

Christchurch City Council

Community Services Group

Suburban Swimming Pools Review

May 2005

Edgware Pool
Templeton Pool
Papanui Pool
Woolston Pool
Belfast Pool

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SUBURBAN SWIMMING POOLS REVIEW

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A review of the provision and operation of the city's five small outdoor suburban swimming pools has resulted in a strong justification for change. The existing provision, restricts participation and is very expensive. Some swimming pools have a high chance of failure at short notice, due to adverse weather and/or condition of plant, and in some cases are inappropriate to repair. This has resulted in ongoing and increasing expressions of concern from customers, schools, pool operators and community groups.

The review concentrates on what Council is trying to achieve from its Suburban Pools rather than focussing on which particular sets of "bricks and mortar" it chooses to maintain. Council's goals in respect of pools are participation, accessibility, healthy lifestyles, education, active recreation and fun, not building maintenance. The pools themselves are only the means to achieving the goal. If change is not proactively planned now, problems will perpetuate and grow to the point where problems may force swimming pool closures.

If the changes detailed in this review are adopted by Council there would be significant increases to levels of service at Edgware, Belfast and Templeton Pools. Woolston Pool would alter its focus to become a dedicated school pool. Papanui Pool would be decommissioned. There would also be changes to pool supervision levels consistent with Water Safety New Zealand standards. These include a lowering (not removing) of the level of lifeguard supervision and allowing schools the right to choose whether they need a lifeguard, or not, when they are the sole user of a pool.

It is important that Council recognises the need and consequences of changes which will see a suite of suburban pools run more efficiently and sustainably, and hence able to cater better for the needs of the community.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council do the following:

- decommission the Papanui outdoor swimming pool,
- open the Woolston outdoor swimming pool for structured school or club groups only,
- allow the Recreation Facilities Unit the discretion on when to collect pool entry fees at suburban outdoor pools (Edgware, Belfast and Templeton), and
- support the management initiatives in table three of this review, in relation to the operation of the suburban pools.

2.0 CONTEXT

Christchurch City Council resources fourteen swimming pools; five indoor, four large outdoor and five small suburban outdoor swimming pools. This review only concerns the five small suburban outdoor pools at: Woolston, Edgware, Papanui, Belfast and Templeton.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Council took over the management of the pools in 2003. The budgeted annual operating cost is \$257,975.00¹. Suburban pool attendance is falling due to changing user preferences and adverse climatic conditions. The cost to operate the pools is growing due to increases in energy, maintenance and compliance costs.² At the same time the length of opening season for the pools is shortening. Hence, the ability of the five suburban pools to effectively contribute to community outcomes is diminishing year by year.

The long term future of all of the City's pools is currently being considered in the Aquatic Facilities Strategy. Council has identified \$26.4 million in the LTCCP for recreational facility developments over the next ten years³. The full provisions of the strategy may take up to twenty years to apply, and so it is felt that a review of suburban pools is needed now.

The purpose of this review is:

1. To identify whether there is sufficient rationale/reason to change the level of service at suburban pools.
2. To identify options and recommend changes necessary to best fulfil Council's goals in respect of suburban pools.

4.0 COUNCIL'S GOALS AND PRINCIPLES DRIVING THE REVIEW

Council's goal for suburban pools is identified as:

A sustainable suite of suburban pools effectively maximising the fulfilment of community outcomes⁴ through active participation.

Principles driving the review include:

- **Cost:** No additional cost to Council from suburban pools.
- **Sustainability:** The suburban pools are sustainable in terms of value, asset condition and patronage until such time as (or if) developments recommended by the Aquatic Facility Strategy supersede their need.
- **Access:** People can still access a pool in close proximity to their home.
- **Schools:** Pool services are available to schools in February.
- **Managed Risk:** Any risks arising from changes are identified, voluntarily accepted and appropriately managed.

¹ Budget 2004/05

² An additional \$35K was needed to provide similar service levels as the 2003/04 season in the 2004/05 season. This additional funding was not approved.

