

Minutes of the Public Transport Committee Meeting held in Mauao Rooms, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Building, 87 First Avenue, Tauranga on Friday, 23 June 2017 commencing at 9.30 a.m.

Present:

Chairman: L Thurston

Deputy Chairman: N Bruning

Councillors: P Thompson, J Nees, S Crosby, K Winters

Appointees: D Thwaites (Western Bay of Plenty District Council), T Molloy (Tauranga City Council), M Gould (Alternate, Rotorua Lakes Council)

In Attendance: Tauranga City Council: Councillor R Curach, C Cassidy (Senior Transport Planner); New Zealand Transport Agency: A Talbot, C O'Keefe; Bay of Plenty Regional Council: Councillor D Love, C Ingle (Acting Chief Executive), F McTavish (Group Manager Strategy & Science), G Maloney (Transport Policy Manager), J Graham (General Manager Corporate Solutions), J Proctor (Transport Operations Officer), J Metcalfe (Senior Transport Planner), M Winters (Transport Operations Officer), M Furniss (Senior Transport Operations Officer), P Sisam (Communications Partner), R McMechan (Planning Administration Officer (Transport)), R Garrett (Committee Advisor), S Neate (Transport Marketing Advisor).

Members of the public: G Southon (Carbon Reduction Group), M Wassung (Tauranga Connect), B Wilde (St Mary's School), L Taylor (Aquinas College Parent Teacher Association), C Reymer (Teacher, Aquinas College), G Crowther (Sustainable Business Network), J Wills (Sustainability Options), C Gordon (Supanz), M Lewis, Dr M Morgan, B Brown.

Apologies: Chairman Leeder, Councillors von Dadelszen, Cronin and Tapsell.

1 **Welcome**

Chairman Thurston opened the meeting, welcomed members, Council colleagues and members of the public; and clarified that no members of the press were in attendance.

2 **Apologies**

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 **Accepts the apologies of Chairman Leeder, Councillors von Dadelszen and Cronin and Rotorua Lakes Councillor Tapsell tendered at the meeting.**

**Thurston/Thompson
CARRIED**

3 **Tabled Items**

Tabled Document 1	J Evans - letter	Agenda item 6.2
Tabled Document 2	M Lewis – book excerpt	Public Forum
Tabled Document 3	St Mary's School Board of Trustees - submission	Public Forum
Tabled Document 4	C Gordon - Smart mobility report	Public Forum

4 **Speaking Rights**

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 **Invites Tauranga City Councillor R Curach to the table and extends Councillor Curach speaking rights for the meeting.**

**Thurston/Molloy
CARRIED**

5 **Suspension of Standing Orders**

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 **Temporarily suspends Standing Orders to allow more time for members of the public to speak in Public Forum**

**Thurston/Thompson
CARRIED**

6 **Public Forum**

6.1 **Mr Max Lewis**

Also refer Tabled Document 2

Mr Lewis expressed his concern that Council was simply building on existing bus services with the proposed Western Bay of Plenty Public Transport Blueprint (the Blueprint), and that the long term service contracts envisaged would not be responsive to new technology. Mr Lewis considered that the use of driverless buses would provide

a more efficient, responsive and cost-effective service, and suggested that Council should cost the Blueprint for the use of driverless vehicles and lead the way in the adoption of this new technology.

Members clarified that currently the only autonomous vehicle operating in New Zealand was at Christchurch Airport on a private road; questioned the level of service a driverless bus could offer to people with disabilities and to children; and further clarified that Mr Lewis and a partner were developing an operating system for driverless vehicles but were not in a position to provide indicative costs at this stage.

6.2 Mr Mark Wassung (Tauranga Connect)

Mr Wassung thanked staff for including Tauranga Connect in the stakeholder group consultations, noted the large amount of work undertaken by Tauranga Connect on this issue over the last year and invited members to explore the information provided by Tauranga Connect on its website www.taurangaconnect.com. Mr Wassung reminded members of Tauranga Connect's Vision 2020-2030 of a multimodal transportation network and emphasised the need to provide a visionary, bold, flexible, agile and articulate public transport system.

