

Public Transport Committee

Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Thursday 17 March 2022, 9.30 am
- Venue:** Via Zoom (Audio Visual Meeting)
- Chairperson:** Cr Andrew von Dadelszen
- Deputy Chairperson:** Cr Lyall Thurston
- Members:** Cr Norm Bruning, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Cr Jane Nees – Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Cr Paula Thompson – Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Cr Stacey Rose – Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Mayor Garry Webber – Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Mayor Judy Turner – Whakatāne District Council, Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles – Alternate, Whakatāne District Council, Commissioner Stephen Selwood – Tauranga City Council, Phill Thomass – Lakes Community Board, Michelle Te Wharau – Waka Kotahi (non-voting)
- In Attendance:** Cr Matemoana McDonald, Mat Taylor – General Manager, Corporate, Namouta Poutasi – General Manager, Strategy and Science, James Llewellyn – Transport and Urban Planning Manager, Simon Bell – Transport Systems Team Leader, Amanda Namana – Committee Advisor
- External: Alice Davies
- Apologies:** Chairman Leeder – Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Jessica Andrew – Waka Kotahi, Mayor Judy Turner – Whakatāne District Council (early departure), Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles – Whakatāne District Council (early departure), Cr Stacey Rose – Bay of Plenty Regional Council (early departure)

This meeting was livestreamed and the recording is available on Council's YouTube channel: [Public Transport Committee - 17 March 2022 - YouTube](#)

1. Apologies

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Chairman Leeder, Jessica Andrew, Mayor Judy Turner (for early departure), Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles (for early departure) and Cr Stacey Rose (for early departure) tendered at the meeting.**

**Thurston/Thomass
CARRIED**

2. Order of Business

To accommodate the presenter, the Public Forum would be taken following item 6.1 – Chairperson’s Report.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

4. Minutes

Minutes to be Confirmed

4.1 Public Transport Committee Minutes - 30 November 2021

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Confirms the Public Transport Committee Minutes - 30 November 2021 as a true and correct record.**

**Iles/Thurston
CARRIED**

5. Presentations

5.1 Accessibility - using the bus system and Bee Cards

The Chair advised that this item would be deferred to a future meeting.

5.2 Update from The Wednesday Challenge

The Chair advised that this item would be deferred to a future meeting.

6. Reports

Decisions Required

6.1 Chairperson’s Report

Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- Provided details of the government announcement earlier in the week to provide half price public transport fares for three months from 1 April 2022

to 30 June 2022.

Key Points - Members:

- Suggested social media and bus sticker advertising of the three month half price fares to take advantage of the opportunity to increase bus patronage as petrol prices continued to rise
- Agreed the three month half price fares were a good opportunity to understand price sensitivity for patrons across the region
- Mayor Turner provided an update:
 - Discussions had taken place with Mayor Campbell (Kawerau) and Mayor Riesterer (Ōpōtiki) around specific transport issues to the Eastern Bay of Plenty. There were current sub-regional initiatives underway to provide transport to medical appointments for remote communities, a disability resource centre reviewing how they could improve public transport, a senior citizens group looking at public transport options for members (particularly those that could no longer drive) and Ōpōtiki projects providing services for people needing to travel up the coast. Noted that there was collective thinking underway from the Eastern Bay of Plenty to suggest strategic future public transport outcomes to the Committee
- Acknowledged the social and physical demands of bus driving and the unique financial dynamics of providing a public transport service.

In Response to Questions:

- Communication was key to implementing the three month half price fares and staff were working through details of a communications plan
- There was increasing pressure to have a more strategic approach to the cost of fares and how they applied to different groups of people
- The Ministry of Transport (MOT) had invited the Transport Special Interest Group (TSIG) to sit on the operational working group to provide Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) guidance
- Bus driver wages and working conditions would be a priority in considering investment in the future public transport system
- There had been challenges with driver retention and recruitment, for which there were a range of factors including Covid-19 impacts. This was a serious situation across the country and needed to be addressed on a national level
- General Manager, Corporate advised that although staff would provide all available information on providing free fares in alignment with the government half price fares, a full investigation of all options available (including weighing up all pros and cons) would not be possible given the timeframe.

Items for Staff Follow Up:

- Add a standing item to future agendas for an update from the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Mayoral Committee in relation to public transport.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

1 Receives the report, Chairperson's Report;

**Von Dadelszen/Thomass
CARRIED**

- 2 Recommends to Regional Council that staff investigate options for a full bus service incorporating free fares to align with the government announcement of half price fares, for a period of three months
Bruning/Thompson
- 3 *Proposed Amendment:* Recommends to Regional Council that staff investigate options for a full bus service incorporating free fares to improve patronage
Webber/Selwood

With the agreement of the mover/seconder of the original motion, the amendment was incorporated into the motion as follows:

- 4 **Recommends to Regional Council that staff investigate options for a full bus service incorporating free fares to improve patronage, and align with the government announcement of half price fares, as a trial for a period of three months.**

**Bruning/Thompson
CARRIED**

7. Public Forum

7.1 Alice Davies

Presentation: Tauranga Bus Stop Accessibility: Objective ID A4064166 [↗](#)

Tabled Document 1 - Tauranga bus stop accessibility Research Report: Objective ID A4064165

Key Points of Presentation:

- Alice was currently studying a Bachelor of Social Work at the University of Waikato in Tauranga and obtained an internship through the Transportation Group (under Engineering New Zealand), hosted by BECA
- Outlined the research purpose and methods
- Results supported the hypothesis that the disabled community were adversely affected by inaccessibility of bus stops and the journey to bus stops
- Current accessibility issues with bus stops included connectivity to the footpath, being able to safely cross the road, shelter and seating, the inclusion of live updating digital signs, obstacles, height of access/dismount for buses to footpath and clearance to near traffic
- Compared Tauranga City Council bus stop guidelines to feedback received and provided recommendations to better align these.

