

# Public Transport Committee

## Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Tuesday 19 November 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 Ken Shirley - BOPRC
  - Cr Gavin Dennis - Alternate, Whakatāne District Council (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) (via Zoom)
  - Garry Maloney - Alternate, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) (via Zoom)
- In Attendance:**
- BOPRC Councillors: Cr Ron Scott
- BOPRC Staff: Oliver Haycock - Director, Public Transport; Andrew Williams - Manager, Transport Planning; Niki Carling - Team Leader, Transport Planning; Jen Proctor - Senior Transport Planner; Claudia Cameron - Committee Advisor
- Apologies:** Cr Andrew Iles - WDC and Chairman Doug Leeder (EX-Officio) - 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 - 19 November 2024](#)

## 1. Apologies

### Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Cr Andrew Iles and Chairman Doug Leeder tendered at the meeting.

von Dadelszen/Thurston  
CARRIED

## 2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

## 3. Minutes

### Minutes to be Confirmed

#### 3.1 Public Transport Committee Minutes - 24 September 2024

### Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Confirms the Public Transport Committee Minutes - 24 September 2024 as a true and correct record.

Thurston/Nees  
CARRIED

### Minutes to be Received

#### 3.2 Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee Minutes - 11 September 2024

### Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 Receives the minutes, Tauranga Public Transport Joint Committee Minutes - 11 September 2024.

von Dadelszen/Crowther  
CARRIED

## 4. Presentations

#### 4.1 Public Transport Tuatahi Arotake Q1, 2024/25 Performance Monitoring Report

*Presentation: Arotake Tuatahi Q1, 2024-25, Performance Monitoring Report:*  
*Objective ID A4822532* [↗](#)

Presented by: Jen Proctor – Senior Transport Planner and Andrew Williams –  
Manager, Transport Planning

**Key Points:**

- The continuing increase in patronage for the Rotorua Network had come predominantly from Child tickets (under 18s) and Community Connect. A decline in child tickets since the removal of the Community Connect Extension had not yet been seen
- There had been a 20.5% increase for school services compared to the previous year
- Year to date (YTD) patronage did not include On Demand or school services
- Total Mobility (TM) use had increased compared to the same quarter in the previous year
- The graph, TM Contract costs by funding source, showed an additional 25% Climate Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funding had been received in the 2023/24 financial year. As TM operated as a subsidised taxi fare, revenue was not collected in the same way as other public transport services
- 0.8% of trips had been missed, this was largely due to congestion and traffic delays.

**In Response to Questions - NZTA:**

- The growth in Otago patronage was largely due to the 2017 network review and large increases in both Queenstown and Dunedin
- Noted that everyone using the service was paying a fare.

**In Response to Questions - Staff:**

- 13-18 years was classified as a youth
- Staff would seek to close any fare avoidance loopholes through transferring from the fixed network to the On Demand network
- The On Demand service had increased demand without causing patronage on the fixed route network in its vicinity to decrease. Patronage on route 55 had grown and route one had remained broadly constant.

9.45 am – Deputy Mayor John Scrimgeour **entered** the meeting.

- Applications and trips for TM had increased, this was potentially due to increased awareness of the service. Communications were on-going with disability support and advocacy groups such as CCS Disability Action
- The number of patrons using the “plus one” accessibility concessions was relatively low compared to the accessibility trips taken. The support provided by the plus one was seen as essential
- Although patronage had increased for the Katikati/Ōmokoroa service the farebox recovery ratio had decreased. This was due to timing of contracting costs which was being investigated.

**Key Points - Members:**

- Noted the importance of comparative data particularly in relation to Appendix two
- Although the buses for the Garden and Art Festival were not provided by BOPRC, it was noted this service was well received

- Highlighted the need for bus stop signage on Dive Crescent to face along the pavement as well as towards the road and car park.

