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Committee Passenger Transport Committee  
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## **Regional Passenger Transport Plan - Establishment of a Hearings Subcommittee**

### **1. Purpose**

To establish a subcommittee of the Passenger Transport Committee to hear and report on submissions lodged on the draft Wellington Regional Passenger Transport Plan (PT 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**

#### **3.1 Draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan consultation**

At its meeting on the 5 October 2006 the Passenger Transport Committee approved the release of a draft PT Plan for consultation. Consultation on the draft PT Plan is being carried out alongside the consultation on the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS). The consultation process follows the special consultative procedures of the Local Government Act 2002.

Submissions have been invited on both the draft RLTS and draft PT Plan. Submissions on both documents close on the 16th of February 2007. All people making submissions have the opportunity to indicate in their submission that they want to be heard in support of their submission.

#### **3.2 Submissions on the Draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan**

To date approximately 30 submissions on the PT Plan have been received. Most of these are relatively brief submissions and few of the submitters have requested to be heard.

However some larger submissions are likely to be received towards the end of the submission period (an update on the actual number received will be provided at the Committee meeting), and it is appropriate now to establish a process for this Committee to hear submissions on the PT Plan.

The Regional Land Transport Committee will consider its process for the RLTS submissions at its meeting on 28 February.

## **4. The hearing process**

### **4.1 Hearings Subcommittee**

Hearings subcommittees are an efficient option for hearing and considering submissions where there are high numbers of submitters wishing to be heard. Even though submission numbers are relatively low at this stage, the establishment of a hearing subcommittee is still likely to be the most efficient option (the alternative is for the full Committee to hear/consider the submissions).

It is suggested therefore that the Committee establish a subcommittee to hear, evaluate and report on submissions and make recommendations back to the full Committee.

### **4.2 Terms of Reference**

#### **4.2.1 Subcommittee Membership**

All members of the PT Committee are eligible for appointment to the hearings' subcommittee. It is consistent with best practice and the requirements of the special consultative procedures set out in the Local Government Act 2002 that members hearing submissions be present for the duration of the hearing of the submissions. The only constraint on membership of the hearing subcommittee, therefore, is the availability to sit through the anticipated two days of hearings and be available for deliberations.

It is proposed that the Chairperson of the Committee and the Chairperson of the RLTC be members of the hearing subcommittees for both the RLTS and the PT Plan processes. This will help ensure that submissions and considerations relevant to both processes are appropriately integrated.

It is recommended that an additional two Committee members be appointed to the subcommittee. These two members should be nominated at this meeting.

Those members of the Committee not appointed to the subcommittee would of course be able to attend the hearings.

#### **4.2.2 Chair, Quorum and Standing Orders**

It is recommended that the Chairperson of the PT Committee chairs the subcommittee.

When deciding on a quorum the main issue to consider is the risks that illness or other unanticipated commitments may prevent a committee member from attending part of the hearings. A quorum of one less than the total membership i.e. three, is recommended.

It is proposed that the Wellington Regional Council Standing Orders apply to the subcommittee.

Recommended Terms of Reference for the subcommittee are in **Attachment 1**.

## **5. Integration with RLTS submissions**

Many of the submissions received to date could be categorised as submissions on **both** the PT Plan and the RLTS. It is necessary therefore to establish a process to ensure that the submissions are considered by the appropriate (and possibly both) hearings subcommittees.

This issue will be partly addressed by holding the RLTS hearings **prior** to the PT Plan hearings to ensure that any decisions on the RLTS which may affect the PT Plan can then be incorporated into the final PT Plan. Any operational passenger transport matters which arise from the RLTS submissions will be referred to the PT Plan subcommittee for consideration.

Integration will also be assisted by having the chairs of the two committees on both hearing subcommittees.

Any other integration issues that may arise can be resolved by the chair of the RLTC together with the chair of the PT Committee.

## **6. Timing**

It is currently expected that hearings on the RLTS submissions will be held in March. The PT Plan hearings are therefore likely to be in April.

The first meeting of this Committee after the April hearings is on 15 May and, subject to the final number and complexity of the submissions, the subcommittee is likely to report back to that meeting.

## **7. Communication**

On-going communications about the PT Plan will continue, including communicating the establishment of the subcommittee.

## **8. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

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

3. ***Resolves to establish a subcommittee to hear, evaluate and report on the submissions to the draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan, and make recommendations to the Committee in accordance with the Terms of Reference in Attachment 1.***
4. ***Resolves to appoint four Committee members to the Regional Passenger Transport Plan Hearing Subcommittee, including Councillor Evans (to be the Chair) and Councillor McDavitt.***

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**Attachment 1: Terms of Reference for the Draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan Hearing Subcommittee**