Members thanked Mr Wassung for his passion and contribution to the discussion around public transport, and noted that some ideas promoted by Tauranga Connect had been picked up in the Blueprint. Mr Wassung confirmed that he supported many of the recommendations in the Blueprint report, particularly those around improved frequency and reliability and increased connections for Bayfair and Pāpāmoa. However, Mr Wassung considered there was still too much focus on buses and that a proposal for buses and cyclists to share a lane was inviting disaster; he noted that Welcome Bay remained disconnected and also supported the retention of school bus services. Mr Wassung also requested that there be better notification provided to interested stakeholders of public transport meetings.

6.3 Mr Glen Crowther (Sustainable Business Network)

Mr Crowther was supported by Mr G Southon from the Carbon Reduction Group and Ms J Wills from Sustainability Options.

Mr Crowther noted the main areas of interest of the various groups he represented – reduction of emissions, use of electric buses, use of modern technology and apps to create a smart network based on a neutral platform, the need to increase usage of public transport and decrease dependence on cars, retention of school bus services, the integration of public transport with urban form, the need to prioritise investment in public transport and remove focus from the fare box to facilitate public health and increased accessibility for lower income users, support for payment of a liveable wage, the need for the Blueprint to be visionary and on a larger scale to take account of future growth, and concern that funding provided will be insufficient with a low per capita spend on public transport compared to other cities.

Mr Crowther appreciated the open engagement experienced with staff but emphasised that it was not an exemplary consultation process. Particular concerns were the complexity of the website, the lack of a public transport “big picture”, the lack of an oral submission process and poor communication regarding meetings. Mr Crowther also noted that the predictable controversy around the proposed reduction in SchoolHopper services had put a negative perspective on Council community engagement.

In response to questions from members, Mr Crowther emphasised the need to pull together all the various agencies involved in public transport and the wider community,

to integrate public transport with urban form and to engage with innovative community transport networks.

6.4 **Ms Lee-Ann Taylor (Parent-Teacher Association, Aquinas College)**

Also refer Tabled Document 3

Ms Taylor was supported by Ms C Reymer, Year 12 Dean, Aquinas College and parents and students from Aquinas College and St Mary's School.

Ms Taylor expressed her opposition to the proposed reduction in SchoolHopper services to Aquinas College, and noted that the main concerns in the school community were around safety of students, use of interchanges, reliability and frequency, increased traffic congestion as more parents would opt to drive their children to school, inconvenience to other users of the public network and cost to disadvantaged families.

Ms Reymer's concerns regarding the withdrawal of SchoolHopper services included lack of consultation with students affected, increased car usage, increased potential for truancy, possible effect on pick-up and drop-off times, bus capacity and overloading, deterrent effect of cost and the impact on disadvantaged families and the impact on other bus users of increased student use.

Ms Reymer also expressed concern regarding a meeting held between Aquinas College senior management and Council representatives, and commented that the College had been offered a "carrot" to withdraw its objections to the SchoolHopper proposals. The Chairman objected, noted that he had been present at that meeting and Ms Reymer had not, that her recount of the discussion held was incorrect and asked for a retraction. Ms Reymer retracted her statement.

Staff clarified that visits had been undertaken with schools that had provided significant feedback on the Blueprint to discuss issues raised, and noted that many schools were suggesting innovative solutions for their students' transport needs rather than focusing on buses.

6.5 **Ms Carole Gordon (Supanz)**

Also refer Tabled Document 4.

Ms Gordon emphasised the need to acknowledge and apply the projected demographics through the development and implementation of a "longevity transport mobility plan" for the elderly population. Ms Gordon also noted the importance of providing elderly-friendly buses with age-appropriate modifications such as handles, bigger seats and storage for walkers and walking sticks. Ms Gordon also made the point that assessing significance to elderly should be part of all policy development. Other concerns noted included the importance of encouraging elders to be active and involved, increasing amenities within walking distance in local communities, considering the transport needs of non-drivers and utilising technology to support older populations.

In response to members' questions regarding the elderly and children utilising the same bus services, Ms Gordon noted that she was not aware of any particular concerns around the elderly tolerating student users.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11.25 am and reconvened at 11.40 am.

6.6 Dr Mark Morgan

Dr Morgan explained that, as an Aquinas College parent, his main concern was the proposed reduction of SchoolHopper services and the impact that would have on child safety, cost to parents and increased traffic congestion. Dr Morgan expressed particular concern for safety around transfers and interchanges, the need for children to cross busy roads and the mixing of adult bus users with school children. He also considered that it would be extremely difficult to accommodate existing school bus users on public bus services where they would be competing with students from other schools as well as the general public. Dr Morgan noted that the current SchoolHopper service was a well-utilised safe service for children and could not see the sense in removing that service.

