

Summary of key submission themes and officer comments

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1. Issues within scope

1.1 Rates

1.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 4, 16, 19, 20, 31, 40

While several submitters opposed the rates increase of 5.6% providing suggestions such as GWRC reviewing its own costs, there was also support to increase the rates if it meant that required infrastructure investment for the region could be funded.

There were also some comments on reviewing rates and providing more transparency.

1.1.2 Officer comments

The 5.6% rates increase is below the 9.3% increase proposed in the Long Term Plan 2015-25. Much of the increase is made up of committed regional infrastructure projects.

The rate allocation methodology is being reviewed as part of the long term plan process.

The public transport targeted rates component equates to approximately 25% of operational funding for public transport. Any changes to the public transport rate will need to be considered in line with fare initiatives and performance against our Farebox Recovery Policy (55-60%), which also considers the costs of public transport. The public transport funding model (which is based on a congestion charging philosophy) is currently being reviewed in the lead up to the development of the next long term plan. Any proposed changes to the public transport funding model will be consulted on.

1.2 Proposed reprioritisation of the work programme of Wellington Water

1.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 1, 5, 7, 9, 13, 19, 26, 30, 32, 33, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47

Submitters expressed support in general to ensure that prior to proceeding with any programme of work that a strong business case and rationale is established. Suggestions were made in terms of the approach ensuring consideration was given to particular issues/areas of the region:

- the impact of building dams
- importance of managing fresh water
- the impacts on the Berhampore community
- taking into consideration the impacts of climate change.

1.2.2 Officer comments

Officers note that there are sometimes conflicting priorities for Wellington Water as they work towards achieving the strategic outcomes of providing safe and healthy water, being respectful of the environment and providing resilient networks that support our community. Officers agree that a strong business case and rationale is needed before proceeding with any investment programme.

1.2.3 Submission from Wellington Water

Submission number 39

Wellington Water has recommended the inclusion of Community Infrastructure Resilience (CIR) improvements for the bulk water supply. CIR investment is a higher priority than seismic strengthening of the reservoirs due to the humanitarian requirement after a significant seismic event. The change is cost neutral as funding will be provided from reduced budgets of other projects. The reservoir seismic strengthening projects still represent important resilience improvements. Construction timing and budgets for these will be outlined in the 2018/28 LTP.

1.2.4 Officer comments

Officers support the proposed reprioritisation of capital expenditure.

1.3 Impact of earthquake on CentrePort operations and loss of dividend

1.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 1, 5, 10, 11, 19, 20, 24, 32, 33, 40, 45, 46, 47

Submitters expressed overall support for rebuilding the Centreport operations, however, there is a call for due diligence in terms of ensuring sound business decisions are made for the ongoing benefit of the community and to ensure any rebuilding reflects value for investors.

There were three submissions that opposed the proposal to debt fund; one with reference to how this will be managed over the longer term and two suggesting that GWRC divest itself of Centreport.

1.3.2 Officer comments

CentrePort has been requested by GWRC, via Port Investments Limited, to develop a recovery plan. It has been requested for the planning process to take a longer term view of opportunities for redevelopment of the port and for this work to be undertaken in collaboration with the regional council, local councils, and other key stakeholders, and in consultation with the public.

The strategic plan will cover both long term options for port operations and the future of CentrePort's Harbour Quays property investments.

1.4 Fast-tracking flood protection in the Hutt - RiverLink

1.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 14, 20, 26, 27, 33, 45, 46, 47

Overall, submitters expressed support for bringing forward the purchase of the properties in reference to the RiverLink project. In addition the following comments were made requesting that these be given due consideration during the project:

- possible private sector funding to ease the burden on ratepayers
- ensuring that archaeological and environmental issues are carefully managed.

Two submissions questioned the necessity of bringing forward the property purchases suggesting the risk was low or that enough information was not available to make an informed decision.

1.4.2 Officer comments

Opportunities for private sector investment will be considered in the post stopbank construction phase for any surplus residual land.

