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Committee Sustainable Transport Committee  
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## **PTOM bus tendering – Service timetables update**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on bus service timetables for the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) tendering process.

### **2. Background**

The Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2014 (RPTP) outlines the services integral to the region's public transport network. These services are to be procured under PTOM. Bus services have been grouped into units which will be operated under contract to Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). The new PTOM contracts are expected to come into operation between late 2017 and early 2018.

In preparation for tendering bus services under PTOM, a review of all bus service timetables in the public transport network needs to be undertaken. The review will ensure the tender documents specify sufficient bus capacity, realistic and achievable travel times. The review will better enable tenderers to submit robustly costed bids.

Further fine tuning of timetables may occur in consultation with the contracted PTOM bus operators closer to implementation of the new contracts. Any fine tuning can reflect updated travel time and patronage data, as well taking into account any significant land use or demand changes which may emerge between now and the commencement of PTOM contracts.

Area-wide bus services have been undertaken in Wellington City, the Hutt Valley and Porirua in recent years meaning routes and timetable requirements are well understood for these areas. Therefore minimal further investigation work is expected.

The Hutt Valley was reviewed in 2014/15 and the outcome of this review is in the process of being implemented, with new timetables being finalised. These new timetables will be included in tender documentation.

Bus services in Kapiti and the Wairarapa, including school bus services, have not been reviewed for some years. The opportunity has been taken to carry out an operational review of these services to ensure the contracted services still reflect current demands and operating conditions. The last comprehensive review of services in Kapiti took place in 2008/09, with changes implemented in August 2009. Minor reviews also took place in Kapiti when the metro rail services were extended to Waikanae in 2011; other minor changes have been made since. Otaki services were last reviewed in 2012, with changes being implemented in June 2012. The last review in Wairarapa took place in 2011/12, with changes being implemented in September 2012.

### **3. Comment**

#### **3.1 Wellington**

The operational bus network design for Wellington City was extensively reviewed and consulted in 2011/12 and new bus routes included in the RPTP. The RPTP incorporated further public feedback on proposed bus routes. Timetables have been developed based on the service specifications listed in the RPTP, however through the timetable development process it has been identified that some non-significant changes will be required to the RPTP. Section 4 of this report provides information on this matter.

Information on proposed changes to current Wellington City contracted school bus services is provided in section 3.6 of this report.

#### **3.2 Porirua**

The last review of Porirua bus services was carried out in 2013 in the form of a post implementation review of bus service changes implemented in 2011. This review made changes to Whitby services while confirming that other Porirua services were performing satisfactorily.

It is planned that Porirua routes and timetables will remain unchanged with the exception of the route 210, which currently covers both Tawa and Tītahi Bay. The current route 210 services are highly complicated with some trips starting and ending at Porirua Station, and other trips starting and ending at Tītahi Bay. Some trips can wait for around 10 minutes at Porirua Station to enable conflicting train connections from Tītahi Bay onto Wellington Trains, and off Waikanae Trains to buses onto Kenepuru Hospital and Johnsonville. The intention is to split the route into two separate bus routes. The Tītahi Bay end of the route will remain unchanged between Porirua Station and Tītahi Bay, however buses will no longer through-route on to Tawa and Johnsonville. Routes 210 and 211 will be merged through Tawa to operate a consistent regular bus route connecting Porirua to Kenepuru Hospital, Tawa and Johnsonville. These changes will result in more consistent legible bus services for both Tītahi Bay and Tawa.

Information on proposed changes to current Porirua contracted school bus services is provided in section 3.6 of this report.

### 3.3 Hutt Valley

The Hutt Valley Public Transport Review was completed in January 2015. Rather than a fundamental redesign of the current network, the review focused on timetable changes and minor route adjustments to improve the level of service for customers and remove some very poorly patronised services.

The review provided a list of recommended changes to enhance the performance of the Hutt Valley bus services. The last extensive report (Report 14.547) provided to Councillors on the Hutt Valley Public Transport Review was to the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting on 11 February 2015. An update on progress to implement the recommendation of the Hutt Valley Public Transport Review is provided below.

Detailed draft timetables have been developed for the route 110, 130, 160 and 170; we are currently working through feedback on these timetables from the bus operator. High level draft timetables have been developed for the other Hutt Valley routes and feedback on these will also be sought from the bus operator. The majority of the changes are expected to be implemented at the end of April 2016. The Hutt Valley timetables and route changes are being worked through as a package to ensure cost neutrality is maintained

The Hutt Valley Public Transport Review recommendations, current status and timing of implementation are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

	Recommendation	Status	Implementation
<b>Improve service reliability</b>	Investigate the operational causes of early-running and late-running trips on all bus routes and implement changes to reduce the issues.	Timetables have been developed to better reflect actual journey travel times particularly at time of greater traffic congestion.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Using Real Time Information (RTI) revise bus timetable running times to better reflect actual running times.	Real time information has been used to develop timetables that better reflect actual journey travel times.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Provide for sufficient layover time at the end of trips to ensure there is enough recovery time should trips become delayed.	Layover times have been reviewed and recovery time changes has been incorporated into the new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
<b>Improve bus/train</b>	Work with operators to investigate methods where information can	Ongoing work being undertaken to improve the accuracy of the data within	Ongoing.

