

Public Transport Committee

Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Tuesday 24 September 2024, 9:30 am
- Venue:** Council Chambers, Regional House, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga and via Zoom (Audio-visual meeting)
- Chairperson:** Cr Andrew von Dadelszen – Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC)
- Deputy Chairperson:** Cr Lyall Thurston - BOPRC
- Members:**
- Cr Jane Nees - BOPRC
 - Cr Paula Thompson – BOPRC (via Zoom)
 - Cr Malcolm Campbell – BOPRC
 - Cr Andrew Iles – Whakatāne District Council (WDC)
 - Cr Gavin Dennis (Alternate) – WDC
 - Mayor James Denyer – Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC)
 - Deputy Mayor John Scrimgeour (Alternate) – WBOPDC (via Zoom)
 - Cr Glen Crowther – Tauranga City Council (TCC)
 - Cr Rod Taylor – TCC
 - Cr Rick Curach (Alternate) – TCC
 - Cr Conan O’Brien – Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC)
 - Mayor Tania Tapsell (Alternate) – RLC (via Zoom)
- In Attendance:**
- BOPRC Councillors: Cr Ron Scott; Cr McDonald (via Zoom)
- BOPRC Staff: Oliver Haycock – Director, Public Transport; Andrew Williams – Manager, Transport Planning; Ange Foster – Communications and Engagement Manager; Prue Sisam – Communications Operations Team Leader; Katri Harmoinen – Transport Planner; Bron Healey – Principal Advisor, Transport; Matthew Kilpatrick – Senior Transport Planner; Steve Groom – Governance Manager; Claudia Cameron – Committee Advisor
- Apologies:**
- Susan Collins – NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA); Garry Maloney (Alternate) – NZTA and Cr Ken Shirley – BOPRC

Chair’s Statement

The Chair reminded those present that this meeting was being livestreamed and recorded and that the recording would be made available on the Bay of Plenty Regional Council website following the meeting: [Public Transport Committee Meeting - 24 September 2024 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

1. Apologies

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Susan Collins - NZTA, Garry Maloney - NZTA (alternate) and Cr Ken Shirley - BOPRC tendered at the meeting.

Thurston/Crowther
CARRIED

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

3. Minutes

Minutes to be Confirmed

3.1 Public Transport Committee Minutes - 12 June 2024

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Confirms the Public Transport Committee Minutes - 12 June 2024 as a true and correct record.

Campbell/Nees
CARRIED

Minutes to be Received

3.2 Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee Minutes - 4 June 2024

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the minutes, Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee Minutes - 4 June 2024.

Crowther/von Dadelszen
CARRIED

4. Presentations

4.1 Public Transport Tuawhā Arotake Q4, 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report

Presentation: Public Transport Tuawhā Arotake Q4: Objective ID A4775998 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Oliver Haycock – Director, Public Transport

Key Points:

- Included the full financial performance for the year
- More services were operating after the prolonged recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the driver shortage
- There had been some minor changes to the network over the past 12 months to increase efficiency
- Anecdotal feedback from communities indicated that increased living costs, CBD parking charges and fuel costs encouraged public transport use
- The overall patronage figures did not include on-demand patronage figures
- There had been an increase in Total Mobility and concessions trips compared to the previous financial year
- Staff had fielded over 5000 inquiries in the last quarter, with only 1.1% remaining outstanding
- Missed trips occurred in 1% of total trips and were often caused by congestion; there was optimism that projects to increase corridor efficiency would reduce this
- Expenditure had been lower than forecasted, partly due to a reduction in consultancy costs. Overspend due to inflationary pressures had been managed within budget.

In Response to Questions:

- Regarding the on-demand service:
 - Algorithm adjustments were taking place to increase on-demand passenger efficiency
 - Smaller buses were able to access the heart of residential areas
 - Figures in the report were only for the previous financial year, however use of the service continued to grow
 - Data was being collected and trends analysed to understand the future of the service following the trial period
 - A progress report outlining the first six months of the trial would be presented to the Public Transport Committee
 - At the trial's conclusion a paper would be taken to Regional Council outlining future options
- The low patronage of the Katikati-Tauranga service was potentially due to service unreliability which was a result of congestion
- Noted that the apparent increased capex budget was due to a budgeted software development project being delayed.

Key Points - Members:

- Other councils had operated successful on-demand trials, however had not continued the service due to financial viability
- Assurance was sought that analysis of the BOPRC trial would be benchmarked against other Councils' experiences.

Resolved**That the Public Transport Committee:**

- 1 Receives the report, Public Transport Tuawhā Arotake Q4, 2023/24 Performance Monitoring Report.**

**von Dadelszen/Nees
CARRIED**

5. Verbal Updates

5.1 Waka Eastern Bay Update

Tabled Document 1 - Waka Eastern Bay Update: Objective ID A4780006 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Cr Andrew Iles - Whakatāne District Council

Key Points:

- Trips had increased over the past year from 27 per month to over 300 per month
- There were now four vehicles in operation with two part-time paid drivers supported by volunteer drivers
- 166 registered users, many of whom had some form of disability
- Listed as a Total Mobility provider and had completed 18 trips to date; there were 13 users with Total Mobility cards and four Total Mobility Drivers.