Prior to construction, an archaeological management plan will be completed. Expert advice will be sought as and when required. All environmental affects will be carefully managed under the various resource consent conditions.

Property purchases are currently undertaken under a willing seller, willing buyer arrangement. There is no pressure being applied to current owners to sell.

1.5 Public Transport

1.5.1 Fares

1.5.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 14, 16, 20, 22, 25, 26, 30, 32, 45, 40

A total of 12 submitters explicitly commented on fares. While most appear to be in support of the proposal to not increase fares and introduce a range of initiatives, some suggestions were also provided, such as ways to encourage families to use public transport. The feedback suggests that more detailed information should be provided in further consultation processes.

1.5.1.2 Officer comments

Our aim is to bring in the new set of fare changes in mid-2018 to align with new bus contracts and extension of the Snapper interim bus ticketing system to the entire bus network. The provision of tertiary student discounts is one of many fare changes being considered as part of our review of public transport fares. Other potential changes include free bus-to-bus transfers, an off-peak discount for all, and free bus connections to regional rail stations as part of the rail monthly pass. Given the significance of these initiatives, the Council is proposing to consult with the public in August this year on the detailed changes, prior to formal endorsement of the fare package. Alongside the fare review, a review of the Farebox recovery and PT funding is also underway.

1.5.2 Tertiary Student Fares

1.5.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 7, 8, 17, 19, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 35, 37, 47

The 13 submitters expressed support for the implementation of a student tertiary fare in 2018 while Wellington Chamber of Commerce (WECC) questioned how this can be funded.

1.5.2.2 Officer comments

The provision of tertiary student discounts is one of many fare changes being considered as part of our review of public transport fares. Any decisions on fare discounts (including the amount of any potential discount) will need to consider a range of factors including affordability, funding streams and consideration of where the benefits lie. Given the significance of these initiatives, the Council is proposing to consult with the public in August this year on the detailed changes, prior to formal endorsement of the fare package.

1.5.2.3 Summary of submissions received via the Fairer Fares website (Victoria University Students Association)

Submission numbers – see Fairer Fares Submissions

1769 Submissions were received specifically on VUWSA's campaign for 'Fairer Fares'. The Fairer Fares campaign reached a wider audience and submissions reflect people from all parts of the Wellington region although a majority (65%) were from Wellington City. 65 submissions were received from other parts of New Zealand. While a majority of submissions were from current students, a significant number (23% identified as ratepayers) came from non-students, often family and friends of students or teachers/tertiary staff.

Of these submissions, there was an overwhelming majority in support of cheaper student fares, a minority suggested adding some restrictions to fare discounts including full time students or off peak hours only, and one submission did not support discounted student fares. Concerns were also raised about rates increases, including querying how student fare discounts would be funded.

The majority of submissions noted that transport costs were part of a wider picture where students were experiencing financial hardship due to high housing costs and limited incomes (limited student allowances/loan funding and part time jobs often at minimum wage). Many students cited struggling to afford basic living costs such as food and rent, others relied on parental support.

Specific concerns around affordability included:

- lower transport costs could enable students to live further out easing pressure on rental accommodation in the city
- transport costs as a barrier to attending tertiary education for people from lower socio-economic areas including Porirua and parts of the Hutt Valley. This was also raised as a specific issue for Maori and Pasifika youth
- fairness in relation to free fares for Gold Card holders, and child/secondary student discounts
- fairness in relation to other parts of New Zealand, e.g. discounted fares in Auckland, free fares in Palmerston North
- safety and health impacts associated with inability to afford transport, e.g. walking home late at night or in bad weather, mental health issues associated with financial stress
- the contribution of high transport costs to poor attendance and financial stress were cited as reasons for failure to complete qualifications/lower academic achievement
- in order to reach potential students need reduced financial stress/more time for studies, some cited requiring part time jobs just to cover transport costs.

