



Report 07.188
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Committee Regional Passenger Transport Plan Hearings
Subcommittee
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Report on Submissions on the Regional Passenger Transport Plan

1. Purpose

To provide the Hearings Sub-committee with an overview of the submissions received on the draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan (the Plan), and discuss the process to finalise the Plan.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The Plan was released for public consultation in November 2006. In terms of the Land Transport Act 1998, the Plan forms a part of the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS), and the RLTS was released for consultation at the same time.

A summary document was sent to all households in the region, and several public meetings were held.

A Plan Hearing Sub-committee was appointed by the Passenger Transport Committee to hear, evaluate, and report on submissions.

Submissions on both documents closed on 16 February 2007.

4. The submissions

123 submissions were received on the Plan. In addition, many of the 1,294 RLTS submissions addressed passenger transport issues.

The Plan submissions came mostly from individuals, but were also received from the “usual” organisations such as the territorial authorities, community boards, and transport and environmental organisations.

The submissions were generally supportive of the direction and contents of the Plan, with most seeking more and better passenger transport services. Requests for improvements in all services, but particularly for rail services and rail infrastructure, featured highly.

Some of the specific issues raised were:

- Concern that the objectives are unobtainable, and the Plan proposals are unaffordable, un-prioritised, and unsustainable
- Support for goals to increase passenger transport usage, but needs an action plan to achieve the objectives
- Support for more funding for passenger transport
- Need for planning to be more proactive rather than reactive
- Need to improve rail infrastructure, reliability and capacity
- The need to improve park and ride facilities
- Support for better route coverage, more frequent services, and more night and weekend services
- Support for use of environmentally friendly vehicles
- Support for concession fares for those on low incomes, and off-peak fares
- Support for increased bus/train accessibility
- Support for improved reliability and integration of bus/train services
- Support for real time information and improved ticketing systems.

5. The hearings

A joint Plan/RLTS hearing for those who had submitted primarily on passenger transport issues, and who had asked to be heard, was held on 19 March.

A further hearing for those who had submitted only on the Plan was held on 29 March.

6. Regional land transport survey

As part of the Plan/RLTS consultation process, the Council undertook a region-wide survey of residents and businesses. The survey sought views on the RLTS and its key components.

One of the key findings of the survey was the identification of passenger transport (and in particular improvements to the trains/rail network) as the main priority for transport improvement in the region.

A report on the results of the survey was included in the order paper for the RLTS Hearing Subcommittee's meeting on 2 April 2007 (report 07.169).

7. The process from here

Ordinarily the next step in the Plan process would be to address each of the Plan submissions and decide what changes should be made to the Plan as a result of those submissions.

However as the Plan is part of the RLTS, the Plan must follow the strategic direction set by the RLTS. At its meeting on 2 April, the RLTS Hearing Subcommittee decided to make changes to the RLTS which will cause a delay in its finalisation (see report 07.178 contained in the supplementary order paper for the 2 April meeting).

As a consequence, the finalisation of the Plan will be delayed.

A copy of the minutes of the 2 April meeting (the decisions from which vary slightly from the recommendations contained in report 07.178) are attached as Attachment 1.

A likely timeframe for the final development of the PT Plan, taking into account the delays, is set out below:

Process	Date
RLTS updated	April/May
PT Plan updated	May/June
Progress report to Passenger Transport Committee	15 May
PT Plan Hearing Subcommittee considers the redrafted PT Plan	Late June
RLTS to Regional Land Transport Committee for approval	27 June
PT Plan to Passenger Transport Committee for approval	24 July
PT Plan adopted by GWRC	August

This revised timetable for the Plan follows that of the RLTS, and indicates that the decisions on the Plan should be able to be made in May (once strategic direction contained in the RLTS has been finally determined).

The RLTS Hearing Subcommittee is to hold a number of workshops to help determine the direction of the RLTS. It is likely that the same process will be followed for the PT Plan. The Plan workshops are likely to be held in May.

8. Communication

No communications are required.

9. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

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Attachment 1: Minutes of 2 April 2007 Meeting of the Regional Land Transport Hearing Subcommittee