
Foxton Pool - Extended Season Trial

File No.: 17/37

1. Purpose

To present to the Foxton Community Board a report on the Foxton Pool extended season trial.

Executive Summary

The current Foxton Pool was constructed in 2007 and includes a light weight building with no thermal insulation or vapour barriers and without spare structural capacity to support significant additional loads. This building accommodates a 25m pool and a learners/toddlers pool. Issues associated with condensation have existed from the time of the original build.

In 2009 Council responded to public feedback for pool heating, and gas heating was installed providing pool temperatures of 28 degrees to the main pool and 32 degrees to the toddler's pool.

Over the last 10 years the Foxton Pool has been open across the period 1 December - 1 May each summer season.

In November, 2015 Foxton Community Board (Council) received a petition with over 1,000 signatures, requesting Foxton Pool be operated twelve months (12) of each year.

In 2016 an extended operational season occurred commencing 1 December 2015 until 24 September 2016. This ensured a public swimming pool was available for residents of Horowhenua district over the period of the Levin Aquatic Centre redevelopment.

During the extended season, environmental conditions and impacts associated impacts were identified by staff and some customers primarily related to condensation.

In this report, Foxton Pool usage data has been analysed for its "normal" 2015/16 season (December – May) season as well as the extended 2016 season (May – September).

During the 2015 /16 season two Customer Surveys were undertaken and an analysis is included.

A report was commissioned from Calibre Consulting on options for year round usage. A summary is included. The Calibre Consulting report recommended three options for proving a year round Aquatic operation at Foxton Pool. Option One (1) recommends leaving the building uninsulated and adding heating and ventilation to the main pool hall. Option Two (2) Proposes re-cladding, re-roofing and adding ventilation and heating to the main pool halls and changing rooms. Option Three (3) recommends replacing the existing building. Capital costs for year round use have been provided by Calibre in relation to each option, and Operational costs have been calculated against these options.

Remedial actions by Council were undertaken as a result of issues identified during the extended season. These actions were undertaken prior to commencement of the 2016/2017 season and further remedial actions are planned within the existing capital works budget for Foxton.

Foxton Pool usage data for the current season, November 2016 – February 2017, has been analysed. This usage data is compared to LAC data for the same period and a Unit Cost has been calculated for both Levin Aquatic and Foxton Pool, dividing the total amount of operational costs by the total number of casual swimmers, to provide a comparison.

At this time, Council Officers plan to continue to operate Foxton Pool as a five (5) month operation.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Report 17/37 Foxton Pool - Extended Season Trial be received.
- 2.2 That this matter or decision be recognised as not significant in terms of s76 of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background/Previous Council Decisions

In 2007, after community consultation, Council constructed a 25m pool, and learners/toddlers pool began to the west of the original outdoor Foxton pool at a cost of \$1.5m. The complex includes a 25 metre indoor pool and an indoor play and toddlers' pool.

A Horowhenua District Council (Council) requirement of the building design was that future development was accommodated, so that insulation and ventilation could be added at a later date. Issues in construction and engineering led to Council officers questioning the structural integrity of the building and legal action followed. It has since been found that the structure cannot support additional weight without significant expenditure.

The Pool building's original design intent was to accommodate an unheated pool and shelter swimmers and spectators from outdoor conditions and was not mechanically heated or ventilated. Condensation issues were documented from the first season of operation. At that time the pools were heated through solar gain only.

In 2009, submissions were received by Council for the Foxton Pools to be fitted with boost heating. Subsequently gas heating was installed providing pool temperatures of 28 degrees to the main pool and 32 degrees to the toddler's pool. This added significantly to the condensation issues inside the building.

Over the last 10 years the Foxton Pool has been open across the period 1 December - 1 May each summer season.

In November, 2015, Council received a petition to increase the season / hours of the Foxton Pool. The petition had over 1,000 signatures, requesting the Pool be operated twelve months (12) of each year.

Within the petition, specific commitments were made by a number of organisations and clubs regarding utilisation of the Pool if hours were to be extended.