Another key theme for submissions was around wider sustainability and liveability concerns. Students are seen as making an important contribution to the vibrancy and future economic growth of the Wellington region and encouraging them to use public transport was seen as an important part of enabling a sustainable and resilient region.

Specific concerns raised around sustainability and liveability included:

- high costs of housing and transport are seen as potentially undermining Wellington’s relative attractiveness compared to other university cities
- encouraging students to use public transport by making it more affordable would help reduce congestion, help habituate use of public transport and mitigate climate change
- currently it is perceived as being cheaper to drive and park than use public transport
- inconsistency between council adopting policies in relation to living wages while not taking steps to reduce poverty for students.

Other points that were raised included:

- a lack of integrated ticketing and fares, particularly a lack of free-transfer fares adding to the cost. Also noted was that some fare products, e.g. monthly rail passes, had high upfront costs and were not well suited to irregular travel patterns of students
- routes and timetabling that aligned poorly with the travel needs of students
- fares generally being too high
- introducing discounts for other groups such as the unemployed, beneficiaries and people with disabilities.

1.5.2.4 Officer comments

The provision of tertiary student discounts is one of many fare changes being considered as part of our review of public transport fares. Any decisions on fare discounts (including the amount of any potential discount) will need to consider a range of factors including affordability, funding streams and consideration of where the benefits lie. Given the significance of these initiatives, the Council is proposing to consult with the public in August this year on the detailed changes, prior to formal endorsement of the fare package.

1.5.3 Rail Scenario 1 (RS1)

1.5.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 4, 16, 21, 25

Submitters expressed disappointment in the delay and also suggested/supported seeking government funding.

1.5.3.2 Officer comments

GWRC has jointly submitted a business case to the Crown for the urgent replacement of the Hutt Line traction poles. This business case contains necessary precursor elements to the implementation of RS1 on the Hutt Line including some elements of double tracking between Trentham and Upper Hutt. A RS1 business case is planned for early 2017/18 for submission to the Crown.

1.5.4 Integrated Ticketing

1.5.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 7, 14, 19, 25, 26, 40

Submitters on the issue of Integrated Ticketing, were not in support of the delay. One submitter has suggested more frequent updates be provided to the community.

1.5.4.2 Officer comments

The Snapper interim bus ticketing system will be introduced in July 2018 to align with the new contracts and associated fleet of approximately 250 new buses. New fares (including free transfers between bus) will also be introduced at this time. Combined, these changes will significantly improve integration on bus through the provision of a single transport card for all buses in the region.

Over the longer term, GWRC is working with the NZ Transport Agency and other regional councils to specify and procure a fully integrated ticketing system for all councils (except Auckland) under the National Ticketing Programme. Procuring this system is a huge and complex job and needs to satisfy the requirements of all funding partners. In particular the NZTA is a significant funding partner and is looking to maximise the value of their investment across the country through co-operation between the partner councils. Ticketing and payments technology is developing so rapidly that all options need to be carefully investigated to ensure the development of a system that is fit for the future while meeting people's needs and expectations.

1.6 Masterton Building

1.6.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 1, 5, 20, 21, 26, 32, 33, 45, 47

Submitters expressed support to undertake investigation work on the existing building with the intent of providing structural strengthening solutions rather than going to the expense of purchasing or building new premises.

1.6.2 Officer comments

Submissions noted.

Future GWRC accommodation decisions in Wairarapa will be made in the context of the wider GWRC accommodation requirements. Before finalising accommodation for Wairarapa based staff, GWRC will consult with the existing Wairarapa District Councils to explore opportunities for co-location and or sharing of facilities and services.

2. Issues outside scope of consultation

2.1 Resilience

2.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 19, 40, 41, 48

Submitters stated support for GWRC's focus on resilience and in particular GWRC providing leadership in this area and the activities of WREMO.

2.1.2 Officer comments

Noted. GWRC is currently in the process of appointing a Regional Manager for WREMO. The future role and resourcing for WREMO is also being considered in the light of recent events. GWRC is working actively with Wellington Lifelines, other local governments in the region and central government to improve resilience of our key infrastructure and buildings. We are also leading the Regional Natural Hazards Management Strategy.

