

Public Transport Committee

Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Thursday 18 March 2021, 9.30 am
- Venue:** Bay of Plenty Regional Council Chambers, Regional House, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga
- Chairperson:** Cr Andrew von Dadelszen
- Deputy Chairperson:** Cr Lyall Thurston
- Members:**
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council:
Cr Norm Bruning
Cr Jane Nees
Cr Paula Thompson
Cr Stacey Rose
- Lakes Community Board/ Rotorua Lakes Council
Phill Thomass
- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency
Cole O'Keefe - Waka Kotahi NZTA (non-voting member)
- Tauranga City Council
Commissioner Stephen Selwood
- In Attendance:** Cr David Love - Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Mat Taylor - General Manager, Corporate, Namouta Poutasi - General Manager, Strategy and Science, presenters - as listed in the minutes, Amanda Namana - Committee Advisor
- Apologies:** Mayor Garry Webber - Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles - Alternate, Whakatāne District Council, Chairman Doug Leeder - Bay of Plenty Regional Council

1. Apologies

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Mayor Garry Webber - Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles - Alternate, Whakatāne District Council, Chairman Doug Leeder - Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Cr Jane Nees (for lateness) tendered at the meeting.**

Rose/Thomass
CARRIED

2. Public Forum

2.1 Jessica Arlund, supported by Louise Wittenzellner

Key Points

- Students from Mount Maunganui College attended an informative day about safe driving and the dangers of driving under the influence
- Extended bus service hours could assist with this issue and provide better options for people who could not afford taxi or ride share services
- Potential benefits included providing more freedom for people with disabilities, elderly and youth, less traffic, fewer collisions, safer roads with fewer young drivers and improved patronage for restaurants and bars
- Suggested bus hours be extended particularly over the weekend, preferably to a 24 hour service
- Provided evidence from other countries where offences involving driving under the influence had significantly reduced after bus hours were extended to 3 am, as had roadside injuries and fatalities
- Bus services ran until midnight in Christchurch and Auckland.

In Response to Questions

- Not every route needed to be running the extended hours, but as many as possible would be beneficial and suggested that increased fees for later services would be acceptable.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared

4. Minutes

Minutes to be Confirmed

4.1 Public Transport Committee Minutes - 27 November 2020

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Confirms the Public Transport Committee Minutes - 27 November 2020 as a true and correct record.

Thurston/Bruning
CARRIED

5. Reports

5.1 Chairperson's Report

Legal and Commercial Manager Jessica Easton presented this item.

Key Points:

- Waka Kotahi Covid-19 Public Transport Funding covered costs that included additional cleaning of buses, hand sanitiser for passengers and

fare revenue shortfalls. This funding would continue until 30 June 2021, after which time there was strong indication given that councils would need to fund these costs themselves

- Staff were still actively looking for Māori representation on the Western Bay of Plenty Community Panel
- Overall patronage decline around the region was consistent with what was occurring around the country
- An additional three buses had been added to the school service network to address the increase in patronage
- Additional security was being considered for the Farm Street interchange for the safety of drivers and passengers.

Key Points - Members:

- Suggested a survey to understand how much of the increased school service patronage was driven by the free fare initiative
- Recruiting suitable members for the Western Bay of Plenty Community Panel may need to involve getting out into the community
- The key question was whether safety and security measures were an operational or infrastructure expense and how this fits within Council priorities.

In Response to Questions:

- Recognised that there were some gaps on the Western Bay of Plenty Community Panel and would add a rural bus user as a representative
- Although Rotorua had not experienced a similar spike of security incidents, in the case of a significant increase the situation would be addressed
- Security requirements were reviewed on a weekly basis and were considered by the amount, type and location of incidents.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Chairperson's Report.**

**von Dadelszen/Rose
CARRIED**

Decisions Required

5.2 Strategic Direction in 2021

Presentation - Strategic Direction: Objective ID A3759144 ⇨

Legal and Commercial Manager Jessica Easton and Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- Urban planning was focused on people as opposed to solely infrastructure or vehicles
- Safety of the public when using public transport services was a key concern
- Supplying and managing parking was crucial for mode shift

- Travel demand management and behaviour change were important elements of work to progress throughout 2021 and into the future
- The definition of mobility impairment had been extended further and existing members of the Total Mobility scheme were automatically eligible for accessibility free fares.

Key Points - Members:

- The collaborative relationship between Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Tauranga City Council staff, along with wider stakeholders had been ongoing and consistent, however a conversation at a higher governance level would be beneficial to discuss how to drive better services and value for money
- Changing the culture of Tauranga as the most car dependent city in the Southern Hemisphere was a challenging task and had to involve the vision of the entire community
- It was important to consider both inter-generational and cultural perspectives in changing mindsets around mode shift
- A strong communications strategy and using new data available through the Bee Card system was key for decision making and providing updates to the community
- The work programme needed to provide a clear understanding of the scope of the projects and incorporate the inter-dependency of how they related to one another
- In relation to business cases and other processes, being nimble and responsive was critical in being able to act at the right time to achieve the best outcomes.