Key Points - Members:

- Commended the presentation, research, and valuable recommendations
- Suggested that Alice present to the Tauranga Joint Public Transport Committee
- Tauranga City Council had a significant infrastructure programme underway to address improvements to the current standard.

In Response to Questions:

- Representative groups such as CCS, blind/vision impaired groups and other organisations had also been communicated with during the research
- These organisations considered that it was sometimes complicated to communicate transport issues as it could be difficult to differentiate where the responsibility for separate concerns lay

- There were also many organisations that had resources and were willing to assist but were not being approached to contribute.

10:59 am – The meeting **adjourned** and Cr Stacey Rose **withdrew**.

11.10 am – The meeting **reconvened**.

6. Reports (Continued)

Information Only

7.2 Public Transport Arotake Tuarua 2021/22 - Performance Monitoring Report July to December 2021

Presentation: Arotake Tuarua: Objective ID A4066617 [⇒](#)

Transport Systems Team Leader Simon Bell and Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- Provided corrections to the Annual Totals of the Quarterly Patronage table on Page 21 of the agenda:
 - 2017/18 - 2,832,444
 - 2018/19 - 2,608,277
 - 2019/20 - 2,375,750
 - 2020/21 - 2,664,380
- Covid-19 and changes to working situations were likely to have contributed to patronage drops during the last quarter
- Outlined the additional data now provided in Arotake Tuarua reporting.

Key Points - Members:

- Suggested a specifically designed vehicle for mobility impaired patrons may be required – receiving further data would ensure the correct service was being provided for the correct customer base
- Considered the biggest issue for providing more bus stops would be gaining support from affected landowners, and proposing greater mobility options was likely to add to this
- To optimise patronage, cost effectiveness and reduce carbon emissions, it was important to understand total patronage by route and by time of day, enabling matching of services, costs and emissions to the demand.

In Response to Questions:

- Tauranga City Council were compiling a programme of bus stop improvements, which would be reported to the new Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee
- Reiterated that the Total Mobility service had specific criteria and was designed for people with severe disabilities that were unable to use conventional public transport systems
- Some public concern had been expressed after the removal of the HL service from Mount Maunganui to the hospital, staff advised that the new service with a CBD transfer still provided a quicker total journey time
- The bar chart on Page 28 of the agenda did not show a journey analysis for patrons that would have previously used the HL service, this analysis would likely form part of the review of the network changes once a wider data set was available

- The longer the bus route and the more congestions points they passed, the more unreliable the service could be
- KPI's for punctuality were analysed by service planning staff and generally fell within service standard targets, noted that these may need to be reviewed as part of future changes to contracts to better reflect aspirations
- The tertiary commuter services subsidy would be reviewed once there was a better understanding of the best service options for a future contract
- Waka Kotahi funding decisions through the NLTP around the balanced approach had not affected the bus network refresh process as this was within existing budgets. Many benefits of the balanced approach could likely be delivered within the refresh process
- Staff were working closely with Waka Kotahi to identify if there was funding within the current NLTP budget for Rotorua that could be repurposed to deliver infrastructure improvements
- Public consultation for the Rotorua Bus Network Refresh would proceed as planned, with a launch expected on 11 April 2022.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Public Transport Arotake Tuarua 2021/22 - Performance Monitoring Report July to December 2021.**

**von Dadelszen/Webber
CARRIED**

7.1 Strategic Direction in 2022

Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- A subject matter expert had been engaged to review existing information on ferry service options from Ōmōkoroa to Tauranga and Mount Maunganui, particularly through previous Priority One and Fullers work. This included patronage and peak demand data to explore a viable service.

Key Points - Members:

- If more resourcing was required to achieve a robust business case, this needed to be addressed as it would improve the ability to receive funding for investment.

In Response to Questions:

- Having a good business case process and prioritisation in place was key to support spatial planning and development for future communities
- Park and ride options would be examined through the business case process, however a park and ride service provided anywhere that did not restrict the supply and price of parking would be unlikely to succeed
- The challenge with the available data was getting it into a format to successfully analyse and provide the information required for business cases. In competing for funding, it was crucial to have a business case as robust as possible.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Strategic Direction in 2022;**
- 2 Endorses the Public Transport Committee Work Programme for 2022.**

**Nees/Thomas
CARRIED**

Information Only**7.2 Improving Our Network**

Transport and Urban Planning Manager James Llewellyn presented this item.

Key Points:

- The Transport Management System process would provide the data to make solid investment decisions, as well as giving those interested in public transport data a self-service way of accessing this.

In Response to Questions:

- The Transport Data Systems team was a new team established within Regional Council, who worked collaboratively with data teams across other councils, MOT and Waka Kotahi.
- The rationale behind changing Route 122 was to achieve as much coverage as possible across the urban area, whilst ensuring the service could be operated with one vehicle. Data would be further analysed to establish if there were sufficient wider benefits in the changes before the final proposal
- Consultation for the proposed route change would occur with the public and key stakeholders including the Visitor Centre, with the exact scope yet to be agreed.

Resolved**That the Public Transport Committee:**

- 1 Receives the report, Improving Our Network.**

**Webber/Thomas
CARRIED**

12:31 pm – the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Cr Andrew von Dodelszen
Chairperson, Public Transport Committee