2.2 Climate Change

2.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 26, 31, 38, 40, 43

Submitters expressed concern over the need for GWRC to place more emphasis on the impacts of climate change and to take a stronger leadership role in this area.

Mt Victoria Residents Association ask that GWRC ensure appropriate measures and activities are in place to monitor and manage our environment. One submitter suggests that the proposed Natural Resources Plan (pNRP) does not go far enough in addressing climate change and there is suggestion of more independent monitoring of air quality.

2.2.2 Officer comments

GWRC adopted a Climate Change Strategy in 2015. This contains an action plan that is being actively implemented and reported on. This is not featured in our Annual Plan Consultation Document as this is an existing and ongoing programme.

Submissions on the proposed Natural Resources Plan (pNRP) are currently being heard by a panel of independent commissioners in the Schedule 1 process under the Resource Management Act.

Submissions on climate change will be considered as part of this statutory process.

2.3 Environment

2.3.1.1 Submission on pest control

Submission number 36

This submitter proposed a 50% rebate on pest control rates to private land owners contributing to aerial 1080 programs.

2.3.1.2 Officer comments

Historically, Council has considered numerous requests for rate rebates where landowners wish to undertake some environmental enhancement works (e.g. QEII Trust Covenant owners). Council has not rebated to date as doing so raises equity issues. In this case the Regional Predator Control rate funds activities across the entire region. The activity is focused on maintaining biodiversity gains following the successful eradication of Bovine Tb by OSPRI. The rate also funds predator control in parts of the region that have never received GWRC led control (i.e. lower Kapiti, Porirua, rural Wellington City). Rebating in one part of the region means less work is able to be undertaken elsewhere. The Regional Predator Control programme is scheduled to roll out across the region as the eradication of Bovine Tb continues.

A report to Council on the objectives of Project Aorangi and how it aligns with GWRC biodiversity objectives will be prepared. This report will identify whether there are other options or opportunities to support the Project.

2.3.2.1 Submission on Kapiti Whaitua

Submission number 48

KCDC are eager to establish a timeframe for when the Kapiti Whaitua processes will commence.

2.3.2.2 Officer comments

Greater Wellington is currently running Whaitua committees in the Ruamahanga and Porirua Whaitua. Whaitua committees are groups of local people responsible for developing a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) in conjunction with their community. A WIP describes the ways in which the people from that catchment want to manage their water now and for future generations through a range of integrated tools, policies and strategies.

Committees are made up of local community members, iwi representatives, local authority representatives, and Greater Wellington Regional Council representatives. Recommendations proposed in a WIP are agreed by consensus.

Towards the end of 2017, we also plan to establish the Hutt-Wellington Whaitua committee. The Kapiti Whaitua process will be the next to commence, and currently it is anticipated that this will be sometime in 2018.

2.3.3.1 Submission on Pauatahanui Harbour dredging

Submission number 12

The submitter requested that an urgent trial dredging of the Pauatahanui Harbour begin.

2.3.3.2 Officer comments

In conjunction with Porirua City Council staff are currently developing a report which will look at issues and opportunities around proposals which have been suggested to dredge Pauatahanui Inlet. This will include a collation of work done to date on this issue, and suggestions around options for possible future interventions.

2.3.4.1 Submission on working collaboratively with Federated Farmers

Submission number 23

Federated Farmers commended Council for supporting new ways of working together and progress made in key areas. They requested that GWRC urgently provide clear guidance on the “ground rules” in respect of the multiplicity of rules which impact day-to-day farming activities, specifically the extent of discretion exercised by consents and compliance staff.

2.3.4.2 Officer comments

The acknowledgement of a commitment to working together with Federated Farmers is appreciated; as is the effort that Federated Farmers wish to work in the same way. Greater Wellington will meet directly with relevant Federated Farmers staff to progress the issue.