In particular:

1. Foxton Volunteer Fire Brigade emphasised its intention to utilise the pool as a training facility for its Brigade.
2. Coastguard Manawatu emphasised its intention to utilise the pool as a training facility for its Brigade.
3. Te Waiora Community Health Centre emphasised how it would promote the pool for use by its patients who were older, being treated for chronic low back pain, experiencing hip and/or knee osteoporosis or for weight loss.
4. Coley Street School, Foxton Primary School and Foxton Beach School emphasised their separate intentions to utilise the pool for Learn to Swim Classes for school students.
5. Foxton Beach School additionally emphasised its intention to utilise the pool for Water Polo for school students.

At the Foxton Community Board meeting in February 2016, the Board supported the opportunity to trial an extension to the Foxton Pool season over the period of the Levin Aquatic Centre redevelopment over the proposed timeline from early May – end of August, 2016.

At the meeting, the Board requested a further future report on Foxton Pool extended season; including usage patterns and a summary of Foxton Pool customer feedback. A further update to the Foxton Community Board was subsequently provided in January 2016 prior to the proposed date for the extended period commencing. This Report presented to the Board's February 2017 meeting is the final report on the extended season as requested by the Board in February, 2016.

Foxton Community Board, in its meeting in February 2016, agreed to progress the Levin Aquatic Centre redevelopment within the timeline proposed and acknowledged that the redevelopment presented an opportunity to trial an extension to the Foxton Pool operating season / hours.

The Foxton Pool was scheduled to remain open from 1 December 2015 until 1 September, 2016. Foxton Pool was previously closed by 1 May, so the period 1 May through to 1 September 2016 was the trial period for the Foxton Pool extended opening hours / season. In effect, The Foxton Pool remained open until 24 September 2016.

During the period 1 May through to 24 September 2016, the Foxton Pool operated during the following hours:

Monday to Friday	6.00am – 6.00pm
	(Clubs had exclusive use 6.00pm – 8.00pm)
Saturday and Sunday	10.00am – 6.00pm

Council officers, including Aquatics Manager and the Community Services Manager, met with a number of Foxton community members, primarily pool users, on two (2) separate occasions and, as a result, prepared and delivered a promotion and marketing plan regarding the trial period for the extended opening of Foxton Pool. Promotions related to the extended season included significant newspaper advertising in the Horowhenua Chronicle, posters on public display in and around Foxton as well as a pamphlet drop through local shops and 2,400 households in Foxton. A total of \$10,096 was spent on advertising Foxton pool, compared with \$8,295 for Levin Aquatic Centre in the 2015/2016 financial year.

During the extended season environmental conditions within Foxton Pool were identified by staff and some customers. On cooler days there were increasing levels of condensation in the Pool hall. As the season progressed and the external weather conditions cooled the condensation issues worsened. The condensation affected staff and spectator comfort issues, as well as resulted in a number of operational issues including poor visibility for staff and spectators, necessitating practice adjustment to adequately patrol / supervise swimmers. A fire alarm malfunction was caused as a result of increased moisture levels and tanalising agent staining dripped from timbers. Also, the moisture content on structural timber reached undesirable levels.

Council officers have continued to meet regularly with Foxton community members as a Pool User Group and two (2) meetings have been conducted since the promotion and marketing planning exercise with Foxton Pool Users. These meetings are publicly advertised and open. Both meetings have been well attended and regular updates on Foxton Pool and Levin Aquatic Centre upgrade have been provided. Feedback from attendees on the meetings has been positive and it continues to provide a forum for Foxton Pool issues to be raised and solutions sought and reported on.