³ Aquatic Facilities Strategy, Criteria Report March 2005.

⁴ Outcomes include healthy and active people, a cultural and fun city, a safe city and a learning city.

- **City Wide:** Suburban pools complement not compete with other pool provision and are assessed from a city wide perspective.
- **Council Policy:** Suburban pools are operated in a manner consistent with council's policies in respect of sport and recreation.

5.0 RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

The 2004/05 public operating season was 50 days, an average of 17 days shorter than the 2003/04 season. This was due to financial constraints, compliance costs, and the emphasis on providing the same levels of service at each pool.

- The current public season length of 50 days is so short that it is increasingly hard to justify the operation at all.
- If change is not made the season will shrink further as non controllable costs continue to rise while resources are fixed.
- The overall attendance at pools is dropping due to: changing user preferences, changing climatic conditions, a lack of opening during term one, and a shorter opening season. This trend is predicted to continue.

Table 1 shows the reduction of the public operating season and illustrates the declining attendance at suburban pools from the 2003/04 season to that of 2004/05.

Table 1: Public Operating Season and Attendance Totals 2003/04 and 2004/05					
	Edgware	Belfast	Templeton	Papanui	Woolston
Season length 2003/04	78 days	71 days	64 days	64 days	62 days
Season length 2004/05	50 days	50 days	50 days	50 days	50 days
Attendance 2003/04	3,965	1,724	1,772	1,221	1,048
Attendance 2004/05	3,070	1,234	1,490	1,222	985
Total Public Attendance at All Suburban Pools 2004/05: 8001					

In some instances suburban pools compete with Council's other pools:

- Woolston Pool is less than 1.7 km from Waltham Pool.
- Papanui Pool has Edgware Pool about 3 km to the south and Belfast Pool 4 km to the north.

The major cost components of operating any public pool are human resources, maintenance and energy. Council can, and will, manage human resource costs. However, both maintenance and energy costs are both predicted to rise.

- Electricity costs have risen 20% over the past 18 months and are predicted to rise by a minimum of 4% over the forthcoming financial year⁵.

⁵ Information compiled by Councils Energy Manager.

Maintenance

All suburban pools are kept mechanically operational and are maintained to a functional standard. Due to their age and past history, some pools face fundamental maintenance issues that will require large sums to correct. Much of the damage is of a structural nature, was inherited by Council and is not economically prudent to repair.

- Provisional findings from an Outdoor Pool Asset Condition Report⁶ have indicated that the amount budgeted for suburban pool maintenance in 2005/06 (\$74,900), will be significantly short of what is needed to keep the pools operating reliably. There is no provision to meet this shortfall.

- Papanui Pool is particularly fragile with plant, building and pool tank problems that can not be effectively remedied without substantial cost⁷. It is likely to fail at any time and in fact did so on two occasions during the 2004/05 season.

Provisional findings from an Outdoor Pool Asset Condition Report for Papanui Pool indicate a lifespan of two years or less for critical areas of plant and a repair cost of \$83,000. The report estimates pool tank and building repair costs of between \$235,000 and \$335,000. Council have a total budget of \$11,300 for maintenance. The Report has raised concerns that due to the age and poor condition of Papanui Pool, even extensive maintenance work may not guarantee a reliable pool into the future.

Lifeguards

The degree to which the suburban pools comply with industry lifeguard supervision guidelines has come into question.

- Having a lifeguard present when the pool is being exclusively used by school groups is not required within the guidelines. However, schools could be given the choice.

There is limited scope to increase revenue, due to Council's pricing policy that encourages access through lower entry fees, and the lack of value added services such as learn to swim programmes which are able to be delivered from the pools. Evidence collected by Lincoln University for Council's pricing review shows considerable consumer resistance to price increase, especially if there is no increase in service.