2.4 Kapiti Flood Protection

2.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission number 48

KCDC expressed their keenness to work with GWRC to find a practical solution to the issue of delayed open stormwater channel maintenance due to consent requirements

2.4.2 Officer comments

GWRC staff are currently working with KCDC regarding opportunities to improve management of watercourses in the Kapiti area. This may necessitate a review of the existing Watercourses Agreement with KCDC.

2.5 Otaki River

2.5.1 Summary of key submission

Submission number 48

Friends of the Otaki River have requested that toilets be installed on GWRC land near the Otaki River mouth

2.5.2 Officer comments

Staff are currently working with KCDC to find a solution to this issue. Staff have identified suitable areas for the toilets, one of which is on GWRC land. GWRC is prepared to contribute to installation costs. However, we believe that ongoing servicing and maintenance of the toilets should be a KCDC responsibility.

2.6 Public Transport

2.6.1 Public Transport System and Vision

2.6.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 5, 18, 25, 31, 32, 33, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47

A number of submitters commented on the overall direction of the public transport system, covering such issues as:

- extending support for continuing to move towards a transformational public system and therefore the package of initiatives which are planned
- improvements to the network

- ensuring the transport network is more family friendly
- requesting a detailed study of options around the Karori tunnel
- better integration between walking and public transport
- extending the walk to school programme.

The submissions also included one submitter who did not support the aims of the public transport programme of work.

2.6.1.2 Officer comments

The fundamental vision for public transport in the Wellington region (and priorities for improvement) are set out in the Regional Public Transport Plan. Many of the comments align with our aim to *'continually improve the Metlink network so that the public transport services:*

- *go where people want to go, at times they want to go*
- *provide competitive journey times*
- *provide value for money*
- *are easy to understand and use*
- *are safe, comfortable and reliable*
- *provide flexibility, allowing people to change their plans.'*

Rail and bus network initiatives

GWRC plans to review and update the Regional Rail Plan in 2017/18. In shorter term, GWRC has agreed to contribute additional funding for track work to be completed before June. Together with KiwiRail's contribution the work will see an additional \$1m targeted at reducing speed restrictions. Unfortunately the Wairarapa Line will still require significant additional investment in the track asset to be able to provide a consistently reliable service.

From mid-2018, Wellington's new network will improve bus services to Mount Victoria - more trips in the evenings and on weekends, free connections between buses to allow passengers increased freedom of travel anytime.

Climate change

Climate change is a fundamental consideration in all decisions on public transport made by GWRC. All reports to Council require specific reporting on adaptation and mitigation implications.

Social access

Social access is a key driver for public transport and an important consideration in how we set fares and public transport funding. For example, our proposal to offer a 25% off-peak discount is partly targeted at increasing social access.

Karori tunnel options

These are matters for the Road Controlling Authority outside of GWRC's direct control. GWRC officers work closely with Wellington City Council (WCC) officers when such proposals impact on the public transport network.

Better integration between walking and public transport

GWRC runs an active travel programme called Movin' March which encourages and incentivises students to walk, scooter and cycle to primary schools in the Wellington Region and is separate to the Bikes in School programme. The programme has been running successfully since 2011 and this year we had 70 schools participating, reaching 18,000 students and their families. We will continue to offer this programme to all primary schools in the Wellington region with the goal of increasing participations.

GWRC works closely with local councils to improve access to public transport facilities, where there is an overlap of jurisdiction. We also have a programme of improvements to wayfinding information such as signage and maps and Metlink Journey planner, to connect people with key public transport hubs.

2.6.2 Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM)

2.6.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 19, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44

Submitters raised a number of issues in relation to the scope and options within the Lets Get Wellington Moving programme. Some of these being explicit suggestions through to suggesting further considerations.