In Response to Questions - Staff:

- Current bus contracts in the Eastern Bay were committed to operate until 2026, an on-demand trial could be considered via the 2025-2026 Annual Plan process.

Key Points - Members:

- Members of the community had expressed interest in a similar service in Te Puke.

6. Reports

6.1 Chairperson's Report

Presentation: Baybus Website Presentation: Objective ID A4775343 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Oliver Haycock - Director, Public Transport; Ange Foster - Communications and Engagement Manager and Prue Sisam - Communications Operations Team Leader

Key Points:

- There were significant funding constraints from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF). Initial analysis indicated the current levels of core services could be provided, but the programme of proposed improvements may require reconsideration and other funding options investigated
- The only programme which had secured Low Cost Low Risk (LCLR) funding was for the continuation of the on-demand trial
- Noted the projects to improve corridor efficiency would benefit the public transport network, however Cameron Road Stage 2 had not received funding
- The updated Baybus website was introduced and a demonstration provided:
 - Responsive design, focus on user experience, worked effectively on all devices
 - The journey planner was on-site and used location tracker

- Accurate live and timetabled route data; all available stops could be added to the timetable
- Clearer live tracking icon and better indication of service alerts
- Included accessible transport information with a comprehensive fare table and information.

In Response to Questions:

- Push alerts required users to log in; they could be made available in the future
- Although not an app, it was a mobile friendly webpage which could be saved on the user's phone home screen
- An understanding of the National Ticketing Solution (NTS) technology integration was required prior to a decision being made regarding replacement of the Transit App
- Although Government/NZTA farebox recovery operational policy was in development, the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on land transport 2024 had signalled the need to increase farebox recovery. Guidance regarding targets was yet to be received, although would likely be similar to the 2018 farebox recovery level. Staff had commenced a regional fares review in anticipation of the required changes.

10.41 am – Cr Malcolm Campbell **withdrew** from the meeting.

Key Points - Members:

- Noted the Regional Transport Committee roundtables due to take place in Rotorua and the Eastern Bay to discuss the NLTF funding
- Consultation with businesses impacted by the proposed Cameron Road bus lanes was to be undertaken by TCC. Noted an error in the Chair's Report, a report would be taken to TCC in *February 2025* regarding this matter. Members requested the report be completed earlier if the decision was time sensitive
- As farebox recovery included other sources of revenue, emphasised the need to look at all potential sources of income, e.g. advertising on buses.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

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

**von Dadelszen/Thurston
CARRIED**

10.43 am – Cr Malcolm Campbell **entered** the meeting.

Decisions Required

6.2 Membership Update

Presented by: Matthew Kilpatrick – Senior Transport Planner and Steve Groom
Governance Manager

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Membership Update;**
- 2 Notes the new members of the Public Transport Committee representing Tauranga City Council as Cr Glen Crowther, Cr Rod Taylor and Cr Rick Curach (alternate);**
- 3 Notes the new alternate member for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi as Garry Maloney.**

**Thurston/Denyer
CARRIED**

10.45 am - The meeting **adjourned**.

11.01 am - The meeting **reconvened**.

6.3 Bay of Plenty Regional Tertiary Contracts

Presented by: Oliver Haycock – Director, Public Transport

Key Points:

- Current tertiary contract funding was underpinned by a 51% contribution from NZTA via Low Cost Low Risk (LCLR) funding with the remainder coming from BOPRC and two tertiary institutes
- The NLTF had not provided for the continuation of funding leaving a funding gap of \$280,000 per annum. Additionally neither tertiary institute had committed to the continuation of their portion of the funding
- Service patronage was low
- Staff were recommending the service cease at the end of the 2024 calendar year which required a decision by BOPRC as there were budgetary implications.

In Response to Questions:

- There was an option for tertiary institutions to provide their own shuttle service
- The projected funding requirement included assumed student contribution through the introduction of fares
- Extending the Katikati to Tauranga service to Toi Ohomai was not possible due to timetabling constraints and would therefore require an additional vehicles.