School Hire

The reduced public operating season placed a substantially increased financial burden on schools wishing to run swim education and water safety programmes in term one. This is because schools have to fund the full cost of operating the facility for the duration of their hire.⁸ Such an increase can not be sustained, and schools will either pull out of aquatics or find other pools to use. This is undesirable for Council suburban pools, as schools are potentially their foremost customers and also the most effective means for the pools to deliver community outcomes.

- During the 2004/05 season two Community Boards have provided financial assistance to four schools and two swim clubs totalling \$13,500, to off set higher than expected pool hire costs. This is a dangerous precedent, justified in 2004

⁶ Outdoor Pool Asset Condition Report 2005, compiled by John Loughnan, independent engineer to be finalised by April 2005.

⁷ Outdoor Pool Asset Condition Report 2005 provisional findings.

⁸ Templeton, Belfast, Papanui and St Albans schools report a 100% increase in pool hire costs from 2003/04 to 2004/05

year by short notice decisions in respect of the pool season. It will be difficult and dangerous to justify again.

Cost

You will see from table 2 below, that the cost per swimmer to provide the aquatic facilities is high, and these costs are continually growing. The community operates the services, but these should not be provided regardless of the cost. Table 2 compares operating costs per swimmer of Council operated pools. (Note, this information is given for comparative purposes only.)

Table 2: Operating Cost Per Swimmer (*Public Admissions, schools costs and admissions excluded.)							
	Centennial	Jellie	Edgware *	Belfast*	Templeton*	Papanui*	Woolston*
\$ per swim	\$0.94	\$1.77	\$16.49	\$25.04	\$20.17	\$25.46	\$37.57

There is evidence of growing dissatisfaction at the level of service offered by suburban pools. The solution appears to be either an increase in resources, or a “smarter” way of operating. Feedback through Community Boards, Suburban Pool User Committees, schools, customers and pool management is calling for a change. There is compelling rationale supporting proactively managed change now, before change becomes imposed without warning by asset failure or a lack of financial resources.

6.0 OPTIONS FOR CHANGE

Options have been considered under four headings:

- Retain current length of season.
- Increase the financial resources.
- Change levels of service between pools according to need.
- Retain status quo.

It is important to note that each option is a package, including certain elements which would produce savings and others which would result in greater costs. It is not possible to pick and choose parts of the package without the overall cost rising.

6.1 Option 1: Retain Current Length of Season

This involves providing 2004/05 length of season (50 days) at each suburban pool with existing resources. To absorb increased costs changes to management practices are necessary, these changes are outlined in Table 3:

Table 3: Changes to Suburban Pools Management Practices		
<i>These will be used at the discretion of RFU as and when appropriate.</i>		
Change	Justification	Drawback
Suburban pools will not be open some or all public holidays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save on expensive holiday pay costs • Best time for family visits to other pools, easy to advertise • Families do not tend to use suburban pools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand on facilities on fine days • Pools not open holidays
Schools will be given the option to hire a lifeguard for school-only sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools are well equipped to supervise children • Schools have option to hire lifeguard • Schools can manage risk • Saves schools \$\$\$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional risk for schools (not for Council to manage)
One lifeguard on duty for some low use public sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better use of resources • Improved supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal safety risk to staff • Risks of unpredicted increase in use
RFU will have the delegated authority to decide not to collect the entry fee, where doing so will compromise supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue is minimal • Costs more to collect than fees gained • May increase patronage • Target lower socio economic groups • Less risk of robbery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devalues service • Precedent for others
Pools will be closed on bad weather days when less than 15 people would normally visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system would be managed through the Customer Call Centre to advise closures • Cost savings • Why open for no users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs careful management • Inconvenient for bad weather swimmers.
Reaffirm that maintenance levels are managed to focus on keeping pools operational rather than preserved into the long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is current practice • Limits the resource needed • Keeps pools open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban pools will not exist in their current format into the long term.

Advantages:

This option keeps present systems going in the face of increased costs:

- No reduction to 2004/05 length of season.
- No increase in the cost of service for users.
- Increased costs managed within current budget.
- All five suburban pools operating for the public.