4. Issues for Consideration and Findings

Foxton Pool Usage by Clubs / Organisations over the 2015/16 season:

The table below shows the number of users associated with club or organisation use in booked sessions. Analysis of the booking records shows the following:

Normal Season - November to April 2016		Extended Season – May to September 2016	
December	568	May	1028
January	168	June	953
February	1869	July	895
March	1622	August	895
April	368	September*	549
Total	4595	Total	4320

The table below shows the number of sessions each organisation booked:

Booking Name	Normal - November to April 2016	Extended – May to September 2016
Foxton Swim Club	17	22
Levin Swim Club	9	133
Surf Club	33	50
Sports Manawatu – Green Prescription	3	7
Horowhenua Sports Academy	1	19
Special Olympics	1	16
Foxton Primary School	15	1
Foxton Beach School	1	1
Sports Manawatu – Sealord Swim for Life	14	10
Taitoko Tri Whanau	1	6
Coley Street School	9	0
Saint Mary Catholic School	11	0
Koputaroa School	1	0
Terrace End School	1	0
Levin Masters Swim Club	0	9
Manawatu College	0	7
Levin Sub Area – Underwater Hockey	0	7
Levin Intermediate	0	1
Scout Group	0	1
Miscellaneous (unnamed group bookings)	4	20
Number of Bookings	121	310 – 133 (Levin Swim) – 16 (Special Olympics) – 9 (Levin Masters) = 152
Number of Clubs / Groups	14	15

Club use shows a clear peak in February and March and then a more consistent pattern of use during the period of the extended season. The February and March peak is consistent with previous seasons.

The usage pattern, May to September, was significantly impacted by the closure of Levin Aquatic Centre (LAC) with regular LAC user groups shifting to Foxton Pool because of the redevelopment. For example Levin Swim Club, made over 130 bookings at Foxton Pool during this time compared to 9 in the normal season. Special Olympics made 16 bookings compared with one (1) in the normal season. Levin Masters made nine (9) bookings compared to zero (0) bookings in normal season. If we excluded the booking numbers resulting from usage redirected due to the Levin Aquatic Centre redevelopment there is consistent but moderate bookings across the normal and the extended season. This suggests that the level of usage (in terms of both number of clubs using the Pool as well as the number of bookings per club) in a normal season might reasonably be expected to be maintained for the extended season, but unlikely to significantly increase, at least in short to medium term.

The 2015 petition included commitments from a number of local and community organisation to make use of the Pool during the extended season to conduct extra training, rehabilitation and general usage. There is no evidence that Foxton Volunteer Fire Brigade, Coastguard Manawatu or Te Waiora Community Health Centre used the facility over the extended season; however twenty (20) individual one off group bookings did not name a specific local organisation. In contrast, Manawatu College, Foxton Primary and Foxton Beach School did utilize the pool when the season / hours were extended as they had indicated in the petition.

Foxton Pool Classes over the 2015/16 season:

Learn to swim - Streamline swim school operated out of Foxton Heated Pool for term 3 of 2016, with 118 students enrolled during the LAC shutdown. The holiday learn to swim programme in the term 2 / 3 holidays saw 45 enrolments. It could be reasonably anticipated, that learn to swim classes for a year round operation, under ideal internal conditions, could be 100 pupils per term – 400 enrolments per annum. This number is anticipated to be significantly reduced if the environmental conditions were to be less than optimal.

Aqua Fitness Classes - Aqua classes at Foxton Pools over both the normal and extended seasons have been particularly well attended and provide some of the busiest sessions of use for the Pool over all. Classes had up to 30 regular participants per class. Many regular members of the Aqua classes attend the Foxton Pool User group meetings and their passion and commitment to the facility is clear. It could be anticipated that Aqua Fitness classes for a year round operation would be consistent with numbers across the extended season in the short to medium term.

Foxton Pool Usage by Individuals / Casual visit over the 2015/16 season:

Below is the number of individual casual visits to the pool.

Normal Season- November to April 2016		Extended Season - May to September 2016	
December	1318	May	975
January	2017	June	696
February	1187	July	1437
March	988	August	805
April	1091	September*	633
Total	6601		4546

* 1 Sep – 24 Sep 2016

Analysis of the above numbers shows peaks in December, January and February when school holidays and the summer season had influence. This is consistent with previous seasonal use of Foxton Pool. There was an approximate drop off of 30% between the normal season and the extended season times, with the exception of a peak in July. April saw a small peak due to school holidays but LAC was still partially open over this period and will have reduced the casual usage numbers at Foxton. The July peak is related to a combination of increased demand in the school holidays as well as LAC being closed for redevelopment.