	Recommendation	Status	Implementation
connections	be given to customers on board the bus or train informing them if the service is running late and a planned connection may be affected.	the real time information system. Working with operators to improve their capability in the use of the real time information system is underway.  A new website has been launched which provides greater tracking information on services for customers and operators.  Work with operators on how further information can be quickly and easily provided to customers is yet to commence.	
	Ensure timetables provide for sufficient connection times.	Connection and layover times have been reviewed and improvements have been incorporated into the new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
Provide additional service	Supplement capacity on the northbound Route 110 trips at 2.33pm and 2.48pm on school days.	Has been incorporated into the new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Introduce some peak only trips between Riverstone Terraces and Upper Hutt Railway Station by amending the Route 114 route and timetable.	Route and timetable are being developed.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	No new urban east-west link bus service be provided at this time.	No further work required at this time.	
Improve utilisation of resources	Investigate the operational possibility of combining Routes 160 and 170 in the evenings.	Improving the service reliability and bus/train connection has been the focus at this time rather than changing routes. Timetables have been	Reliability improvements implemented with new timetables at end of April 2016.  Possibility of

	Recommendation	Status	Implementation
		developed to reflect these reliability improvements.	combining routes will be assessed as part of the post-implementation of the new timetable.
	Investigate operational opportunities to minimise points of service duplication between urban and school bus services in Upper Hutt.	<p>This was expanded to include all Hutt Valley contracted school services.</p> <p>A numbers of areas have been identified where there is an oversupply of capacity and duplication of service.</p> <p>Some services to Taita College and school services from the Western Hills can be merged into the public services (routes 121 and 150).</p> <p>Some areas have multiple school routes that can be combined; Stokes Valley, Harbour View, Birchville, and Maoribank.</p> <p>Due to very low usage the service to Plateau School should be discontinued.</p>	<p>Begin communications on the changes with schools before end of this term.</p> <p>Aim to implement with new public timetables at end of April 2016.</p> <p>Aim to implement for start of Term 2 (2016).</p> <p>Aim to implement for start of Term 1 (2016). GWRC school travel planner will assist.</p>
<b>Removal of services with very low demand</b>	Discontinue the Gillespies Road extension on the Route 110, all trips to operate the standard route.	Incorporated into new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Discontinue the Judd Crescent extension on the Route 130, all trips to operate the standard route.	Incorporated into new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Discontinue the Hutt Hospital extension on Routes 160 and 170, all trips to operate the	Incorporated into new timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.

	Recommendation	Status	Implementation
	standard routes.		
	Retain the better used trips for commuters and access to schools for students on the Routes 145 and 154, and discontinue the trips with low customer uptake.	Being drafted into detailed timetables.	New timetables aim to be implemented at end of April 2016.
	Reinvest savings into the Hutt Valley public transport network to enable the recommended services improvements to be made particularly in enabling timetable reliability.	Savings have been used to provide for additional resource requirements need to enable service reliability improvements across the Hutt Valley bus services, and to provide the additional Riverstone Terrace services.	

### 3.4 Kapiti

This current review of Kapiti bus services has a limited scope due to the changing roading environment in the area and the need to complete the review in time for the PTOM bus tenders. The routes and timetables in the PTOM tenders will take into account, as best as can, the roading changes that will be in place when the new contracts commence. A fuller review of Kapiti bus services will be embarked on once all the roading changes are nearer completion.

Meetings have been held with bus operators, the Otaki and Waikanae community boards and Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) officers to discuss issues and options. KCDC also arranged a community board workshop session on 21 October 2015.

The work on identifying issues and analysing passenger boarding data is now largely complete.

The issues primarily relate to problems with the reliability of the bus/train connections in both Paraparaumu and Waikanae during off-peak periods. The time taken to travel through Coastlands Shopping Centre on some routes has a disproportionate impact on reliability.

The future town centres work being undertaken by KCDC has been identified as an important issue for future bus operations, as the current proposals may affect the ability to provide efficient bus services. This is being discussed with KCDC officers.

All routes in Kapiti have relatively low passenger numbers, and the Paraparaumu East route (route 270) and Otaihunga and Paekakariki

shopper services have very low passenger numbers. Over the last 5 years for each passenger that uses the shopper services the cost for the Council has been increasing. In 2010/11 it cost \$17 per passenger; at the end of 2014/15 this cost had risen to over \$23 per passenger.

Options to address the issues are being developed. Some options involve trade-offs between routes, and re-directing available resources to areas where better value for money is likely to be achieved. For example, the resources that would be freed up by discontinuing some services would be better used addressing issues such as bus/train connections or servicing Coastlands.

Some options, that appear to be well supported by stakeholders (and which can be delivered for little or no cost), are being considered for the Otaki and Waikanae routes.

The school services in Kapiti are well patronised and no changes are likely to be suggested.

### **3.5 Wairarapa**

Issues in Wairarapa mostly centre around the lack of services on Sundays particularly train connections to Martinborough and Greytown. Inclusion of Sunday services would involve additional funding requirements as it would be difficult to trade-off other service levels and still maintain cost neutrality for Wairarapa bus services. For PTOM tender readiness any addition of Sunday services would not be recommended at this time.