Disadvantages:

This option does not address many of the major concerns detailed in section four of this review. It is more of the same, perpetuating inefficiencies and a departure from industry best practice.

- Sustainability of all suburban pools is put at risk as they will not increase their operating season or address pressing maintenance issues.
- The pools will not be open to schools in February unless they hire the pool at considerable cost.⁹
- Pools will still be competing with each other for business.

6.2 Option 2: Increase the Financial Resources

The season at all suburban pools is extended from 50 to 75 days (open February) using additional funding and the changed management practices outlined in Table 3. Table 4 identifies the additional funding required.

Table 4: Financial Resources Needed to Fund Outdoor Pool Services 2005/06	
Similar service levels to 2004/05 with an additional four weeks operation to the end of February 2006	\$43,158 ¹⁰

Advantages:

- Increased level of service.
- All five suburban pools open to the public.
- Pools accessible to schools and the public in February.

Disadvantages:

This scenario was rejected by Council and the Leisure and Recreation and Committee in February/March 2004.¹¹ It is seen as throwing more money at a problem without fixing it.

- Sustainability of some suburban pools is put at risk, as pressing maintenance issues will not be addressed.
- Pools will still be competing with each other for business.
- Increased resources will be required, with no budgetary provision.
- Council may be seen as choosing to spend more money rather than confronting and managing fundamental issues.

6.3 Option 3: Change Levels of Service between Pools According to Need (This is the preferred option)

Different levels of service will be provided at each facility, according to need, and to maximise the fulfilment of community outcomes. This will be done from a city wide perspective, without increasing the financial cost to the community. This option also involves changes to the management practises outlined in Table 3.

⁹ For example a one month programme by Templeton School cost \$5,700 in 2005.

¹⁰ Calculations based on the daily operating cost of the suburban pools.

¹¹ The decision included the suburban pools into the scope of the Aquatic Facilities Strategy and an accompanying proposal to increase funding by \$35,000 to maintain season duration did not proceed.

Table 5: Changes to levels of Service at Suburban Pools									
Pool	Public users 04/05	Cost per user 04/05	Asset condition	User experience ¹²	Distance to O/D pool ¹³	Current level of service	Proposed level of service	Justification	
Edgeware	3,070	\$16.49	3	8	4 km	50 Days Mid Dec & Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91 Days Dec, Jan & Feb Hot showers Later closing (6.30pm) Enhanced programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most popular suburban pool, close to town, committed user groups Better facilities, deep water Potential to grow Edgeware asset condition can be managed if Papanui is decommissioned 	
Belfast	1,234	\$25.04	6	5	4 km	50 Days Mid Dec & Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77 Days Mid Dec, Jan & Feb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant distance to other facilities Asset in reasonable condition 	
Templeton	1,490	\$20.17	6	6	7 km	50 Days Mid Dec & Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63 Days Jan & Feb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong support from school Asset in reasonable condition Large distance to other pools Pleasant semi rural environment 	
Woolston	985	\$37.57	8	1	1.7 km	50 Days Mid Dec & Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Feb to mid Mar Schools use only CCC maintain asset and water School open & clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 1.7 km to Waltham outdoor pool Pool has no heating, so not used by public Asset condition is good and close proximity to school lends itself to school pool use exclusively Very low cost to operate as school pool User charge reflects schools contribution 	
Papanui	1,221	\$25.46	1	2	4 km	50 Days Mid Dec & Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool decommissioned School assisted to find other pool time. Move Swim club to Edgeware or Belfast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very low public use Asset in a poor condition in all areas Close proximity to Edgeware and Belfast pools High heating and maintenance costs and an unpredictable plant, so not suitable as a school pool Only one major user, Papanui School Poor facilities, main pool too shallow 	

¹² Customer service potential based on facilities offered and condition of asset.

¹³ As at may first 2005.