Based on the number of casual visits, as recorded above, calculations can be made into the number of casual visits per hour. The hours of operation from December to April were 10am – 6pm, Monday – Sunday, totalling 1216 hours for the season. The extended season opening hours were 6am - 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am - 6pm Saturday and Sunday, totalling 1588 hours. The average number of casual swimmers per hour is 5.4 during the normal season and 2.9 during the extended season. This equates to an approximate reduction in casual usage of 45% per hour of operation in the extended season when compared to the normal season.

2.9 individual casual visits per hour of operation for the Pool can be expected for half the year while 5.4 visits per hour can reasonably be expected for the other half of the season at the Foxton Pool if the season and hours were to be extended long term.

Foxton Pool usage data for the current season, November 2016 – February 2017, has been analysed. This data is compared to LAC data for the same period and a Unit Cost per Swimmer has been calculated for both Levin Aquatic and Foxton Pool, dividing the total cost by the total number of casual, swim school and membership swimmers, to provide a comparison, as below:.

	Levin Aquatic Centre		Foxton Heated Pool		Total	
	15/16	16/17 (YTD Jan)	15/16	16/17 (YTD Jan)	15/16	16/17 (YTD Jan)
Revenue	\$363,954	\$171,458	\$47,944	\$40,024	\$423,638	\$229,227
Expenses (Incl Depn)	\$1,330,698	\$701,618	\$465,942	\$307,289	\$1,819,372	\$1,044,762
Interest	\$95,315	\$49,407	\$38,570	\$19,993	\$133,885	\$69,400
Overheads	\$389,564	\$179,907	\$196,257	\$90,635	\$585,821	\$270,542
Rates Income Allocated	\$1,487,468	\$681,025	\$668,947	\$338,859	\$2,167,681	\$1,036,125
Usage/year	79,663	50,380	13,185	10,102	92,848	60,482
Cost per swimmer	\$10.87	\$9.78	\$19.15	\$22.97		

Public/private ratio	80/20	80/20	93/7	89/11	84/16	82/18
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It should be noted that both years were impacted by the Levin redevelopment. Levin Aquatic Centre figures exclude a term of swim school in 15/16 and 16/17 which equates to roughly a \$50,000 reduction in revenue each year. Term 1, 2017 payments are also due to be processed which have not been included in 16/17 figures, again accounting for a \$50,000 reduction. Foxton Pool was also open for extended hours which inflated expenditure for both years.

The Customer Experience of Foxton Pool over the 2015/16 season:

During the Foxton Pool extended season, two (2) Pool User surveys were conducted, the first in January, the second in July. These provide a snapshot of the customer experience of the extended season.

The first survey was conducted between 23 December 2015 – 20 January 2016 (normal season), with 72 respondents. The second was conducted between 25 July –and 26 July 2016 (extended season) with 43 respondents.

	Normal Season 2015		Extended Season 2016
Were the staff friendly and welcoming?	4.6		4.7
Were the staff helpful and courteous?	4.5		4.7
How safe and secure did you feel at the pool?	4.7		4.4
General swimming	4.6		4.4
Events	3.9		4.1
Fitness / Learn to Swim	4.6		4.5
How do you rate your visit to Foxton Pools?	4.6		4.4

General Comments:

Positive

- Loved layout of pool complex
- Loved all the inflatables for older kids
- Surf lifesaving was really well run
- Great pool for toddlers
- Aquacise is great it is only exercise I can do at this stage in my life
- Free Open Day was well run
- I had a good work out

Negative

- Hard to find same day Learn to Swim lessons for 2 children
- Water pressure in shower wasn't adequate

Suggestions for improvements:

- Would be good to see clock while swimming in pool (*a clock was placed in a more visible place as a result of the feedback*)

- Would like a slide like in Levin
- Could you bring blow up toys out more
- Would like softer chairs
- More Learn to Swim Programme options
- A Mobility Park would be useful
- Gym sticks would be great (*Gym sticks have been provided as a result of feedback*)
- More safety matting (*Safety matting has been assessed and some changes made as a result of feedback*)
- Need to have something to dry your hands on in the bathrooms a blower or paper towels (*hand dryers have now been installed*)
- Would like a spa, sauna and steam room as well as adult only hotter pool, better showers and more swimming equipment, such as flutter boards
- Would like longer hours so dads can bring their kids down after 6pm.

