

**AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE SWIMMING POOL EXEMPTION SUBCOMMITTEE TO
BE HELD IN THE GLEN EDEN ROOM AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON
VALLEY ROAD, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE, ON FRIDAY, 29 MAY 2009,
COMMENCING AT 9.30 AM**

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1 APOLOGIES



2 URGENT BUSINESS

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides that where an item of business is not on the agenda, it may only be dealt with at the meeting if:

- (i) the Subcommittee by resolution so decides; and
- (ii) the Chairman has explained at the beginning of the meeting (when open to the public) that the item will be raised for discussion and decision, why the item is not on the agenda, and why it cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

The Subcommittee may make a decision on a matter determined to be urgent.

NOTE: Urgent Business need not be dealt with now and may be delayed until later in the meeting.



3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Council has acknowledged in its Code of Conduct that Elected Members need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a member of the Council and any private or other external interest they might have. This note is provided as a reminder to members to check that no such conflicts arise in relation to any items on this agenda.



4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Meeting Minutes - Thursday, 23 April 2009

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Swimming Pool Exemption Subcommittee resolve to:

Receive the minutes of the meeting of the Swimming Pool Exemption Subcommittee held on Thursday, 23 April 2009, as circulated, and that they be taken as read and now be confirmed.



5 **APPLICATIONS FOR SPECIAL EXEMPTIONS – FENCING OF SWIMMING POOLS ACT 1987**

GLOSSARY

Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987	(the Act)
Swimming Pool Exemption Subcommittee	(the Subcommittee)
Swimming pool	(pool)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present to the Swimming Pool Exemption Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) 12 applications for special exemptions from some of the requirements of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987 (the Act).

The Subcommittee must consider each of the applications for special exemption and either decline, approve or approve (subject to conditions) the exemptions sought.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Swimming Pool Exemption Subcommittee resolve to:

1. **Receive** the Applications For Special Exemptions - Fencing Of Swimming Pools Act 1987 report.
2. **Either**
 - (a) Agree to approve (subject to conditions) the application for special exemptions sought; OR
 - (b) Agree to decline the application for special exemptions sought.

BACKGROUND

- A1
1. Under section 6 of the Act, copy attached at page A1, a Council may only grant an exemption if, after having regard to the characteristics of the property and the swimming pool (pool) and any conditions that may be imposed, it is satisfied that *“such an exemption would not significantly increase danger to young children”*. The sort of issues that will usually arise for consideration under a section 6 exemption include matters such as the location of fences in relation to the boundaries of the *“immediate pool area”*, the construction of the pool fence and the operation of gates providing access to the fenced area.
- A2-A4
2. The details for a complying fence are set out in the Schedule to the Act, a copy of which is attached at pages A2 to A4. Of particular note are the provisions of clauses 8 to 10, relating to gates and doors, and clause 11. Where a building is part of the pool fence and a door from that building opens into the pool area the Council may grant an exemption from compliance with clauses 8 to 10 if it is *“satisfied that such compliance is impossible, unreasonable, or in breach of any other Act, regulation, or bylaw, and the door is fitted with a locking device that, when properly operated, prevents the door from being readily opened by children under the age of 6 years.”*
 3. A pool fence which complies with the Act, with or without an exemption, also complies with the requirements of the Building Code. A fence which complies with the Building Code, with or without an exemption granted under the Act, meets the requirements of the Act. Under the Building Code *“sliding and sliding-folding doors that give access to the immediate pool (area) from a building that forms part of the”* pool fence do not need to be self closing and self latching. To comply with the Act however such doors need to have a latch mounted at least 1.5 metres above the ground. The requirements for sliding and sliding-folding doors under the Building Code will be relevant to the exercise of the Council’s discretion in relation to an application for an exemption under clause 11 of the Schedule of the Act in respect of doors opening from a building into a pool area.

4. Apart from these matters the Act provides no further guidance for the basis of the exercise of the Councils' discretion. The purpose of the Act is stated to be "to promote the safety of young children by requiring the fencing of certain swimming pool", and that is clearly a relevant issue for Councillors to bear in mind in relation to any exemption application.
5. When granting a special exemption the Subcommittee may impose such other conditions relating to the property or the pool as are reasonable in the circumstances (section 6(2) of the Act). Issues to be considered include:
 - Will the exemption be personal to the applicant so that on a sale of the property a new owner will need to apply for a new exemption? This might be appropriate where the personal circumstances of the applicant have had a bearing on the exercise of discretion.
 - Will the exemption be granted for a fixed term and irrespective of changes of ownership so that the exemption runs with the property?
 - Will the exemption be granted for an indefinite term, irrespective of changes of ownership so that the exemption runs with the property?
 - Are there any other conditions which should be imposed, such as the replacement of pool covers after use (particularly in relation to spa pools) or a requirement for more frequent inspection of the pool (currently pools in the City are re-inspected on a 3 yearly cycle).
6. Any exemption granted or condition imposed may be amended or revoked by the Council, by resolution. The rules of natural justice would however dictate that this action should not be taken without prior notice to the pool owner and allowing the pool owner an opportunity to be heard.
7. Circumstances will arise where the Subcommittee may wish to grant an exemption, but there are matters in relation to the extant pool fence where a further exemption may need to be granted to enable the exempted arrangements to fully comply with the Act. The most common examples will arise where the fence, following exemption, will include a door which opens into the pool area from a building or there is a gate in the extended fence which does not comply with the Act. In such cases it is considered appropriate for the Subcommittee to accept an oral application for any further exemptions that may be necessary. The Committee Secretary will record the application made. If the Subcommittee does not consider it appropriate to grant an exemption for such matters, but it would be happy if some work is done, then it is recommended that the appropriate course of action is to grant the exemption sought conditional upon specified work being completed within a reasonable period.