Advantages:

This is a genuine attempt to think outside the square, and to address the issues in a sustainable manner. There is a hard decision in respect of Papanui Pool but the logic behind it is sound. This option is the best to get maximum value from the suburban pools in the medium term.

- Overall increase of 30 operational days on 2004/2005 levels of service.
- Three pools have substantial increases in service at no additional cost to council.
- No increase in the cost of service for users.
- Increased costs can be managed within current budget.
- Substantial flexibility in season length.
- Four pools open to schools in February; three pools open over the school holidays.
- Keeps a suite of outdoor pools open as equally spaced as possible around the City.
- Allows for additional investment and programming at the pools that can best justify it.
- Identifies and manages additional risk.
- Uses limited maintenance resources in a sustainable fashion, i.e. funds previously allocated to Papanui will be used to preserve Edgeware.
- This option proactively manages a pool decommission rather than waiting for an unscheduled asset failure.

Disadvantages:

- The principal disadvantage is that the general public will no longer be able to access an outdoor pool at Papanui. Reduced levels of service at Papanui and Woolston Pools.
- Papanui School and Swim Club will need to be relocated.

6.4 Option 4: Retain the Status Quo

This involves maintaining the current philosophy of providing similar levels of service at each facility. Current levels of risk management practice would be maintained. Due to increased costs beyond Councils control the season will probably diminish.

Advantages:

- No changes.

Disadvantages:

- The rationale for change outlined in section 4 of this report is ignored.
- Instead of managing change, there is a probability that change will be imposed without warning by asset failure or increase costs.
- Due to increased costs the pool season will diminish further.
- Ineffective use of Council resources.

7.0 THE PREFERRED OPTION

This section of the review aims to evaluate all options and recommend a preferred option. Table 6 evaluates each option presented in this report in terms of:

- the extent to which it fulfils Council's goal for suburban pools
- the extent to which the principles driving the review are satisfied
- the degree to which the rationale for change is met
- any publicity considerations

This is followed by Table 7 that evaluates each option in terms of its compatibility with relevant existing Council policy of guidelines. Then Table 8 expands on the preferred option.

Table 6: Evaluation of Options				
Criteria	Options			
	Retain Current Length of Season	Increase the Financial Resource	Change Levels of Service Between Pools	Retain the Status Quo
Council's Goal for Suburban Pools				
Maximising fulfilment of community outcomes through the sustainability of the facility and level of participation.	3	2	7	0
Principles Driving the Review and Rationale for Change				
No additional cost of service.	7	0	7	7
Sustainability, condition of the asset.	3	2	6	2
Another pool in appropriately close proximity.	7	7	4	7
Pool services are available to schools in February.	2	7	7	2
Any risks are identified, accepted and appropriately managed.	5	2	8	2
Suburban pools complement not compete with other pool provision.	4	4	8	4
Other Rationale for Change				
Adverse publicity reaction for the changes.	6	2	6	7
Adverse publicity reaction for not changing.	2	5	7	2
Totals¹⁴	39/90	31/90	60/90	33/90

¹⁴ Each marked out of 10, 1 being least favourable

Existing Council policy and guidelines	Options			
	Retain Current Levels of Service	Increase the Financial Resources	Change Levels of Service Between Pools	Retain the Status Quo
Current pricing practice, price allows participation.	3	8	7	3
2005/06 budget guidelines, all outcomes managed within current resource levels	7	1	7	7
Recreation and Sport Policy (Applicable sections):				
All people have the right to participate regardless of age, ability, discretionary income, ethnicity, gender and geographical location.	4	7	6	4
Council must manage limited recreational resources in a manner that ensures equity fairness and effectiveness.	4	4	6	2
Physical assets meet the identified and viable needs of Christchurch and minimum legal standards.	3	3	7	3
Resources are allocated and services delivered efficiently, effectively and equitably.	6	4	6	4
Totals ¹⁵	27/60	27/60	39/60	23/60

