton Pool to allow it to open for the forthcoming and future (5-10 years) summer seasons to service the Templeton and surrounding population.

The problem is that this work has not been budgeted for and there are no other avenues of funding from within the Leisure Unit budget to carry out this work ie there are no other capital budgets that could be delayed for 12 months. If the Council supports this expenditure then a source of funds will have to be identified.

The Director of Finance comments:

“In view of the likelihood of this pool not being required in the medium term and the lack of budget provision for this major repair I would seriously question the appropriateness of spending this sum of money. If however the Committee wishes to commit this expenditure because it considers it to be a matter of priority then I consider that the first option should be to provide the funding by way of substitution from within the Leisure budget. I note that staff of the Leisure Unit do not consider this is practical but I believe it should be seriously attempted. If by the time of the six monthly review sufficient savings have not been identified then the matter could be considered as a priority for any surplus funds which arise out of the six monthly review but an assumption should not be made there will funds be from that source.”

The above report was presented to the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board at its meeting held on 1 September. The Community Board was concerned that the need for funding this essential work had not been recognised earlier, and that no financial provision had been made.

The Board considered that closing the pool for the forthcoming season was not an option; nor did members feel that the financing should now be the Board’s responsibility.

The Board resolved:

1. That the Board Chairperson and Community Advocate be authorised to discuss with the Director of Finance his decision to recommend against funding the Templeton Pool remedial work from the contingency fund.
2. That, if those discussions are unsuccessful, the Board Chairperson and Community Advocate be authorised to negotiate a cost sharing arrangement, with the Director of Finance to provide partial funding to enable the Templeton Pool remedial work to be undertaken.

Since the Board meeting, the discussions referred to in 2 above have been held and the Board Chairperson has agreed, in line with the resolution of the Board, and as a gesture of goodwill, to provide \$10,000 from the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board discretionary fund towards the remedial work. Mr Mora requests that the balance of the cost of this work be found from other sources within the Council’s budget.

Mr Mike Mora, Chairperson Riccarton/Wigram Community Board, addressed the Committee in support of the Board’s request. Mr Mora advised that the pool is one of the focal points for the Templeton community and is a well-used facility attracting attendances of between 10,000 – 11,000 during the four months of the year it is in operation. Mr Mora pointed out that the Board’s contribution of \$10,000 to the cost of the repairs was a significant commitment on the Board’s part, given that it represents 20% of its discretionary fund.

In considering the Board’s request, the Committee noted that with the opening of the new indoor leisure pools there will be a need to rationalise pool facilities throughout the city by identifying those which are expendable and to close them. Templeton Pool is, however, not in this category at present and it is the Committee’s belief that, in view of the priority the Community Board has given to retaining the pool, it should be kept open in the medium term. The pool is well patronised and operationally it is not an expensive pool to maintain.

The Committee therefore endorsed the Board's view that the balance of the funding should be found within existing resources and requested the Director of Finance and the Leisure Manager to bring to the next meeting of the Council a recommendation on possible methods of funding this expenditure.

As the Council has delegated to the Strategy and Resources Committee the power to approve the re-allocation of budgeted expenditure to a new or totally different activity, the report is being referred to this Committee.

The Leisure Manager **recommends** that the funding shortfall of \$16,000 be found from Code 06892/524, New Plant, Unspecified. The Director of Finance endorses this recommendation.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the staff recommendation be adopted.