## Resolved

### That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 **Receives the report, Public Transport Tuatahi Arotake Q1, 2024/2025 Performance Monitoring Report.**

von Dadelszen/Crowther  
CARRIED

## 5. Reports

### 5.1 Chairperson's Report

Presented by: Oliver Haycock – Director, Public Transport and Andrew Williams – Manager, Transport Planning

#### Key Points:

- Bike racks:
  - There had been a nationwide temporary suspension to the use of bike racks on buses. Bus operators had raised concerns that bikes may obstruct bus headlights on some models of bus, making them non-compliant with the Certificate of Fitness (CoF). Bus operators had taken the position that vehicles must be compliant at all times therefore the bike racks were unusable at all times
  - Contractors had been directed not to remove bike racks
  - Swapping headlights to LED bulbs could provide a solution on some models of bus
  - The Regional Sector was working closely with NZTA and the bus industry to seek a quick solution
- Tertiary Service:
  - The cessation of this service was due to occur in December 2024
  - Alternative solutions for route 80 had been explored by staff. Due to it being a one-bus service, changes to the morning timetabling would have significant ramifications for the rest of the day. An additional bus was only possible if additional funding was found
  - A Murupara community drop-in session was planned, and staff would support the two councillors wishing to attend the Murupara Community Board meeting in February 2025
  - Changes to the Murupara route faced similar constraints to route 80
- School Services:
  - The current level of service (LOS) would remain for 2025
  - A full review of Tauranga and Te Puke school services was underway and would conclude in 2025
  - Noted the need to engage closely with schools for the services review and fares review
- Security:
  - Data was being collected nationally to establish the prevalence of antisocial behaviour on public transport. There had been a small increase in antisocial behaviour in the Bay of Plenty, particularly at interchanges

- The current security contract was due for renewal in December 2024, there was funding in the BOPRC Long Term Plan 2024-34 to continue the security service at the current level.

**In Response to Questions:**

- Fare avoidance:
  - Data was manually recorded but combined with data for all people not paying a fare, which could be for a variety of reasons
  - Drivers were trained to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations
  - Training for drivers could be reviewed to encourage more fare collection where it was safe to do so
  - Public education could assist with missed-fares due to lack of understanding
  - Staff would endeavour to obtain a better understanding of fare-avoidance figures.

**Key Points - Members:**

- Requested staff provide members of this committee with background information regarding the history of the school network in Tauranga
- A member of the Ōmokoroa Community Board was currently compiling data regarding the need for a weekend service to Tauranga. They wished to present to this Committee in 2025.

**Resolved**

**That the Public Transport Committee:**

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

**von Dadelszen/Nees  
CARRIED**

10.29 am - The meeting **adjourned**.

10.45 am - The meeting **reconvened**.

**Decisions Required**

**5.2 Regional Fares Review 2024 - Fare System Decisions**

*Tabled Document 1 - NZ Transport Agency - Proposed Private Share Targets for Bay of Plenty - 19 November 2024: Objective ID A4822525* [⇨](#)

*Tabled Document 2 - Regional Fares Review - Interim Engagement Summary - As at 15 November 2024: Objective ID A4822528* [⇨](#)

*Presentation: Regional Fares Review - 19 November 2024: Objective ID A4822541* [⇨](#)

Presented by: Andrew Williams - Manager, Transport Planning and Niki Carling - Team Leader, Transport Planning

**Key Points:**

- Noted that Farebox Recovery Ratio (FRR) was to be referred to as private share to align with NZTA terminology
- Proposed interim targets for private share for the Bay of Plenty had been received and were significantly higher than anticipated

- A four week discussion period with NZTA would follow to outline challenges and realities of meeting the private share target
- The formula to calculate private share was different to the previous FRR formula. The new formula had current private share at 7% with a target of 26% by 2026/27. For comparison, under the previous formula the current FRR was approximately 13% and the target was 33%
- The fares review alone was not expected to meet the private share target; operational efficiencies would also be required
- It had been signalled that not meeting private share targets may put future National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) funding in jeopardy
- Outlined the assumptions seeking committee endorsement, including:
  - Base adult fare
  - Concession rate
  - Concessions
  - Child/Young person fare
  - Time of travel discount
  - Fare capping
- The 50% off-peak discount would apply to all fares including fares with concessions already applied
- The zones had been adjusted:
  - Te Puna was included within Tauranga
  - The number of zones in the Western and Eastern bay had been reduced
  - The fee to cross a zone had been reduced to smooth the fare increase for travelling further
- Noted the challenge of providing a multi-child discount. A family pass could be further investigated and potentially added to the National Ticketing Solution (NTS) system at a later stage
- The Fares and Pricing Policies contained within the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) required BOPRC to conduct regular fares reviews. It was suggested fare prices be reviewed annually and that fare structures be reviewed six-yearly.