The results of these surveys indicates that customer service and facilities / programs at Foxton are generally satisfactory but there is some room for improvement in the customer experience and Council management is continuing to work on these areas.

Comments from survey participants also show some interest in extending the season / hours. These comments totaled **8 out of the 43** respondents in the July survey.

Over the extended season, there was verbal customer and staff feedback, reiterated in the Pool User Group meetings, expressing concerns with levels of condensation and air quality in the extended season. **3 out of 43** respondents also commented on this in the July survey responses.

Remedial Actions by Council

Remedial actions by Council were undertaken as a result of issues identified during the extended season. These actions took place prior to commencement of the 2016/2017 season and further remedial actions are planned within the existing capital works budget for Foxton. These remedial actions took place to reduce condensation, improve air quality as well as improve management of hot and cold temperatures. Actions included the following:

A period of Pool closure without Pool heating to allow for the structure to dry so that long term damage is inhibited.

Retreating and painting the timber uprights.

Six (6) air circulating fans have been installed.

The extract fan on the roof has been replaced by a passive ventilator which reduces noise pollution for swimmers and nearby residents.

Additional remediation actions planned within the existing Capital budget for Foxton Pool include the erection of self - supporting shade cloths to improve swimmer and spectator comfort as well as better manage temperature.

External Report by Calibre Consulting

An external report was commissioned by Council, from Calibre Consulting, for building solutions for a year round operation. Calibre was asked to address environmental issues (including condensation, air quality, hot and cold temperatures) as well as any risks to building and structural integrity in both the short and long term. Calibre was also asked to estimate capital and operational expenditure to provide Council a better understanding of which option would provide the most cost effective option.

The report by Calibre Consulting noted the following:

- The building was not built to accommodate a heated pool, but was built for limited seasonal use of a cold water pool only.
- The building was not designed or built for winter use.
- The building use proposed was well outside the scope of its original design.
- The moisture content of the timbers in the building was at undesirable levels and had potential to lead to long term structural issues.
- Due to the lack of insulation in the structure, the pool hall is particularly susceptible to extreme condensation events.
- Due to the light weight nature of the structure, the building cannot be easily insulated due to currently being at seismic and wind loading capacity.
- Ventilation and heating can be added but must be self-supporting due to the building structure currently being at capacity.
- Self – supporting ventilation and heating solutions are unlikely to provide suitable outcomes without insulation.
- The most effective long term solution would be a full redevelopment of the building structure to allow for a year round operation.

Discussion on Year Round Options

The Calibre Report proposed the following options for year round aquatics operations at Foxton Pool:

1. Leave the Foxton Pool building uninsulated and add heating and ventilation to the main pool hall.

This is a short term option and is likely to have the poorest outcome in terms of extending the life of the building and providing suitable internal environmental conditions during cooler periods of weather. Condensation would remain an issue, thus continuing to provide an uncomfortable and potentially unsafe environment for pool patrons and staff, continuing to saturate timbers and reducing the building life expectancy, which could be expected to be no more than 5 years if a 12 month operation was implemented with no further building works. This option is also likely to have the least benefit from an operational efficiency point of view as the air flow of the heating system would need to be increased to allow for the lack of sufficient insulation. The capital outlay for the ventilation and heating system would also be greater due to need to increase the size of the units to allow for greater air flow. If the building was to be insulated further down the track this system would be larger than otherwise required.

Capital Cost - The capital cost of this option is estimated at **\$504,000**. This cost is approximate only and has a margin of error of plus/minus 30%.

Operational Costs - The anticipated annual operational expenditure for year round operation:

Expenditure \$610,250.00

Revenue \$90,400.00

Difference \$519,850.00

Targeted Aquatics Rate estimate: **\$24.00** (what each rateable property across the district would need to contribute to allow for the option to be financially viable. This calculation takes into account that Council could expect to pay 10% of the loan required for the capital investment per year. Interest on the loan has not been taken into account).

