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## **Report 01.808**

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Report to the Passenger Transport Committee  
From Dr D J Watson, Division Manager Transport

## **Relationships**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee of the current types of interaction between the Council and other organisations on passenger transport matters, to propose some amendments and additions to them, and to raise some possible Council relationship initiatives that can be considered later as part of a Council wide review of relationships.

### **2. Recent History**

There have been in the past numerous types and levels of interaction between politicians and staff of the Regional Council and their equivalents in other Councils and passenger transport organisations. They range from the strategic or policy to the operational or detailed. Putting aside the simply personal one to one relationships of a day to day nature the following is a list:

#### **(a) Officer Only Meetings**

- ***Local Authority Liaison meetings*** - these consist of meetings in each local authority area, except the Wairarapa, between our Public Transport Planning group, our infrastructure engineer, our inspectors and the local authority roading engineers together with representatives of bus operators of the area. These meetings deal with practical issues relating to street furniture, lane markings, traffic priorities, all of which are designed to improve public transport performance.
- ***Operator meetings*** - these are meetings between our staff and representatives of operators. They include a monthly performance review with Tranz Metro Wellington managers and our managers, regular as required meetings between our Public Transport Planning Manager and

bus operators. These meetings deal with specific operator issues such as changes to routes and timetables.

- ***Regional Transport Officers group*** – this group comprises transport staff from all Regional Councils. I started it ten years ago. It meets about every six months or when circumstances require it. Its purpose is to ensure a common understanding of transport issues of interest to Regional Councils, to provide peer support to other Regional Council officers and to provide government organisations with opportunities to address all Regional Councils at one forum on matters of interest. The RTO group is recognised by LGNZ and Transfund. As a group it appoints Regional Council transport officers to working parties organised by LGNZ, Transfund and the MOT.

(b) **Meetings Involving Councillors**

- ***Wellington QPA meetings*** - this is a regular six monthly meeting required by the Quality Partnership Agreement between ourselves, Wellington City Council and Stagecoach (Wellington). Two Wellington City Councillors and our Passenger Transport Chairperson have previously attended along with staff from Wellington city, the operator and ourselves (a proposal to review the QPA and include in it the second major bus operator is a separate agenda item).
- ***Presentations at Local Authority meetings*** - on an irregular basis, the Council is invited by a local authority to provide a presentation on a particular local topic. From time to time the Passenger Transport Committee seeks an opportunity to present information to a local authority, consultation on transport rating would be a recent example. These meetings would involve the Committee Chair, the Committee Councillor(s) representative of the local authority district and relevant officers.
- ***Wellington City representative invited to Public Transport meetings*** – over the last several triennium the Council has appointed a Wellington City Councillor onto the Passenger Transport Committee, with speaking but not voting rights. This was done on the basis that Wellington was the public transport hub of the Region.
- ***Urban Regional Council Transport Chairs meeting*** – this was another initiative of this Council. Meetings of the Chairs of the Transport Committees of the five urban Regional Councils – that is Wellington, Auckland, Canterbury, Waikato and Otago – or of the big three occur as required. These meetings are to ensure a level of common understanding of key legislation or other national policy issues. From time to time the group will lobby government on issues of common interest. Over the last three years the group was very active in supporting a national land transport policy, extra funding for passenger transport and the need to provide a better link between planning and funding. The group needs to again be active when the government’s transport legislative proposals are announced shortly.

### 3. Comment

The above list demonstrates that the Committee's responsibilities and interests have been promulgated across the region and beyond through a number of relationships. Each of these served specific and different purposes and each have had their successes.

Committee members now have an opportunity as a new Committee to review your working relationship that have a political content and to consider if or how information emanating from formal and informal meetings could best be processed through your political structures.

On the basis that a good relationship is based on trust and no surprises, it is suggested that a first step to further improvement would be to ensure that there is ongoing reporting back from the various meetings already taking place.

Elsewhere on the agenda is the Tranz Metro Wellington Monthly Performance Report. This was previously only circulated to Councillors through the Bulletin. Other major operators could be asked to provide a regular report on their performance. To ensure that information was two way the operators could also be asked if they would like to attend the Committee meetings from time to time to present their views on issues of interest to them.

Similarly, this invitation could be extended to local authorities, both for them to attend some of the Committee's meetings and for them to invite the Council to attend their equivalent meetings from time to time to ensure the full exchange of information between parties.

A recent initiative by Cr McDavitt, as Chairperson of the RLTC, was to provide a regular update report from the Chair which was circulated to all local authorities, through the Mayor and CEO. This Committee could produce a similar report relative to this Committee's progress.

A summary of all these ideas would be:

- Reporting by officers of the outcomes of all other meetings between operators, local authorities and Council officers in an explicit manner
- Regular reporting by operators to the Committee
- Once a year presentations by each operator to the Committee
- Open invitation to local authorities to seek presentations from the Council to their own Committee
- A regular report from the Committee to all Councils, through the Mayor and CEO
- An invitation to all territorial local authorities for a representative to attend a Committee meeting to present their Council's views on passenger transport issues relevant to their district.

These ideas that do not involve Councillors as participants can be implemented immediately. The remainder need to be considered within the context of a Council wide approach to relationships between the Council and other Local Authorities and organisations.

#### **4. Communications**

This report has been all about communication. The recommendations will, if adopted, lead to several communication initiatives.

#### **5. Recommendations**

1. *That the report be received.*
2. *That the feedback on the activities of the various formal groups outlined in the report be included in officers' reports to the Committee*
3. *That Tranz Metro Wellington, Stagecoach and Mana/Newlands be requested to:*
  - (a) *provide a monthly performance report for the information of the Committee*
  - (b) *attend a meeting of the Committee once a year to discuss their past performance and to provide their vision of the future.*
4. *That the other relationship ideas, involving the Council and other bodies, contained in this report be held over for consideration by the Policy and Finance Committee as part of a Council wide review of relationships with other bodies.*

DAVE WATSON  
Divisional Manager, Transport