In Response to Questions:

- Clarified the twofold governance level structure within the Transport spatial plan (TSP)
- The free fare trial for tertiary students was approved to run until the end of 2021 and staff were working together with Toi Ohomai and the University of Waikato around the potential of the jointly funded initiative becoming a permanent service
- The potential for including carers for people with disabilities into the accessibility free fares had been considered; and once the scheme was underway there would be further investigation into introducing this
- All buses in urban areas adhered to accessibility standards set by Waka Kotahi, which were currently under review due to feedback received from the community that these could be improved
- The Arataki report had now been updated to include other regions.

Items for Staff Follow Up:

- Resend the newsletter sent at the end of 2020 which provided information about bike racks on buses and ensure the distribution list was relevant and updated.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Strategic Direction in 2021.**
- 2 Adopts the Public Transport Committee Work Programme 2021 as appended to the report.**

- 3 Notes the public transport fares integration process, which will be progressed through the review of the Regional Public Transport Plan, and the development of a Public Transport Services and Infrastructure Business Case.**
- 4 Notes the implementation of a region-wide Accessibility Free Fare for people with a permanent mobility impairment.**

**Rose/Thomass
CARRIED**

10.48 am - The meeting **adjourned**.

11.05 am - the meeting **reconvened**.

5.3 Regional Public Transport Plan Review

Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn and Principal Advisor, Regional Development Bron Healey presented this item.

Key Points:

- Two key purposes of a Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) were to encourage councils and operators to work together on the design of the public transport network, and to provide an instrument to engage with the public on the public transport networks
- Timing met the requirement of legislation stating that the RPTP should be reviewed at the same time, or as soon as practical following the public transport components of the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) having been approved
- The scope of the RPTP was determined by legislative requirements to some extent, but there was the ability to include discretionary matters in the plan
- Reinforced that the RPTP was a policy document and not a detailed implementation or delivery plan
- A multi-agency project team had been established and would ensure that the outcomes of the different processes were factored into the policy strands of the RPTP, as well as developing a comprehensive engagement plan.

Key Points - Members:

- Suggested that the Western Bay of Plenty Community Panel be involved with the multi-agency project team so that the community was included from the start, and that the Ministry of Transport should also have a representative
- The review needed to be targeted to fundamental issues:
 - Reasons driving those who do not currently use public transport services and what could be done to bridge the gap
 - Targeting each dollar spent to maximum advantage
 - Using data to understand bus occupancy related to times of day and the subsidy costs per user on each route daily
- Park and ride services required a strong policy and were an important factor for many who did not currently use public transport
- Larger focus was needed on people commuting between Tauranga City and rural areas
- Whilst mode shift was a major aspiration, further evidence was required on how to genuinely achieve this in practical terms

- Cautioned against getting ahead of technology and remaining aware of where costs lay.

In Response to Questions:

- The multi-agency project team consisted of internal staff, a representative from Waka Kotahi NZTA and a staff member from Tauranga City Council currently representing Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs). Other TLAs from across the region were invited to be involved and there were alternative avenues for engagement, such as through the Regional Transport Committee
- The RPTP had to be clear on the boundary between public transport and shared services.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Regional Public Transport Plan Review;**
- 2 Approves the high level scope and timeframes for the review process, as outlined in items 2 and 3 of the report.**

**Nees/Thurston
CARRIED**

5.4 Pāpāmoa - Bayfair - Mount Maunganui - Tauranga CDB - Hospital: Optimisation Project

Presentation - Pāpāmoa - Bayfair - Mount Maunganui - Tauranga Optimisation: Objective ID A3759140

Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- The key challenge was trying to understand the optimum length and directness the bus routes should be
- The further away from the CBD, the more important a faster journey became for users
- Transport choice fundamentally came down to how one's transport mode fit their lifestyle
- Transfer times were a critical challenge with the connective service option
- Branding, legibility of signage, protection from the weather and personal safety were all important factors in an interchange
- Introduced a Transit Planning Tool, Remix, which was under consideration for purchase and would provide data to make decisions and test alternatives to develop the best transport options, and could also be used by the public
- Partnership, engagement, collaboration and a no blame culture were all key to the optimisation project.

Key Points - Members:

- The presentation clearly underlined how to apply principles in a case study approach and was a practical demonstration of the inter-dependencies between street knowledge and wider strategic thinking
- The objective was good, robust, data driven decision making
- If the Transit Planning Tool proved successful, it could be rolled out to the rest of the region.

