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Report to the Passenger Transport Committee
From Alexander Hohnen-Campbell, Passenger Transport Planner

Hutt Valley Bus Service Review

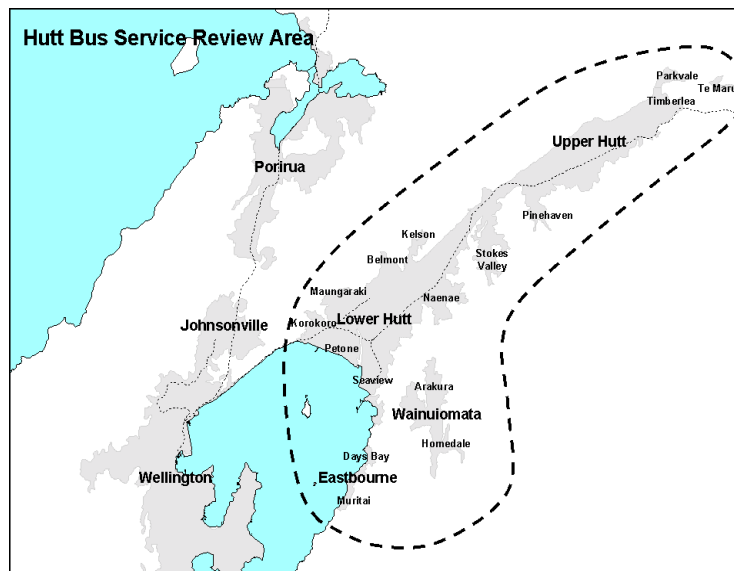
1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the process for the review of bus services in the Hutt Valley, Wainuiomata and Eastbourne.

2. Background

This is the first comprehensive review of Hutt Valley, Wainuiomata and Eastbourne bus services since introduction of the Waterloo bus/rail interchange in 1989. Changed since then have been incremental and made on a route by route basis.

Reviewing all routes in a geographic area maximises the opportunity to improve connectivity, coverage and service levels in an entire geographic area. The intended result is a public transport network that better meets the needs of existing passengers, provides opportunities to attract new passengers and is cost effective to provide.



3. Scope of Review

All regular scheduled bus services in the Hutt Valley, Wainuiomata and Eastbourne are being reviewed. Rail, ferry and school bus services are not being reviewed at this stage although we expect to receive valuable feedback on these services as part of the review. Also some modification to school services could result from changes to the regular scheduled services (for example provision of a new direct bus route past a school removing the needs for a special school service).

Routes being reviewed are as follows:

Route

2, 4	Upper Hutt-Lower Hutt-Petone
11	Totara Park
12	The Plateau and Akatarawa
13	Timberlea
14, 17	Cottle Block
15, 16	Pinehaven
3, 21, 27, 90	Stokes Valley
31, 32, 33	Naenae
40, 41, 46	Kelson
45, 47, 48	Belmont
53	Maungaraki and Normandale
54	Korokoro
60, 61, 62, 63, 80	Wainuiomata
76	Seaview and Gracefield
81, 82, 83, 84, 85	Eastbourne

4. Research to be Undertaken

With Transfund's patronage funding regime there is more incentive than ever to increase use of passenger transport services in the region. On this basis a research program which targets non-bus users, as well as bus users is proposed. The aim will be to identify strategies that will attract new users to the bus network and increase usage by existing bus users.

Specifically we will be looking to determine perceptions of current services – what is working well and what is not. We would like to identify actual and perceived barriers to using bus services and opportunities for growth including specific exploration of:

- Service awareness
- Ease of use
- Image and branding of services
- Destinations served
- Information provision, availability and quality
- Fares integration and perceptions of value compared with alternative modes
- Service Integration
- Perceived strengths and weaknesses of each of the modes – bus, train and ferry
- Barriers to using public transport – what would encourage use/greater use

5. Proposed Community Consultation

With the scale of the proposed service review and opportunity for significant service changes an extensive program of community consultation is planned.

A two-stage consultation program is proposed. Primary consultation will be where Council seeks community suggestions and gathers customer and operational issues with the existing services.

Public comment along with market research will be used to put together new service proposals.

These resulting service proposals would then be put out for secondary consultation where members of the community would have the opportunity to comment on the specific services proposed.

If there are issues arising from this secondary consultation further “micro” consultation may be carried out on subsequent service alternatives.

a) Primary Consultation – Issue Identification (4 March – 12 April)

- Brief WRC and TLA Councillors
- Discussions with operators and meetings with Council officers
- Letters to community boards, iwi, schools, residents associations, retailers
- Newspaper articles and advertisements for consultation
- Bus driver workshop/s
- Ridewell workshop
- Patronage analysis and on-bus surveys (if required)

b) Secondary Consultation – Option Testing (15 April – 30 August)

- Focus groups with bus users and non-bus users
- Meetings with councils and/or community boards and council area engineers
- Distribution of 50,000 prepaid reply brochures to affected households
- Posters and brochures on buses as well as at all community facilities, shopping centers and schools
- Newspaper articles and advertisements
- Displays at major malls and libraries
- Meetings with residents and business associations
- Submissions processed
- Follow up research and micro-consultation for issues arising from consultation
- Finalise proposals

c) Service Implementation

- Proposed services put out to tender in October
- April 2003 new services commence

6. Recommendation

That the report be received.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

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