Existing Council policy and guidelines	Preferred Option: Change Levels of Service Between Pools
Current pricing practice, price allows participation.	This option will avoid high costs to schools and clubs swimming in term February, it will lower costs to all schools.
2005/06 budget guidelines, all outcomes managed within current resource levels	All changes will be managed with no increased cost.
Recreation and Sport Policy (Applicable sections):	
All people have the right to participate regardless of age, ability, discretionary income, ethnicity, gender and geographical location.	The net effect of changes is an overall increase of service by losing 50 pool opening days at one pool, but creating 80 new days overall. No pool user affected by changes will have to travel more than 3 km to use another pool. Pools either side of Papanui will be improved.
Council must manage limited recreational resources in a manner that ensures equity fairness and effectiveness.	No increased costs. Increase to overall service. Equitable geographical spread of pools. More accessible to schools. Longer operating season. Better targeting of resources.

¹⁵ Each marked out of 10, 1 being least favourable.

Physical assets meet the identified and viable needs of Christchurch and minimum legal standards.	Realistic management of assets. Targeted maintenance. Assets operational at times needed. Sustainable use of assets.
Resources are allocated and services delivered efficiently, effectively and equitably.	The best all round approach to confront issues that can be achieved at this time.

Section 5 of this review details compelling evidence from almost all facets of suburban pool operation indicating that managed change must happen now. The consequences of failing to act will probably result in change being imposed without warning as a result of asset failure or a lack of resources.

The preferred option for change is option 6.3, a change in service levels between pools combined with changes to pool management practices. This has the highest compatibility with Council's goal and the drivers for change. It also has the highest compatibility with Council's existing policies and guidelines. It is not the perfect solution but the best that can be achieved under present circumstances.

Council should also be aware that every option apart from retaining the status quo, involves the community and pool users accepting more responsibility for their personal safety and the safety of children. This will be done in an informed and professional manner overseen by Water Safety New Zealand.

The Council's Recreation Facilities Unit (RFU) will have to work with affected parties, particularly in the Papanui area offering pool users convenient alternatives at no additional cost.

It is important that Council understands and accepts the consequences of change. Change for the better which will see a suite of suburban pools run more efficiently and sustainably, and hence able to cater better for the needs of the community.

8.0 SIGNIFICANCE

Community facilities such as swimming pools evoke passion in communities, particularly amongst user groups. Decisions to increase or decrease levels of service at facilities are regarded by some as statements reflecting the value to which community is held rather than a decision on the best way to provide pools.

It is important to respect and accommodate the concerns and wishes of local communities and pool users. In order to achieve this, the review recommends a targeted consultation with those who have a direct interest in suburban pools. In particular the relevant Community boards, swimming pool customer groups and schools from the areas serviced by Woolston and Papanui pools.

Changes to levels of service in small community facilities can appear more significant than they really are. In this case changes to suburban pools are of lower significance at a city wide, or even a local level. It is only amongst the immediate community of users that the significance would be felt. Table 9 aims to quantify the significance of the preferred option.