2.6.2.2 Officer comments

GWRC is working in partnership with WCC and NZTA on the Lets Get Wellington Moving Programme. This is a comprehensive review of the transport issues facing Wellington and will result in an agreed strategic approach and implementation programme. It is already clear that the likely approach will be multi-modal - to reflect the complexity of the transport system and user needs. LGWM has made it clear that any transport solutions serve the needs of the community and respond to the urban environment. The principles encompass consideration of reducing emissions and urban amenity.

2.6.3 Light Rail Transit (LRT)

2.6.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 6, 26, 38, 40, 43, 44

These submitters expressed clear support for a light rail transit system and a request to "protect the route' in the meantime.

2.6.3.2 Officer comments

GWRC is working in partnership with WCC and NZTA on the Lets Get Wellington Moving Programme. This is a comprehensive review of the transport issues facing Wellington and will result in an agreed strategic approach and implementation programme. As part of this programme work will include re-testing the most appropriate corridor for mass transit through central Wellington and consideration of whether a separate corridor is required for LRT and how best to future-proof for this potential future mode.

2.6.4 Trolley Buses

2.6.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 6, 10, 11, 18, 25, 26, 40, 43, 45

Submissions received expressed opposition to the removal of trolley buses suggesting that environmental impacts are given due consideration for any solution as well as two submitters expressing concern that the Writspeed Conversions are not delivering as expected.

2.6.4.2 Officer comments

The decision to remove the trolley buses from service was not a decision taken lightly by GWRC but was taken within the context of our future vision for public transport in the Wellington region.

Removing the trolley buses from service is part of the Council's transition to a newer, more modern and comfortable bus fleet and new bus services in Wellington city that make it easier and more reliable for people to get to where they want to go by public transport. The decision to phase out the trolley buses was made for a range of reasons, including the estimated \$52m of ratepayers' money required to upgrade the power supply system that dates back to the 1930s, and the \$4m-\$6m annual cost of maintaining and upgrading the overhead wire network. We anticipate that rapid improvements in battery technology would make further investment in the overhead catenary network for on-route charging redundant. In addition, increasing public transport use and getting people out of cars will lower transport emissions overall, and therefore the Council's decision is consistent with the Regional Policy Statement, the Regional Land Transport Plan and the Regional Public Transport Plan.

The Regional Council has a stated ambition to be the first region in New Zealand with an all-electric bus fleet. To this end, GWRC provided an incentive mechanism in its recent tender for bus operators to specifically encourage low emission bus fleets, with additional weighting provided for battery only electric buses. The outcome of the tender process will result in a new, modern bus fleet for Wellington that will substantially reduce the emissions of harmful pollutants. It has also presented the opportunity to work with one of the new operators to commence the trialling and introduction of battery electric buses into Wellington city. Incumbent operator NZ Bus is working on the introduction of a plug-in range extended electric bus fleet that will provide an important stepping stone to battery only electric buses in the future. In the first instance these will re-use and refurbish the old trolley buses.

2.6.5 Rail network

2.6.5.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 24, 27, 48

KCDC requested that consideration be given to additional services for commuters beyond Waikanae and to Levin.

Horizons Regional Council thanked GWRC for ongoing support of the Capital Connection and the joint funded trial Levin to Waikanae bus service.

HCC has raised two issues with Ava Station - accessibility and the possible need to relocate the station.

2.6.5.2 Officer comments

GWRC plans to review and update the Regional Rail Plan in 2017/18. This will include investigating the extension of services beyond Waikanae Station.

The Ava South bridge will be reinstated. GWRC is aware of the Petone 2040 project and will continue to work with HCC on potential future locations of Ava Station.

2.6.6 Bikes

2.6.6.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 15, 47

GWRC was asked to give greater consideration for the need to cater to increased use of bikes in the region and hence facilities throughout the whole public transport system.

2.6.6.2 Officer comments

GWRC is committed to improving integration of public transport with walking and cycling. Officers look at opportunities to improve bike storage infrastructure as part of our station and interchange upgrade programme. We are also committed to including bike racks on buses as part of the new PTOM bus contracts. Currently buses used for train replacements are not fitted with bike racks for the most part as replacement buses are often spare (non-commuter) charter buses.