Passenger numbers are low on some routes, particularly on Masterton East (route 206). There are limited options for changing this route. Also given the nature of the bus routes in Masterton, and the fact that there are only three services per day on route 206, few savings would be achieved by changing or discontinuing this route.

The school services in Wairarapa are well patronised and no changes are likely to be required.

### **3.6 School Services**

#### **3.6.1 Context**

There are 262 school bus services in the Wellington region. Average passenger numbers on trips range from **1** student to **81** students.

School catchments, enrolments, and school hours, often change. Much of our focus over the last 5 years has been around reviewing the performance of public bus services. The performance of school services have generally had light touch reviews, and in many cases issues have been dealt with as they arise. This has resulted in a situation where services have not been as responsive to the changing demands and needs of our customers as they could have been as a result of:

- duplication of services

- too much or too little capacity provided in some areas
- inconsistency in how and when services are provided.

Cost recovery rates on school services tend to be lower than many public services due to the lower fares paid by children compared to adults, and school buses services generally being operated during peak times thus requiring expensive peak vehicles.

This initial phase of the school review has focused on services that carry low numbers of students and services with complaints or issues previously identified. A number of school services have been identified that can be deleted or merged with other school or public bus services.

### 3.6.2 Methodology

The RPTP states that school bus services will be provided in the following circumstances (p71, RPTP):

*Where there is enough demand, provide school buses in urban areas to schools not served by the regular bus network or where capacity on the network cannot meet demand. Services generally provide access for children to their nearest or zoned schools.*

When assessing the performance of the school services we started with using criteria used for other services, i.e. a minimum loading of 4 passengers per trip and a minimum cost recovery of 20%. For school bus services we consider 4 passengers per trip too low to support a service. Four passengers would imply a very low cost recovery rate was acceptable, and in some situations providing services for so few especially when the capacity may easily be carried on a suitable public bus services nearby. We have thus used a minimum loading of 15 passengers per trip and believe this would also better represent a minimum cost recovery of 20%.

Average number of passengers per trip during March 2015 has been used in the review. This information has then been used to assess performance against the following criteria to identify possible options:

- **>45 passengers per trip** – potential overloading on some trips, review capacity and identify any need for additional trips or route changes
- **25-45 passengers per trip** – acceptable performance no further action
- **15-25 passengers per trip** – marginal performance, investigate further to identify any improvements that could be made e.g. changes to route or combine with public services
- **<15 passengers per trip** – poor performance, investigate whether there are opportunities to merge the service with other school or public bus services or discontinue the service



- **No data** – loadings data was not available for this exercise. In some cases, detailed trip data is not collected in which case a further assessment will be undertaken based on route characteristics (e.g. is there a public service nearby) and discussions with operators.

A cost recovery measure has not been used due to insufficient data on revenue and operating costs for individual school bus services.

### 3.6.3 Grouping of Services

School bus routes have evolved over time and are highly complex with many areas catered to by different morning and afternoon bus routes. On the basis that students need to travel to and from school, the review has used the approach that, where possible, routes are made consistent with the same route operating to and from schools in both the morning and afternoon.

### 3.6.4 Service Change recommendations

In Wellington City twenty-one routes have been identified which carry on average less than **15** students. Ten of these routes carry on average less than **5** students. Most of the twenty-one routes can be merged with other school routes or with public services, as some routes more or less duplicate a nearby public service route. A few morning and afternoon school routes need to be aligned, and fourteen routes need further investigation to check the potential loadings on other services should these school services be discontinued.

In Porirua two school services have been identified as carrying on average only **2** students per trip. One of these services duplicates a public bus service so the students can be moved on to that service. The other school service has no obvious alternative so we need to work with the affected school on what alternative travel options can be put in place to support these students.

## 4. RPTP Update

A key requirement for procuring services under PTOM is that those services and units are reflected and consistent with the RPTP. Depending on the nature of the changes, it may be necessary to make a variation to the RPTP to enable the changes to be implemented and provided for through the PTOM tendering process.

The process to vary the RPTP (and level of consultation required) is dependent on the “significance” of the changes. Section 6.1 of the RPTP provides guidance on significance policy. According to the policy, the changes being considered through these reviews are likely to fall into the ‘non-significant’ category, which includes:

- Minor changes to service descriptions after a service review
- Changes to the descriptions of services or service groupings as a result of an area-wide service review, as long as there is no significant cost.

In these cases, targeted consultation will be undertaken to inform the variation process. It is likely that a variation proposal will be reported to Council in the

beginning of 2016 following completion of the reviews and finalisation of the procurement strategy for PTOM.

## **5. Communication**

Engagement will also continue with KCDC and the Kapiti community boards as options for timetables and route amendments develop.

Affected schools will be contacted well before any changes to service are made. It is intended that communications with these schools commence before the end of this current academic term. The aim is to implement many of the changes in time for the start of Term 2, 2016.

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

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **6.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **7. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Notes that progress on any proposed changes will be reported back to the Committee.*

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