Table 9: Significance of the Preferred Option, (change levels of service between pools).	
Significance	Comment
Council resources fourteen pools, the review negatively impacts on two.	Council's pools include the biggest in New Zealand, QEII, this review has a very slight overall impact.
Yearly admissions through Councils fourteen pools total 1,946,099.	Yearly public admissions through Papanui pool total 1,222 or 0.062 % of total pool users throughout the city.
On a busy day QEII will have double the public admissions Papanui has in a year.	QEII will have over 3,000 admissions on a busy January day, the total admissions for Papanui Pool in 2004/05 was 1,222.
Only two out of two hundred and fifty user groups will be affected. Papanui school and Papanui swim club.	Papanui School can be relocated at no additional cost to the School in the short term. Papanui Swim club have an average attendance of 7 to 10 swimmers per evening, they can be relocated.
There are more gains than losses.	50 pool opening days are lost at Papanui. 80 pool opening days are created at Edgware, Belfast and Templeton.
No users need to travel more than 4kms extra to use a pool	The Shirley Papanui Ward "Northern Corridor" has an enhanced service at Edgware and Belfast Pools
The Woolston pool users will loose a current service but the impact is small and can be minimised.	There were only 1,048 public users in 2003/04 and 985 in 2004/05 at Woolston. The Waltham Pool has spare capacity, more features and is only 1.7 km away.
The Papanui pool user community will loose a service but the impact is small and can be minimised.	There were only 1,221 public users in 2003/04 and 1,222 in 2004/05 The services at neighbouring Edgware Pool and Belfast Pool will be significantly enhanced
Outcomes concentrate on what Council is trying to achieve rather than what particular set of "bricks and mortar" it chooses to maintain.	Council's goals in respect of pools are participation, accessibility, healthy lifestyles, education, active recreation and fun. The pool is only the means to the goal. This review keeps Council focussed on the goal.

Council's Decision Making Checklist has been completed in respect of the preferred option recommended by this review as an exercise to gauge significance this is included in Appendix 1. This checklist shows a lower overall significance, with the exception of the Papanui and Woolston user groups.

The suburban pools are included in the scope of the Aquatic Facilities Strategy. There is an opinion that no decisions relating to their future should be considered until the review has concluded. However, the majority have firmly stated that decisions relating to the 2005/06 season need to be discussed and changes made immediately after the close of the 2004/05 season. Reasons for this include:

1. The Aquatic Facility Strategy will not report until July/August. This will not give enough lead in time to make changes before the 2005/06 summer season.

2. The full implementation of the Strategy may take more than 10 years, changes to suburban pools are needed before then.
3. The Shirley/Papanui and Riccarton/Wigram Community boards were concerned that decisions on 2004/05 levels of service were made in late spring with insufficient time for customer groups to make arrangements. Both boards indicated that any debate on service levels should happen immediately after the summer season.
4. By debating the issues immediately after the season, the matters are fresh in peoples' minds and the user groups are still operative and able to contribute. Pool customer user groups do not meet in the winter. Schools and swim clubs can not prepare appropriately when service level decisions are made just before the pool season starts.
5. If decisions are not made soon changes may be forced by asset failure or lack of resources. The problems will not go away.

9 RESEARCH and CONSULTATION

Research for this review has included the following:

- informal conversations with councillors and community board members
- formal feedback presented by suburban pool user groups and Community Board members at Shirley Papanui and Riccarton Wigram Community Board meetings
- letters of concern forwarded by the Chair of the Shirley Papanui Community Board
- feedback from representatives of the Belfast, Edgware and Papanui swimming pool customer committees
- information from effected schools including Belfast, St Albans, Papanui and Templeton
- interviews with pool customers face to face
- feedback from all user groups via the Suburban Pools Manager
- an analysis of historical written correspondence and meetings between pool committees and Council officers,
- information from Council's Health and Safety Officer
- interviews with pool lifeguards, supervisors and team leaders responsible for the pools
- interview with Peter Walls, Councils previous Pools Assets Manager
- a review of the information used by the Aquatic Facility Strategy team that includes extensive public consultation,
- schools Swim For Life Survey
- a brief analysis of nationwide trends and industry learning,
- information from Water Safety New Zealand
- a review of compatibility with Council's existing relevant policies, goals and LTCCP, all of which have had extensive public consultation

Consultation

This review was debated at a Council Portfolio Group and Council Seminar on 24 February and 29 March respectively. Both forums were supportive and asked that:

- reasonable efforts to consult with all affected parties be made
- special effort made in the Papanui and Woolston areas
- further consultation, research and clarification on the nature of any schools-only arrangements at Woolston, to avoid the risk of exclusive use and excessive Council subsidy for one school
- any feedback be taken into consideration in a report to Council

Consultation with affected parties occurred over one month between 20 March and 28 April and included:

- Media releases in The Press, Christchurch Star and local papers
- Interactive presentations to Community Boards
- Interactive presentations to suburban pool user groups, pool committees and schools
- Proactive contact with every identified suburban pool regular user group in the past two years

The only group contacted (on numerous occasions) that did not offer any feedback, was the Papanui swimming pool committee and swim club.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. When issues relating to the schools-only use of Woolston were clarified, there was support for the preferred option. There was sadness at the potential loss of Papanui pool but many users had already accepted that the Papanui pool had a limited life and were happy to see the pool decommissioned in a planned and managed way.