In Response to Questions:

- Understanding social demographics and land use change was crucial in considering options for optimisation
- Needed to be cognizant of both the long term and short term challenges.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report: Pāpāmoa - Bayfair - Mount Maunganui - Tauranga CDB - Hospital: Optimisation Project;**
- 2 Notes the proposed scope of work and timescales;**
- 3 Approves the proposed high level scope of work contained in item 2 of the report.**

**Thurston/Thomas
CARRIED**

5.5 Bus Fleet Decarbonisation

Presentation - Bus Fleet Decarbonisation: Objective ID A3759137

General Manager Strategy and Science Namouta Poutasi and Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- The bus decarbonisation work was driven by Government direction received in early 2021 relating to decarbonisation of all New Zealand buses by 2035. By 2025 no new diesel buses should be purchased or introduced into urban/ inter-urban fleets
- Although capital prices were currently high, the differential would improve over time as more buses were manufactured
- There was a high capital cost upfront but this was offset by significantly lower operating costs.

Key Points - Members:

- Many different streams of work were involved and it was important to not duplicate any of this
- Expressed concern over the unproven nature of using hydrogen buses - awaiting national direction or guidance and collaborating across the country would be prudent.

In Response to Questions:

- The feasibility study was not a joint venture with Waikato Regional Council, but as collaboration with the Waikato region was high on the

agenda there may be potential opportunity for cost savings or to undertake further work

- The Transport Special Interest Group (TSIG) was undertaking high level work to produce its own roadmap of what decarbonisation across New Zealand would look like
- There was a significant unanswered question of who was going to pay for all of the electricity supply and related infrastructure.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 **Receives the report: Bus Fleet Decarbonisation.**
- 2 **Approves the feasibility study outline project scope included in item 5.2 of the report.**
- 3 **Recommends to Council the inclusion of \$300,000 for the feasibility study within the deliberations of the Long Term Plan**
- 4 **Extends an invitation to the Minister of Transport to attend the next meeting of the Public Transport Committee in person, or via Zoom.**

**Nees/Thomass
CARRIED**

Information Only

5.6 Improving our network

General Manager Strategy and Science Namouta Poutasi, Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn and Team Leader Urban presented this item.

In Response to Questions:

- The figures on page 81 applied only to the Tertiary Free Trial patronage and the bottom total referred only to Tauranga - Rotorua.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 **Receives the report, Improving our network.**

**Thurston/Rose
CARRIED**

5.7 Public Transport Technology Update

Presentation - Public Transport Technology Update: Objective ID A3759139 ⇨
Transport Advisor (Network Optimisation) Melissa Winters, Transport Support Stacey Brooks and Legal and Commercial Manager Jessica Easton presented this item.

Key Points:

- The biggest advantage of Dynamis and the Bee Card was it brought all of the operators across the region into the same system

- The tag on tag off data supplied from the Bee Card system provided a much clearer picture of the journeys that patrons were taking
- Demonstrated how the Dynamis replay and real time tracking on the Bay Bus website worked
- The Transit App was available for all services across region except for three
- A Vodafone outage had caused issues with the digital displays that were not yet resolved and may take up to two weeks to rectify
- Future technology initiatives included:
 - Improving reporting capability of on time performance monitoring, patronage reporting and contract management. Staff were working with Waikato Regional Council on many of the reports as they used the same background systems and were able to share development work
 - Future real time service change notifications to customers included 'bus running late' texts and traffic delays
 - Next stop announcement systems were complicated but a priority focus for 2021.

Key Points - Members:

- Public confidence in the live information technology was crucial in achieving mode shift change and increasing bus patronage.

In Response to Questions:

- Bus stop usage information was shared with local authorities to assist in determining future infrastructure requirements
- The Transit App was used internationally and alternatives had been considered, but developing custom Apps held prohibitive costs
- There were plans to provide digital signage in Rotorua.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Public Transport Technology Update.**

**von Dadelszen/Thurston
CARRIED**

5.8 Public Transport Arotake Tuarua - Performance Monitoring Report July 2020 to December 2020

Legal and Commercial Manager Jessica Easton and Transport Operations Team Lead Jen Proctor presented this item.

Key Points:

- State Highway 2 corridor between Katikati and Tauranga was a challenging route to place bus stops and residents of Fairview Estate had approached Council to have one placed there. This was installed in 2020 and was both a successful and safe solution with good usage by residents to date
- Operators were being added to the Tauranga, Katikati and Rotorua networks for the Total Mobility scheme

- There had been a spike in complaints over the October-November 2020 period, along with reduced punctuality and reliability, which was addressed with focused contract management and recruitment
- Bee Card use for tertiary students was picking up and staff hoped to see further increases in using Bee Cards instead of cash.

Key Points - Members:

- Moving solely to Bee Card as a completely digital service was impractical for some members of the public and it was important to balance accessibility with convenience
- Key to engaging with students was approaching them in person; and suggested incentivising students by lowering the \$5 card fee.

In Response to Questions:

- Staff would continue working with tertiary institutes to promote the Bee Card.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Public Transport Arotake Tuarua - Performance Monitoring Report July 2020 to December 2020.**

**Rose/Thurston
CARRIED**

1.11 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Cr Andrew von Dadelszen
.Chairperson, Public Transport Committee