2.6.7 Bus network

2.6.7.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 25, 32, 34, 40, 45, 47, 49

A number of submissions identified specific issues with either scheduling or bus routes in the region. They are asking if GWRC can give due consideration to the specific requests.

Several submissions were also received regarding issues with particular bus stops.

A further two submissions made reference to issues of bus signage, including issues of visibility on buses due to advertising and issues with RTI signage.

One submitter also suggested the use of higher capacity buses to address overcrowding, but wasn't sure if they go through tunnels.

2.6.7.2 Officer comments

GWRC is aware of various issues facing Wellington's current public transport network and responds, where and when possible, to immediate demands.

Bus routes

From mid-2018, a new network will provide:

- improved frequency of services on high-demand routes
- fairer distribution of bus services for many suburbs that have lacked evening or weekend buses

- higher-capacity buses into central Wellington (including double-deckers on some routes) to reduce congestion and overcrowding during peak times
- free transfers between buses across the Wellington region
- stricter controls on vehicle sizes on a day-to-day basis, meaning less daily variability of capacity
- tougher rules around reliability and punctuality of services.

More information about the new network is available online at <https://www.metlink.org.nz/2018-a-new-bus-network-for-wellington-city/>, and there will be an extensive public information campaign ahead of the new network implementation date.

GWRC is also reviewing school buses across the region to improve transport options for students and rationalise resources used to provide school and public buses. As part of this work, GWRC is working with schools to provide better alignment between bus network timetables and school opening hours.

Signage

GWRC is working with all territory authorities to improve light phasing to improve traffic flows including the introduction of (bus) B light phasing. These are evident at various locations within Wellington CBD.

Advertising

From mid-2018 when new bus contracts commence GWRC will be taking control of on-bus advertising from bus companies, and bus company branding will be removed from buses and replaced with a single public transport brand, Metlink, across all vehicles.

At this stage the plan is to allow advertising on the back of buses, and not to have advertising over windows. We're currently testing new more transparent adhesive products to understand any impact on visibility through the window sections. Our primary objective is to ensure our customers enjoy a safe and comfortable journey on the new Metlink bus network and vehicles, and this will determine the decision around the treatment of window coverings.

Real Time Information (RTI)

All RTI screen orientations are considered to allow easy viewing, however due to the narrow street, available footpath space and bus stop layouts, it is not always possible to view the display while seated within the bus shelter.

Adshel displays

Adshel displays are installed under agreement between Adshel and the local territorial authority.

Higher capacity buses

The routes for higher capacity buses have been determined with infrastructure capacity issues in mind, including tunnels. The Hataitai bus tunnel is the only tunnel that high capacity buses will travel through.

2.6.8 Parking

2.6.8.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 4, 14, 16, 32

Submitters expressed various views on commuter car parking, from considerations to more parking through to a review of emphasis on park and ride versus encouraging other modes of commuting.

2.6.8.2 Officer comments

To date, GWRC has focused primarily on park and ride developments at rail stations as opportunities have arisen and land has become available. To ensure a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach is taken, GWRC is proposing to develop a comprehensive Park and Ride Strategy which will attempt to address the range of issues expressed.

2.6.9 Funding Options

2.6.9.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission numbers 25, 26, 32

Submitters raised the issue of different funding options for public transport.

2.6.9.2 Officer comments

Funding for public transport (beyond the fare payer) is heavily dependent on Central Government's statutory and funding framework for transport. GWRC, with other regions, actively promotes public transport priority by working with MoT and NZTA on key aspects of the funding framework currently under review. This includes the GPS, NZTA's Investment Assessment Framework and Long Term Strategic View.

2.7 Location of GWRC Offices

2.7.1 Summary of key submission

Submission number 45

GWRC offices should be re-established in the CBD.

2.7.2 Officer comments

GWRC is in the process of reviewing its future accommodation requirements and will consider a wide range of factors, including location, as part of this process.