Both the Papanui and Woolston pool user communities, supported by their respective Community Boards, were forthright in stressing that their cooperation and willingness to make a “tough” decision, in respect of their local pools, should be taken into account by Council’s Aquatic Facility Strategy, in recommending the location of new facilities.

Other comments are summarised as follows:

- Better a planned closure than a breakdown.
- Not sensible to restore a pool that has exceeded its lifespan.
- No extra cost to Council appropriate.
- Additional 30 day opening is a great outcome.
- Pools open to public in February is common sense.
- Schools can now afford to use the pools again.
- This reflects the realisation that pools can no longer be run by volunteers (Woolston).
- The effects of this review should be considered in the bigger strategy.
- We were expecting this and are glad it is presented in a managed way with enough time to implement for next season.
- We will be sad to see the Papanui Pool decommissioned.
- Please assist the Papanui School to make alternative arrangements.
- This is common sense.

APPENDIX 1: COUNCILS DECISION MAKING CHECKLIST
 Completed in respect of the preferred option, changed levels of service according to need.

Significance:		High/ Medium/ Low
Impact on social, economic, environmental or cultural wellbeing.	Positive impact as service levels grow overall	Low
Impact on Council's capacity	Positive as existing resources are better used to cater for more activity	Low
Alignment with the LTCCP or Annual Plan	Aligned	Low
Expenditure Required and magnitude of the decision in terms of its net cost to the Council.	No additional cost to Council, potential long term saving in maintenance costs	Low
Potential Effects radically different	Totally quantifiable effects in a tight framework	Low
Degree of controversy	Low outside the limited user groups and possibly the local community, higher for those effected User groups and the respective pool communities have supported the review findings Strong community support In the Shirley Papanui area two out of three pools have a substantial increase in service.	Low
Reversibility of the decision.	A decommissioned pool can be recommissioned, i.e. no demolition, schools only pool can be opened to public	Low
Certainty of information.	Purely factual information where necessary verified by an independent engineer	Low
Impact on Strategic Assets	None	Low
Change to mode of delivery of a Group of Activities.	Very small, effects 0.062% of users to Council funded pools	Low
Change to level of service of a Group of Activities.	Positive change to levels of service overall at suburban pools	Low
If this is a <u>significant decision in relation to land or a body of water</u>, how does it take account of the relationship of Māori to ancestral land, water, sites, waahi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga?	No	N/A
Any other relevant matters	Needs of specific pool user groups will be addressed	Low
Should the proposal be decided through LTCCP (or amendment)?	No	N/A

VIEWS OF AFFECTED AND INTERESTED PARTIES

What research, communication or consultation has been undertaken? (including considering information already held by the Council)	Extensive research and consultation as prescribed by Council seminar 23 March
What was done to encourage interested or affected persons to present their views?	All affected parties identified and individually consulted and invited to meetings
What consideration has been given to community views on this matter?	As directed, priority was given to the affected communities
What opportunities were Maori given to contribute to the proposed decision?	N/A
Is there a legal requirement to consult? What?	No
Is a Special Consultative Procedure Required Prior to Decision? Why	No
Must the decision be made through an LTCCP? Why?	No

UNIT CONSULTATION

Units Consulted	Comments on Proposal
Research and Policy	Support, consistent with Councils Aquatic facility Strategy process
Facility Assets	None
Community and Recreation	Supportive, advised to consult with affected communities, this was done