Key Points - Members:

- Acknowledged the need for fiscal responsibility
- Expressed regret at the potential loss of access for users and highlighted the importance of providing communities access to tertiary education
- Sought assurance that staff would endeavour to facilitate a replacement service through other organisations such as Waka Eastern Bay, Intercity and iwi
- Questioned whether the potential budget savings from the discontinuation of this service could be re-invested to improve other services
- Emphasised the need for a thorough communications programme
- Highlighted the need for a Western Bay network review, particularly regarding service times, to ensure convenience of alternative services.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 **Receives the report, Bay of Plenty Regional Tertiary Contracts;**
- 2 **Endorses the recommendation that the Bay of Plenty Regional Tertiary Commuter services cease at the end of 2024;**
- 3 *Directs staff to follow up with Iwi and Tertiary Providers to investigate potential alternative options for all regional Tertiary Commuter services and to investigate potential changes to the Katikati commuter service to Tauranga.*

That the Public Transport Committee recommends that the Regional Council:

- 4 **Receives the report, Bay of Plenty Regional Tertiary Contracts;**
- 5 **Approves the recommendation that the Bay of Plenty Regional Tertiary Commuter services cease at the end of 2024.**

**Thurston/Nees
CARRIED**

Minute Note:

The wording of resolution 3 was amended for improved clarity at a later point in the meeting. This was resolved by over 75% of voting members by a show of hands.

- 3 **Directs staff to follow up with Iwi and Tertiary Providers to investigate potential alternative options for all Regional Tertiary Commuter Services and to investigate potential changes to the route 80, Katikati express service to Tauranga, as a mitigation for the withdrawal of the tertiary service.**

**Thurston/Nees
CARRIED**

11.18 am – Mayor Tania Tapsell **withdrew** from the meeting.

Information Only

6.4 Bus User and Non-User Surveys

Presented by: Bron Healey – Principal Advisor, Transport

Key Points:

- Reported on key metrics to measure user experience and satisfaction, this allowed service adjustments to be made accordingly
- Trends were able to be measured over time
- Outlined points of note from the survey results:
 - Accuracy of the Transit App
 - Awareness of the Bee Card
 - Barriers to use
- Noted that the non-user survey had not been funded for continuation as it was not an effective way to gather meaningful data.

In Response to Questions:

- Non-User Survey:

- Acknowledged that the demographics, particularly in rural Western Bay, were not representative
- The external agency who conducted the research used census data and cold-calling to reach participants, efforts were made to build a representative pool of participants but it was a challenge to get responses
- There was limited analysis of respondents proximity to a bus service
- Targeted engagement on a project by project basis was considered a more effective way to gather opinions of non-users going forward
- As Tauranga has more services than Rotorua there had been a larger discrepancy in levels of service during the COVID-19 pandemic and driver shortages; this may explain why Rotorua's customer satisfaction levels had remained more stable than Tauranga's.

Key Points - Members:

- Noted that there was limited bus service in rural Western Bay which may have impacted results
- Emphasised the importance of gathering data from non-users as they were potential customers
- Assumed that the environmental benefits of taking the bus would have been better reflected in the opinions of survey participants
- Highlighted the low number of youth/young adults who considered the bus good value for money, although considered this may be reflective of reliability. Emphasised the need to carefully adjust fares to maintain and increase patronage.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Bus User and Non-User Surveys.**

**Crowther/Iles
CARRIED**

6.5 Regional Public Transport Plan Action Plan - Implementation and Monitoring Report

Presented by: Katri Harmoinen – Transport Planner and Andrew Williams – Manager, Transport Planning

Key Points:

- The first progress report of the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) following the development and adoption of the RPTP Action Plan
- Reported on the implementation of actions and monitoring of key performance indicators (KPI)
- Noted the National Land Transport Programme announcement and the impact the reduced NLTF funding would have, particularly on business cases
- Next steps:
 - Continued improvement of the RPTP implementation and monitoring
 - Build on any knowledge or data gaps
 - Provide reports to the Public Transport Committee biannually.

In Response to Questions:

- KPI 4: Tauranga dwellings within 500m of a frequent service (every 15 minutes) bus stop included Tauranga and Western Bay but excluded industrial and commercial addresses
- Actions were able to be adjusted at the review of the RPTP to take into consideration the changing direction from central government
- Highlighted the importance of the Transport System Partnership (TPS) and collaboration with partners when looking at future project delivery with the available funding
- Staff were awaiting further direction from central government regarding future bus decarbonisation directives. The mandate from the previous government still existed: no purchase of new vehicles powered purely by fossil fuels beyond 2025 and the entire fleet decarbonised by 2035.

Key Points - Members:

- Expressed concern regarding mode shift and carbon reduction targets, and noted a missed opportunity regarding public transport and land use integration.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Regional Public Transport Plan Action Plan - Implementation and Monitoring Report.**

**von Dadelszen/Thurston
CARRIED**

7. Public Excluded Section

Resolved

Resolution to exclude the public

- 1 Excludes the public from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting as set out below:**

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

Item No.	Subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Grounds under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution	When the item can be released into the public
7.1	Public Excluded Public Transport Committee Minutes - 12 June 2024	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	To remain in public excluded.

7.2	Public Excluded Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee Minutes - 4 June 2024	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	To remain in public excluded.
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**Thurston/Nees
CARRIED**

12.09 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Cr Andrew von Dadelszen
Chairperson, Public Transport Committee