In response to a member's question, Dr Morgan considered that 14-plus would be an appropriate age for school children to travel on public buses.

7 Reinstatement of Standing Orders

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Reinstates Standing Orders.

Thurston/Crosby
CARRIED

8 Declaration of conflicts of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

9 Public Transport Committee minutes - 05 May 2017

Matters arising

Staff clarified that Council was in discussion with NZTA regarding provision of Park 'n Ride facilities as part of the Bay Park to Bayfair project and was comfortable with progress.

A member noted that the provision of free bus services to the Lions game in Rotorua had been successful.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Confirms the minutes of the Public Transport Committee meeting held on 05 May 2017.

**Gould/Molloy
CARRIED**

10 Reports

10.1 NZTA Investment Audit Report

Transport Policy Manager Garry Maloney advised the members of the findings of a New Zealand Transport Agency audit of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's land transport programme, noted that the audit found the programme was well managed and delivered and clarified that the services audited were randomly selected.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Receives the report, NZTA Investment Audit Report.**

**Winters/Bruning
CARRIED**

10.2 Western Bay of Plenty Public Transport Blueprint Feedback and Contract Extensions

Refer PowerPoint Presentation Objective ID A2637025

Transport Policy Manager Garry Maloney and Senior Transport Planner Joe Metcalfe summarised the feedback received on the Blueprint. Mr Maloney noted that the Blueprint had received the largest amount of community feedback for a public transport proposal; and that the feedback was generally supportive of the BayHopper service proposals and generally not supportive of the SchoolHopper service proposals.

Mr Metcalfe outlined the key features supported for the BayHopper service such as increased frequencies, longer operating hours and the inclusion of a cross-town connector service; and summarised the main concerns expressed regarding the SchoolHopper services. Common concerns included safety of children, use of interchanges, transfers between buses, loss of direct to-school services, frequency and waiting time, interaction with other public bus users and timeliness in regard to school start and finish times. Mr Metcalfe observed that schools that had a primary or intermediate component generally opposed the use of public bus services instead of dedicated school bus services while this was less of an issue for secondary schools; members requested staff to investigate the possibility of a dedicated SchoolHopper service for students Year 8 and under. Staff advised that this could lead to inequitable distribution of SchoolHopper services as provision would depend on individual school situations.

Members asked for clarification regarding possible increased traffic congestion as a result of parents not utilising the BayHopper services for school children, particularly any impact on already problematic areas such as the Barks Corner intersection. Staff noted the difficulty of attributing increased congestion to one factor as the impacts of population growth were already being felt; NZTA staff noted that work was underway investigating possible short-term optimisation for Barks Corner. Members emphasised the need for better modelling, thorough cost analysis and accurate funding information. Concern was expressed that while the Blueprint may reflect a high

efficiency network from a transport planning and modelling viewpoint, it might not from a people and user viewpoint.

Members emphasised the importance of collaboration with other organisations such as the Ministry of Education, NZTA and local authorities, and of the need to integrate all aspects of public transport such as urban form, infrastructure, use of technology and pricing.

A member noted that public transport services are listed under s11A of the Local Government Act, which requires Council to have particular regard to the contribution that core service makes to the community, and suggested that the proposed recommendations would provide a breathing space for further consideration to take place.

Members asked for clarification around whether it was possible to separate out implementation of the proposals for the BayHopper and SchoolHopper services. Staff responded that, while both services needed to be considered together to take account of impacts of one on the other, the possibility of implementing specific agreed initiatives without delay was being investigated and would be reported back to Council. Staff also noted that procurement of public transport services required a lead time, and that contracts had to be flexible to be able to adapt to changing circumstances during their term.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Receives the report, Western Bay of Plenty Public Transport Blueprint Feedback and Contract Extensions.**

Public Feedback

- 2 Notes that Council agreed to engage and seek feedback on the Blueprint proposal to inform its decision-making processes.**
- 3 Acknowledges the significant public feedback that it has received on the Blueprint.**
- 4 Notes that feedback to date has been largely supportive of the Bay Hopper proposals.**
- 5 Notes concerns have been raised about the BayHopper proposal including:**
 - a. loss of service to Mount Hot Pools;**
 - b. buses accessing Ballintoy Park;**
 - c. loss of service to sections of Mount Maunganui and Papamoa;**
 - d. loss of service to sections of Welcome Bay and Ohauti;**
 - e. lack of timetable information; and**
 - f. loss of some direct services.**