#### **In Response to Questions:**

- Emphasised that the assumptions provided were based on guidance received at previous workshops
- Although the fare for Rotorua would increase by a larger proportion, this was to bring it into line with Tauranga and Whakatāne. A concession of 50% was available for the financially disadvantaged alongside products and discounts such as fare capping and off-peak rates
- The fare structure required approval with some urgency. Assumptions were able to be altered in the future in response private share target tracking if required
- Once the fares review was completed, an optimisation and cost efficiency review would be undertaken to assist with target achievement. Any potential reduction to services would be reported to this committee
- Although only a few routes were at capacity during peak hours, the off-peak discount was also aimed at increasing “bums on seats”
- Acknowledged the need to report against the centrally standardised “private share”, however the modelling had been completed in relation to FRR
- An earlier implementation date for the school bus fare would likely substantially increase revenue.

#### **Key Points - Members:**

- Urged caution that the level of price increase did not reduce patronage to such an extent that it reduced private share
- Questioned the justification of price increases across the region when Tauranga had received a high-cost On Demand trial
- Expressed concern that the population of Rotorua would react negatively to a 65% price increase. Suggested this could be applied in a staged approach
- As fares had not been reviewed for some time, the price increases would be higher. Noted the pressure from NZTA and the risk to potential funding if fares were not raised sufficiently now
- Raised concern that even with the staff recommended fare increase, the NZTA private share target would still not be achievable
- Questioned whether an additional zonal boundary in Tauranga would assist with increased revenue collection. Suggested it sit approximately as a harbour bridge in Tauranga was crossed (Tauranga-Mount and Matapihi-Maungatapu). This could also support the Urban Form and Transport Initiative (UFTI) Connected Centres programme
- Acknowledged that an additional inter-city zone would be a significant shift from the direction provided at previous workshops. Expressed concern that staff would have insufficient time to investigate and model the potential outcomes before a decision was required.

The Chair adjourned the meeting to allow staff, in consultation with Councillors, time to establish potential amendment wording.

12.29 pm – The meeting **adjourned**.

12.37 pm – The meeting **reconvened**.

## Resolved

### That the Public Transport Committee:

- 1 *Receives the report, Regional Fares Review 2024 - Fare System Decisions;*
- 2 *Approves the fare system parameters – fare structure, concessions, products and adult base fare (excluding Rotorua) – as presented by staff;*
- 3 *Directs staff to provide options for Rotorua’s adult fare increases to occur in a staged approach, with information to be provided for consideration by Regional Council;*
- 4 *Recommends that Regional Council adopt the recommended fare system at its 11 December 2024 meeting.*

*von Dadelszen/Thurston*

An amendment was **moved**.

- 1 *To retain the proposed structure and include a zonal boundary between Tauranga East and West.*

*Crowther/Thurston  
Lost*

A further amendment was **moved**.

- 1 **Approves the fare system parameters – fare structure, concessions, products and adult base fare – as presented by staff.**

**Nees/Shirley**

A **division** was called.

For: Cr Jane Nees, Cr Ken Shirley, Cr Andrew von Dadelszen, Cr Rod Taylor, Cr Glen Crowther, Cr Gavin Dennis

Against: Cr Conan O'Brien, Cr Lyall Thurston, Mayor James Denyer and Cr Paula Thompson

The amendment was **carried**.

The substantive motion was **put**.