Note - Learn to Swim - learn to swim programmes could anticipate 100 enrolments per term; 400 per year.

2. Re-clad, re-roof and add ventilation and heating to the main pool halls and changing rooms.

This is a short to medium-term solution and may give the building a life span, under a year round operation, until 2027. It would allow some operational efficiency, and less powerful heating options would be able to be operated. The main limitation on this option is the current structural strength of the building and the additional weight insulation and ventilation would add. Additional bracing would be required to enable the weight to be supported to allow for suitable structure strength. This option has a lower capital cost however the outcomes are not certain and may not be to the desired level. If this option is to be considered, further investigation would be required as to the exact extent of the structural support needed. In addition the structure would still need to be replaced in a relatively short time frame.

Capital Cost - The capital cost of this option is estimated **\$1,400,000**. This cost is approximate only and has a margin of error of plus/minus 30%.

Operational Costs - The anticipated annual operational expenditure for year round operation:

Expenditure \$573,500.00

Revenue \$93,500.00

Difference \$480,000.00

Targeted Aquatics Rate estimate: **\$26.50** (what each rateable property across the district would need to contribute to allow for the option to be financially viable. This calculation takes into account that Council could expect to pay 10% of the loan required for the capital investment per year. Interest on the loan has not been taken into account).

Note - Learn to Swim - learn to swim programmes could anticipate 45 enrolments per term; 180 per year. This number is reduced from a full upgrade due to poorer air quality and compromised internal environmental conditions making Levin a preference for learn to swim participants.

3. Replace the existing Foxton Pool building

This is a long -term solution and would give a long term, high quality solution. It provides all new construction therefore negates the current structural and durability issues. It provides the best opportunity to make the building as efficient as possible and allows an opportunity to address any issues with the pools design or operation. It does also pose significant disadvantages including high capital cost, longest construction time and potential waste of the current materials.

Capital Cost - The capital cost of this option is estimated at \$3,600,000. This cost is approximate only and has a margin of error of plus/minus 30%.

Operational Costs - The anticipated annual operational expenditure for year round operation:

Expenditure \$569,000.00

Revenue \$102,000.00

Difference \$467,000.00

Targeted Aquatics Rate estimate: **\$39.50** (what each rateable property across the district would need to contribute to allow for the option to be financially viable. This calculation takes into account that Council could expect to pay 10% of the loan required for the capital investment per year. Interest on the loan has not been taken into account).

Note - Learn to Swim - learn to swim programmes could anticipate 100 enrolments per term; 400 per year.

For year round operations the difference in expenditure between the current summer operation and a 12 month operation with extended hours is \$291,000 per year, as the majority of the annual operational expenditure is in staffing related costs. Some options presented some savings in utilities but this is a small portion of the overall operational costs.

In conclusion, at this time, Council Officers plan to continue to operate Foxton Pool as a five (5) month operation. Currently a Regional Sports Strategy is being prepared between and across six (6) local authorities including Horowhenua District Council. This Strategy should guide the partner Councils on what sports facilities might be provided in the future across the region. Council is considering its own 10 year plan for Council Built Sport and Recreation Facilities that is informed by the Strategy. Such a Plan could consider future Foxton Pool options alongside other facilities across the district. This Plan would also consider aquatics alongside other sports and recreation demands and opportunities across the district. The Plan would likely consider population growth, demographic characteristics, demand and opportunities for access, participation rates, club membership as well as current sport and recreation facility and program provision. It is anticipated that priority for Council will be on the provision of multi-use, adaptable facilities that are capable of being used for a variety of sports and recreation activities.

Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A	Calibre Consulting Executive Summary - Foxton Pool Extended Season Trial	

Confirmation of statutory compliance

In accordance with section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002, this report is approved as:

- a. containing sufficient information about the options and their benefits and costs, bearing in mind the significance of the decisions; and,
- b. is based on adequate knowledge about, and adequate consideration of, the views and preferences of affected and interested parties bearing in mind the significance of the decision.

Signatories

Author(s)	Denise Kidd Community Services Manager	
Approved by	Monique Davidson Group Manager - Customer and Community Services	