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Committee Regional Transport Committee
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Active a2b report 2014

1. Purpose

To provide the Regional Transport Committee (the Committee) with the 2014 evaluation report of the Active a2b programme and its a2b Go challenge.

2. Background

Active a2b was first delivered in 2010 by the Sustainable Transport team at Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). It is part of GWRC's ongoing work to reach regional targets to increase the number of walking and cycling trips and reduce congestion in urban areas.

The goals of the programme are transport-related but the programme is promoted and packaged as 'health and well-being' to workplaces, because a 'sustainable transport' programme doesn't appear to have the same appeal. It offers participants personalised support and resources to encourage them to walk and cycle to work.

Active a2b was once again delivered with support from health partners the Cancer Society, Compass Health (a primary health organisation representing 60 general practice teams) and Regional Public Health. These partnerships affirm the health benefits of active transport and also offer participants information for improved nutrition and smoking cessation.

The main target group for Active a2b are those participants who drive alone to work in a vehicle three or more times a week at the time of registration. This 'Active a2b Plus' group receives a higher level of personalised support than other participants.

The programme includes a range of tools, events and challenges, advice, resources and training opportunities, and personalised support for the target group. The a2b GO Challenge is the competitive arm of the Active a2b initiative. The challenge encourages people to draw support from colleagues or friends, and actively commute as many days as possible over four weeks during February - March.

3. Key messages

The full Active a2b report is set out in **Attachment 1** to this report. The following key messages are highlighted from the attached report:

- In 2014, 1,132 individuals from 75 workplaces participated in the programme, with 301 people being part of the 'Active a2b Plus' group. A total of 65 workplaces actively promoted it amongst their staff, with coverage of around 37,000 employees.
- Active a2b continues to meet its targets of decreasing the number of people who drive alone to work and encouraging people to take up active modes. Results from participants who completed both the registration and evaluation survey showed that the programme achieved increases in the use of active trips to work. The Active a2b Plus group delivered increases for active modes; from 4% to 10% for walking and from 2% to 9% for cycling. Car trips for the Active a2b Plus group decreased significantly from 91% to 69%, slightly more than the reduction in car trips observed in 2013. For the Standard group, there was a small increase (3%) in active trips (from 51% to 54%); however there was unfortunately also an increase in car trips and a drop in public transport use.
- Evaluation data indicated that the programme led to a reduction of 3,492km of vehicle travel per week. Using prices set by the New Zealand Transport Agency, the economic value of the increase in walking and cycling for the whole programme was \$92,560, producing an estimated cost benefit ratio for the programme of 1:11.6. This is a big improvement on the value of benefits in 2013 when there was estimated to be a cost benefit ratio of 1:4.3. The key difference from last year is that in 2014 there was an increase in each of the active modes for both groups of participants. In 2013 there was a reduction in cycling activity among the Standard participants.
- Of the participants who completed the evaluation survey, 54% thought that Active a2b had helped them walk or cycle to work more. This is up slightly from 50% in 2013. Outside of work trips, 49% of respondents thought that Active a2b had helped them to walk or cycle more and 68% thought that it had helped improve their health and well-being.
- In its fifth year of delivery, Active a2b seems to be retaining its momentum. In 2014, the number of participants was comparable to the peak numbers of 2012 and 2013. Active a2b is still managing to reach new participants with 70% of them being new to this year's programme.

3.1 a2b GO Challenge

Of the 620 people who registered interest for the a2b GO challenge, 318 actually took part in the event. Promotion was done primarily through workplaces and the Active a2b newsletter, along with distributing some flyers at Park & Ride stations and at Go by Bike day.

The usefulness of the challenge was rated highly by the Active a2b participants who did take part. The numbers of participants was lower than hoped. It is possible there is some confusion about the difference between 'Active a2b' (the programme) and 'a2b GO' (the challenge), which may have meant some workplaces didn't promote it, thinking that they already had. Below are two anonymous responses from the follow up survey held at the end of Active a2b:

In the a2b GO competition the exercise of trying to convince a driver to walk was fun and helpful. While it didn't make a huge difference to my habits I found it fun and creates a kind of 'active commuting posse' in the workplace. It's something to be proud of.

We enjoyed the challenges and opportunity to earn more points and of course the opportunity to win a prize was great for the team.

The full a2b GO report is set out in **Attachment 2** to this report.

4. Communication

Both reports will be circulated to the participating health partners and then placed on the Council website.

5. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

5.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

No decision is being sought in this report as it is updating the Committee on progress of existing programmes of walking, cycling, and travel demand management under the Regional Land Transport Strategy's Implementation Plans.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

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Attachment 1: Active a2b Report 2014

Attachment 2: a2b GO Report 2014