- 1 Receives the report, Regional Fares Review 2024 - Fare System Decisions;**
- 2 Approves the fare system parameters – fare structure, concessions, products and adult base fare - as presented by staff;**
- 3 Recommends that Regional Council adopt the recommended fare system at its 11 December 2024 meeting.**

**Nees/Shirley  
CARRIED**

Cr Conan O'Brien and Cr Paula Thompson **opposed** the motion.

### **5.3 Tauranga South On Demand Trial - Six Month Performance Report & Fare Pricing Considerations**

*Presentation: Six Month On Demand Report Presentation - 19 November 2024:  
Objective ID A4822545 [↔](#)*

Presented by: Andrew Williams - Manager, Transport Planning

#### **Key Points:**

- Outlined the trial purpose and key metrics
- Noted the 536% patronage increase compared to the replaced route 51
- OD Farebox Recovery Ration (FRR) was well below the Tauranga-wide urban network FRR
- Staff had modelled options with varying prices and concession use
- Data from the six months following the fare change in April 2025 would be reported back to this Committee.

#### **In Response to Questions:**

- Comparison of Route 51 and On Demand (OD):
  - The annualised costs represented the full cost for running that service, however it was noted the OD costs did not include power which was sponsored
  - Noted that route 51 ran relatively infrequently whereas OD had five vehicles operating seven days a week. When buses were not on route 51 they were on other routes, which accounted for some of the cost disparity
  - The fixed route service was cheaper to run, but cost per passenger was similar
- The utilisation rate was the number of kilometres (km) travelled with passengers compared to the number of km empty. Previously, OD vehicles returned to Tauranga Crossing between passengers, however now there were a number of "hold points" in Tauranga South which was improving the



utilisation rate. There was potential to report a weighted utilisation to take into account when a vehicle had multiple passengers on board

- The purpose of the trial was to test the success of the service and people's reaction to a different public transport delivery model, therefore fares had originally been set at the same rate as the fixed service. At this point in the trial there was an opportunity to change the trial parameters and test people's behaviour towards price changes
- The operating revenue was lower than expected as concession use was higher than forecasted
- As the SuperGold concession provided free travel, and the proposed concession was 50%, staff would be in conversation with the Ministry of Social Development to gauge the impact of the change.

1.21 pm - Cr Rick Curach **withdrew** from the meeting.

- The 50% concession was an early move towards the changes anticipated from the fares review, the fare structure would be mirrored on the OD service once adopted
- Cash was not accepted on OD, a card payment via the app was available. The higher fare price for non-Bee card payments was to cover merchant fees to facilitate credit/debit card payments.

#### **Key Points - Members:**

- As patronage figures were so high the service was seen as a utilisation success, however as so many patrons were riding with a concession it was not economically viable in its current form
- As the fixed route had been removed there was not another public transport option, therefore a concession in some form should be available
- Acknowledged that public transport required some subsidy. As OD was providing a successful service and increasing patronage, it warranted a level of financial support.

## **Resolved**

### **That the Public Transport Committee:**

- 1 Receives the report, Tauranga South On Demand Trial - Six Month Performance Report & Fare Pricing Considerations;**
- 2 Agrees to increase the fare price of the Baybus On Demand service in line with Option 3, outlined herein, and that it be implemented from April 2025 for the remainder of the trial;**
- 3 Agrees to inform the public of any proposed changes, rather than undertake specific consultation to inform decision making; and**
- 4 Notes that any decision to change fare pricing for Baybus On Demand would be subject to confirmation with funding partners.**

**von Dadelszen/Campbell  
CARRIED**

## **6. 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:**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Subject of each matter to be considered</b>	<b>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</b>	<b>Grounds under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution</b>	<b>When the item can be released into the public</b>
6.1	Public Excluded Public Transport Committee Minutes - 24 September 2024	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	To remain in public excluded.
6.2	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.

**Thurston/Denyer  
CARRIED**

**1.36 pm - the meeting closed.**

**CONFIRMED**

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Cr Andrew von Dadelszen  
Chairperson, Public Transport Committee