**Thompson/Crosby
CARRIED**

- 6 Notes concerns have been raised about the SchoolHopper proposal including:**
- a. Aquinas College – students transferring services, travel time including walk distance to stops, safety at Bayfair, CBD, and on public buses;**
 - b. Bethlehem College - students transferring services, safety and appropriateness for primary age children on public services, travel times, safety at interchanges for all students and ability for international fee paying students to interpret a more complex system;**
 - c. Tauranga Intermediate – walk distances to bus stops, appropriateness of intermediate students on public buses, and crossing points over major roads;**
 - d. Mount Manganui College / Intermediate – safety of students when transferring at Bayfair, and safe crossing points on Maunganui Road or Links Ave;**
 - e. St Thomas More School – appropriateness of public service for primary students and walkability in vicinity of the school; and**
 - f. Otumoetai College and Intermediate – suitable transfer locations at Brookfield.**

**Nees/Crosby
CARRIED**

Proposed Revisions to Address Concerns

- 7 Notes staff will work with the New Zealand Transport Agency, Ministry of Education, Tauranga City Council and schools to look for solutions to address concerns raised about the BayHopper and SchoolHopper proposals and report back to Council in September with options for addressing those.**

Amendment

That Recommendation 7 includes the words “and other stakeholders” after the word “schools”.

The amendment was **PUT** and **CARRIED**.

**Thompson/Nees
CARRIED**

The amendment became the substantive motion and was PUT and CARRIED, so that Council resolved as follows:

- 7 Notes staff will work with the New Zealand Transport Agency, Ministry of Education, Tauranga City Council, schools and other stakeholders to look for solutions to address concerns raised about the BayHopper and SchoolHopper proposals and report back to Council in September with options for addressing those.**
- 8 Notes additional funding may be required to implement those solutions and staff will report back to Council in September on funding options.**

**Crosby/Nees
CARRIED**

- 9 Requests staff include analysis of service and funding implications of continuing SchoolHopper services for students Year 8 and below.
- 10 Requests staff refresh the Tauranga Pressure Points analysis (including Brookfield) to inform Blueprint decision-making.
- 11 Requests modelling work be undertaken on the impacts of SchoolHopper services on Tauranga congestion.

Thompson/Nees
CARRIED

Partnering Discussions

- 12 Notes the New Zealand Transport Agency has approved funding for the transition phase of school bus integration to provide value for money by optimising the Tauranga urban public transport network.
- 13 Notes the report's recommendations were drafted in consultation and agreed with New Zealand Transport Agency staff.
- 14 Notes staff are working with the New Zealand Transport Agency to agree options to achieve an optimised public transport network by 26 September 2017.
- 15 Directs staff to work with New Zealand Transport Agency to complete value for money assessments for piloting the introduction of electric buses as part of the Western Bay of Plenty Public Transport Blueprint procurement.

Bruning/Gould
CARRIED

- 16 Directs staff to work with New Zealand Transport Agency to complete value for money assessments for introducing a living wage for bus drivers as part of the Western Bay of Plenty Public Transport Blueprint procurement.

Thompson/Crosby
CARRIED (by majority)

- 17 Notes staff are working with Ministry of Education to clarify and confirm the support that could be made available for children travelling beyond their closest mainstream school to special character schools.
- 18 Notes staff will meet and work with the most impacted schools to find solutions to address their concerns including:
 - a. improved infrastructure;
 - b. provision of commercial bus services;
 - c. increasing the number of dedicated school bus services;
 - d. opportunities for schools to join the Tauranga Transport Network Group; and/or
 - e. other school-led initiatives.
- 19 Notes staff are working with Tauranga City Council to agree, by 26 September 2017, the Tauranga City Council-funded infrastructure it is

required to provide to address, in particular, SchoolHopper concerns to assist in achieving an optimised public transport network.