DECISION MAKING

Issues

	Applicant	Property Address	A Pages	Non Complying items - Exemption is sought for:
1.	NM Brenton & TP Benecki	176 Bethells Rd, Bethells Valley	A5 - A7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non complying French doors.
2.	L & G Wrennall	103 Tiroroa Ave, Te Atatu South	A8 - A12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fence to the immediate pool area along the top of the deck and following the line of the paving slabs around the pool to prevent direct access from:

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (i) the non-complying doors in the house, (ii) the access way from the laundry to the clothes line, (iii) the access way through the pool area to access the back lawn. • Fee Waiver.
3.	JW Townend	12 Hepburn Rd, Glendene	A13 - A16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fence to the immediate pool area, to isolate the pool from the non-complying doors giving access to the lounge and the laundry, the non-complying windows opening out into the pool area and the access way through to the storage shed, gate and grassed area at the end of the pool deck. • Fee Waiver.
4.	C & K Farrell	14 Valron Rd, Te Atatu South	A17 - A19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-complying French doors. • Fee Waiver.
5.	DM MacKenzie	95 Kervil Ave, Te Atatu Peninsula	A20 - A22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non complying double doors. • Fee Waiver.
6.	JA & LM McLarin	185 Carter Rd, Oratia	A23 - A26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fence to the immediate pool area, so as to prevent direct access from the house and the thoroughfare to the pool area from the drive.
7.	H & M Kimble	18 Exhibition Drv, Titirangi	A27 - A32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fence to the immediate pool area, to isolate the pool from all landscaping/vegetation.
8.	R & M Sunde	161 Atkinson Rd, Titirangi	A33 - A36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fence to the immediate pool area, so as to prevent direct access from the thoroughfare through the pool area to the tennis court and around the house.
9.	AJ & CJ Drought	83 Atkinson Rd, Titirangi	A37 - A42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remove any climbable objects (lower than 1.2 m) from within 1.2 m of the outside of the pool fence. If any objects are unable to be removed, the pool fence must be raised to a minimum height of 1.2 m above, and 1.2 m past either side of each object, i.e BBQ. • To ensure that any other fences or handrails etc., which abut the pool fencing, are a minimum height of 1.2 m and are unclimbable for a minimum distance of 1.2 m from the point where they abut the fencing, i.e trellis fence in garden. • Fee Waiver.

10.	AD & AH Stother	39 Landing Rd, Titirangi	A43 - A49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a fence to the immediate pool area.
11.	JH Myers	1/6 Cliffview Rd, Green Bay	A50 - A57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a fence to the immediate pool area. Non-complying doors and windows. Fee Waiver.
12.	TR Hayes	15 Lantana Rd, Green Bay	A58 - A63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the pool fence is a minimum height of 1.2 m on the deck. To ensure that any other fences or handrails etc., which abut the pool fencing, are a minimum height of 1.2 m and are unclimbable for a minimum distance of 1.2 m from the point where they abut the pool fencing, i.e, would themselves comply with the Act. Fee Waiver.

Options Identified

- The Subcommittee may approve, approve (subject to conditions) or decline the applications for special exemption.
- If an application is declined this equates to the “do nothing option” resulting in the applicant being required to fence their pool in accordance with the Act.

Consideration of Community Views

- Compliance with the Act is a mandatory requirement for pool owners.

Preferred Option

- The special exemption options open to the Subcommittee under the Act are not open to Council officers therefore it is considered inappropriate for Council officers to identify a preferred option.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- The Council is committed to ensuring that Waitakere is a safe place to live and play in. Pool fencing issues have a strong relationship with the Council’s strategic priorities of First Call for Children and Safe City.

CONSULTATION

- Each special exemption application has been discussed with the SWP fencing inspector involved in the initial inspection. As special exemptions cannot be considered by Council officers their opinions are not included in the report.

RESOURCES

- There are no additional resources required to implement the decisions of the Committee.

15. The Subcommittee has the discretion to waive the fee for the special exemption application.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

16. Each of the applicants is seeking exemption from the Act for matters where Council staff consider that remedial action is necessary to achieve compliance with the Act. If an exemption is granted those items will be deemed to comply with the Act, therefore no remedial action will be required (other than for any action that may be required by a condition attaching to the granting of the exemption).

Report prepared by: Wolfgang Nethe, Team Manager Operational Compliance.

