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Committee Strategy and Policy Committee  
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## **Update to Metlink Guidelines - carriage of prams, strollers, buggies, and scooters (non-motorised kick-scooters)**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide an update on the review and development of revised Metlink guidelines for the carriage of prams, strollers and buggies on buses and trains, and for the carriage of scooters on buses.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 Prams, strollers and buggies**

The current wording regarding the Metlink guidelines on the carriage of prams on-board buses and trains is inadequate and has led to inconsistent levels of service. This was highlighted by some high profile negative media publicity at the end of 2013 and some feedback from Wellington City Council (WCC) councillors and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) councillors.

#### **2.2 Scooters**

The current wording of the Metlink guidelines on the carriage of scooters on-board buses has led to inconsistent levels of service, and resulted in complaints from passengers and operators. This was highlighted by one of our transport operators (NZ Bus) in October 2014.

The current wording of the policy is: ***“Only scooters that have been folded and can be carried are allowed on buses”***.

The majority of scooters now manufactured cannot be folded. This has resulted in some children, groups and families being denied entry to buses and occasionally putting drivers in the awkward position of having to leave children on the road side. At an estimate, our region has about 20,000 trips to school by scooter each morning, and many of these children are likely to be catching buses with their scooters at some point. Scooters are also becoming more popular with adults, especially in Wellington City.

### **3. Review**

#### **3.1 Prams, strollers and buggies**

The following steps were taken to review the current Metlink guidelines on the carriage of prams, strollers and buggies:

- An investigation as to the number and type of customer complaints received by GWRC from pram users was completed.
- A user group was established (including people who had made complaints previously) to get feedback as to issues with the current guidelines.
- A review and collation of international polices was completed to see what happens in other places.
- Transport operators were contacted and asked to detail issues and problems they encountered with the current Metlink guidelines.

#### **3.2 Scooters**

The following steps were taken to review the current Metlink guidelines on the carriage of scooters (non-motorised kick-scooters):

- An investigation as to the number and type of customer complaints received by GWRC regarding scooters on buses was completed.
- Transport operators were contacted and asked for input regarding perceived issues with the current policy and issues with the carriage of scooters in general.

### **4. Development and Consultation**

#### **4.1 Prams, strollers and buggies**

A draft set of “new” guidelines on the carriage of prams, strollers and buggies on public transport was developed by GWRC officers. The exact wording, detail and scope were extensively consulted on with the following groups:

- industry providers (pram & buggy manufacturers)
- individual recent complainants to GWRC on the issue of the carriage of prams
- our user group
- WCC and GWRC Councillors
- bus and train operators (providers); and
- GWRC officers (including Metlink call centre staff).

The consultation process to achieve the new guidelines was extensive. All groups were given opportunities to provide robust feedback on the draft guidelines. GWRC staff worked especially closely with the bus and train

operators. It was important that the providers had the opportunity to input and agree with the new guidelines as they will be responsible for the delivery of the service to the public. The new Metlink guidelines were also proofed and “sense read” by an external reviewer.

## 4.2 Scooters

A draft set of “new” guidelines on the carriage of scooters on buses was developed by GWRC officers. The intention, content, and wording was consulted on with the following groups:

- local industry provider Micro Mobility Ltd
- all bus operators
- GWRC officers; and
- Territorial Authorities School Travel Plan coordinators.

The Territorial Authorities School Travel Plan Coordinators and Road Safety Coordinators, and the Wellington Region’s Wellbeing Kura Crew (comprised of multiple agencies which work with schools and children) were also contacted for input.

## 5. Summary

### 5.1 Prams, strollers and buggies

The need for a review of the current Metlink guidelines on the carriage of prams, strollers and buggies was identified. Various types of feedback were collated and policy reviews were undertaken. Extensive industry consultation was entered into to design and develop a new set of Metlink guidelines, recognising the importance of getting them ‘right’.

The new guidelines better reflect current industry practices and standards and will lead to more consistent application. They also represent an improvement in customer service levels and have been bought into by the transport operators who are keen to see them publicly releases to help reinforce new behaviours required by their staff, such as the automatic lowering of a bus when a person with a pram is waiting.

The new Metlink Guidelines (Carriage of prams, strollers and buggies on Public Transport) are included as **Attachment 1** to this report.

### 5.2 Scooters

The need for a review of the current guidelines on the carriage of scooters was identified. Various types of feedback were collated. The new guidelines better reflect the current way scooters are being commonly used. The new guidelines also address scooters consistently with other objects being carried on buses, while also addressing the risks that they are perceived to pose.

The new agreed guideline wording is:

*Scooters that can be carried by hand are allowed on buses. If possible scooters should be folded before the bus arrives. Scooters must be secure at all times on buses, and must not block the aisle or any doorway. Kick-bikes that meet the criteria for Folding Cycles can also be taken on buses.*

## **6. Communication**

Targeted communication will be undertaken with individuals and groups that provided assistance and feedback on the development of these two sets of guidelines. The Metlink website will be updated and social media channels will be used to highlight the new guidelines.

GWRC officers will work closely with and assist bus and train operators to ensure the successful introduction of the new guidelines. GWRC officers will monitor the response to the new guidelines and any passenger complaints received.

## **7. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **7.1 Engagement**

Engagement on the matters contained in this report is set out in section 4 of this report.

## **8. Recommendations**

*That the Strategy and Policy Committee*

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

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**Attachment 1: Metlink Guidelines - Carriage of prams, strollers and buggies on Public Transport**