Bruning/Gould
CARRIED

Financial Implications

- 20 Notes that preliminary negotiations to extend the existing bus contracts are underway but contractors have yet to confirm their agreement to extending contracts through to the end of December 2018.
- 21 Recommends to Council that in principle, it extend the existing Tauranga BayHopper, Tauranga SchoolHopper, Katikati and Omokoroa and Te Puke contracts through to the end of December 2018 to provide more time to find solutions for the concerns raised in the public feedback on the Blueprint.
- 22 Notes there may be additional costs to Council to extend these contracts and Council approval for this extension will be sought once negotiations with existing contractors are completed.
- 23 Recommends to Council that as part of a 2018-2028 Long Term Plan workshop prior to its September 2017 meeting, it determine the funding parameters for Public Transport.

Gould/Nees
CARRIED

Next Steps

- 24 Notes Council approval of the revised Blueprint proposal will be sought at its meeting on 26 September 2017 following the August 2017 Public Transport Committee meeting.
- 25 Confirms that the decision has a medium level of significance as determined by the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. Council has identified and assessed different options and considered community views as part of making the decision, in proportion to the level of significance.

Nees/Bruning
CARRIED

That the Public Transport Committee recommends that the Regional Council:

- 1 Agrees in principle to extend the existing Tauranga BayHopper, Tauranga SchoolHopper, Katikati and Omokoroa and Te Puke contracts through to the end of December 2018 to provide more time to find solutions for the concerns raised in the public feedback on the Blueprint.
- 2 Agrees as part of a 2018-2028 Long Term Plan workshop prior to its September 2017 meeting, to determine the funding parameters for Public Transport.
- 3 Notes that there may need to be additional funding required to implement further solutions to address public feedback concerns which will be the focus for the Long Term Plan workshop.

- 4 Includes the development of a Longevity Transport and Mobility Plan in the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Long Term Plan.
- 5 Notes the need for consideration in the urban form to promote public transport.
- 6 Confirms that the decision has a medium level of significance as determined by the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. Council has identified and assessed different options and considered community views as part of making the decision, in proportion to the level of significance.

**Nees/Molloy
CARRIED**

10.3 Regional Fare Review - Patronage Services

Transport Policy Manager Garry Maloney sought direction from members through this report on the process Council wished to follow to set patronage service fares, and particularly on the timing of the Fare Review and the type and level of public engagement to be undertaken.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Receives the report, Regional Fare Review - Patronage Services.
- 2 Agrees to Option 3 for the level and type of public engagement and the timing for the Fare Review, namely to undertake a separate formal consultation exercise and use the outputs from that exercise as an input to the Regional Public Transport Plan review.
- 3 Notes that if the Fare Review is completed after September 2017, Council will incur additional costs to change that part of the new electronic ticketing system.

**Thompson/Winters
CARRIED**

11 Public Excluded Section

Resolution to exclude the public

THAT the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

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:

General Subject of Matter to be Considered	Grounds under Section 48(1) LGOIMA 1987 for passing this resolution	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to this matter
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7.1 Public Excluded Public Transport Committee Minutes – 5 May 2017	Good reason for withholding exists under section 48(1)(a).	Please refer to the relevant clause in the meeting minutes
7.2 School service from Te Puke	That the public conduct of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist.	To protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

Thurston/Crosby
CARRIED

12 Confidential business to be transferred into the open

12.1 Confidential report: School service from Te Puke

Executive Summary

Uzabus currently run a commercial bus service from Te Puke to Tauranga Boys' and Girls' Colleges, catering for approximately 24 students. They have advised parents that this service will cease at the end of Term 2, 2017 (7 July 2017).

Parents have informally approached Council to request that Council provide funding to continue this bus route until the end of 2017, to enable students to finish the school year without having to change schools.

A number of options are available to the Council/community to respond to the proposed withdrawal, including:

1. provide no additional service;
2. extend SchoolHopper route 412;
3. provide a separate SchoolHopper service; and
4. direct appoint Uzabus to continue to operate the service.

The recommended option is to provide no additional service because:

- Council's current policy does not support implementing a replacement service; and
- the cost of any replacement service is not budgeted in the Draft 2017/18 Annual Plan.

Resolved

That the Public Transport Committee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Receives the report, School service from Te Puke;**

- 2 Adopts Option 1 – not provide a service to replace the existing commercial school bus service between Te Puke and Tauranga Boys and Girls Colleges operated by Uzabus.**
- 3 Agrees to restate the resolutions and release the report’s Executive Summary in the open meeting.**

**Winters/Crosby
CARRIED**

The meeting closed at 1.30 pm.