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

Hutt Valley Bus Review Update

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to document the consultation and market research undertaken to date on the Hutt Valley Bus Service Review.

2. Background

The Hutt Valley Bus Service Review includes the following list of services:

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

3. Consultation and Market Research

A vital part of the service review process is public consultation and market research. This is particularly important in the Hutt Valley given the complexity and extent of the review area. The review process to date has involved two key phases:

Phase 1: Primary Consultation

Phase 2: Secondary Consultation

4. Phase 1: Primary Consultation

As reported to Committee on the 23 August primary consultation was undertaken in May this year. The purpose of this phase is to collect a wide range of general comments on what the public like and don't like, and any suggestions they may have regarding ways in which the service can be improved. Primary consultation for the Hutt Valley Bus Service review included the following:

- Brochure delivered to every household with reply paid comment form
- Newspaper articles in the local press
- Letters to resident associations, schools, iwi and local business groups
- Discussions with bus operators
- Meetings with TLA Mayors, CEOs and relevant staff
- 12 Focus groups of local residents by market research company NFO
- Posters at bus stops, on buses, at libraries and community centres

Nearly 1900 submissions were received from the public by the close of submissions on 14 June.

Twelve local focus groups were conducted in the Hutt Valley, Eastbourne and Wainuiomata by the market research company NFO. Focus group participants were selected to represent both non-bus users and bus users covering a range of ages, gender, occupation and purpose of travel. The focus groups were enormously successful at exploring issues and perceptions of bus services and what is required to increase bus usage.

The public feedback and research told us that for many in the Hutt Valley the existing bus service wasn't living up to community expectations for a modern, convenient transport alternative.

Residents asked for more convenient services, with easier access to destinations such as Petone, better connections between buses and trains, better weekend services, later buses and improved ticketing. Proposals were developed with this feedback in mind.

5. Secondary Consultation – September 2002

Feedback received during the primary consultation phase was collated and used as the basis for detailed network analysis of the Hutt Valley. Proposals were then developed, in consultation with bus companies, before being circulated to affected residents for comment.

Secondary consultation for the Hutt Valley Bus Service Review, as approved by Committee on the 23 August, included the following components:

- Presentation of proposals to Upper Hutt City Council and Lower Hutt Council workshop 11 September
- Letters to resident associations, schools, iwi and local business groups
- Newsletter distributed to every household including a reply paid comment form
- Media releases and adverts in the local press

- Staffed community displays at Westfield Queensgate, Logan Plaza and Wainuiomata Library
- News item in October Elements
- Posters at bus stops, on buses, at libraries and community centres



Figure 1 - Front page of secondary consultation newsletter distributed to every Hutt Valley, Wainuiomata and Eastbourne household in September.

6. Response to the Secondary Consultation

By 6 November 701 people had taken the time to comment on the bus proposals.

Many residents were enthusiastic about the idea of more frequent and more direct bus services travelling through the valley to Petone, without the need to change buses in Lower Hutt.

*“Excellent especially where it does not have to terminate at Queensgate.”
Stokes Valley resident.*

Many elderly residents told us they can’t wait to see more of the new easy access buses without any steps to climb.

“Level entry for aged and disabled is a great move forward” Waiwhetu resident.

Eastbourne residents made many comments supporting the idea of an expanded ferry service.

*“Sounds sensible to work with ferries, but it must be at a sensible fare.”
Eastbourne resident.*

Stokes Valley residents were particularly positive about the proposed Valley Heights bus route.

“I really love the name Valley Heights. I think this is a great proposal. A lot of mothers live on this bus route and can't wait for the easy access low floor buses.” Stokes Valley Resident

Many submissions also made comments in favour of simpler and/or more integrated ticketing and fares.

The breakdown of responses by area is as follows:

Response by Area	Responses	Not Opposed	Opposed	Unstated
Lower Hutt	267	69%	7%	23%
Upper Hutt	123	65%	11%	24%
Wainuiomata	244	31%	58%	11%
Eastbourne	59	76%	0%	24%
Other	8	0%	25%	75%
Total	701	37%	19%	25%

The breakdown of responses by proposed bus routes is as follows:

Response by Proposed Route	Response	Not Opposed	Opposed	Unstated
100 Hutt Valley	103	77%	2%	21%
105 Te Marua	8	25%	50%	25%
110 Valley West	26	62%	15%	23%
111 Totara Park	4	75%	0%	25%
115 Pinehaven	10	60%	20%	20%
120 Stokes Valley	23	96%	0%	4%
121 Valley Heights	33	70%	15%	15%
130 Naenae	48	69%	8%	23%
145 Belmont	13	54%	15%	31%
150 Western Hills	47	79%	6%	15%
154 Korokoro	5	60%	0%	40%
160 Wainuiomata North	49	35%	45%	20%
162 Wainuiomata South	49	53%	39%	8%
165 Wainuiomata to Petone	143	21%	73%	6%
Ferry	31	90%	0%	10%

7. Issues Arising From Consultation - Wainuiomata

As already mentioned feedback received during consultation was generally positive, with just 7% of responses from Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt and Eastbourne opposing any changes to their bus services.

In Wainuiomata however 58% of submissions opposed proposed changes to local bus routes. The consultation process highlighted a specific area of public concern in Wainuiomata. The proposal to remove the bus service from Manutuke, Meremere and Mohaka Streets in Wainuiomata and running of a Petone service along Parkway Road accounted for the majority of the opposing submissions. Over 100 submissions alone were received from the 1500 residents of the Parkway area opposing proposed changes to their local bus route.

“This proposal is a backward step for Parkway. When we first moved here we had no service. Putting in the 62 route was the best thing for everyone in Parkway.” Parkway resident

Throughout the rest of Wainuiomata response was more balanced with many supporting the idea of a service to Petone and a more direct service from Homedale, not via Parkway.

“Thank you for the proposal to go Main Road way and not Parkway, much easier access to clubs and more importantly the doctors. Also what a good idea to be able to go straight to Petone.”

Overall while residents supported the idea of a service to Petone they did not want it to be at the expense of a direct service to Lower Hutt and Waterloo.

As a result of this feedback a further two bus options have been developed and are being sent to residents of Wainuiomata with an invitation to choose a preferred option.

The aim of these options is to address the concerns of the Parkway residents while also delivering an improved service to other areas of Wainuiomata. Submissions on the revised Wainuiomata options will be accepted until 29 November.

8. Issues Arising from Consultation - Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt and Eastbourne

Compared with the Parkway proposals in Wainuiomata, the issues raised in Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt and Eastbourne are relatively minor considering the number commenting on each. Most can be addressed by localised refinements to the proposals or through the existing taxi fare scheme. Further community consultation is not proposed.

The main local issues raised:

- **Copeland Street - Epuni**
8 submissions expressed concern at the removal of service from the Copeland Street area of Epuni (Route 33). Telephone conversations with affected residents revealed most are either already walking to High Street or will be able to use the proposed new Kelson route from bus stops on Oxford Terrace.
- **Gillespies Road - Upper Hutt**
6 submissions requested retention of bus service to Gillespies Road.
- **Cottle Block Area – Upper Hutt**
While some support a direct service to Lower Hutt others have expressed concern at the new proposed route no longer connecting with Trentham train station.
- **Te Marua**
Some parents from Gemstone Drive expressed concern that the proposed new services do not provide a service for children attending the Plateau School in Te Marua. The school has indicated around 8 students would be affected. The proposals are likely to be modified to retain a connection to the school at school times.
- **Belmont**
Some Belmont residents are not happy with the proposed combined Park Road and Hill Road bus service. Current and likely bus usage however make the existing services hard to justify. Combining the two routes into a single less direct

bus route, but with direct access to Lower Hutt and better train connections provides the only immediate alternative to not running the service at all.

- Fergusson Drive – Upper Hutt
Some concern has been expressed at the proposal to divert every second bus from Fergusson Drive through the Cottle Block area of Upper Hutt and the resulting lower half hourly frequency on Fergusson Drive.
- Riverside Drive - Waiwhetu
2 residents expressed opposition to the new proposed Valley Heights bus route running along Riverside Drive, which currently has no buses using it.

9. Next Steps

9.1 Wainuiomata

Revised bus proposals are being distributed to Wainuiomata residents for their feedback with submissions being accepted until 29 November 2002. Proposals will be finalised in December based on community feedback.

9.2 Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt

Proposals for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt were well received especially the proposals for more frequent services and through routing of services to Petone. Minor changes are being investigated where possible to accommodate submissions received. No further public consultation is required. However the community will need to be kept informed of the outcome of consultation carried out.

9.3 Eastbourne

Eastbourne feedback confirms the need to look further at the Harbour Ferry service. This will be the subject of a future report to Committee.

10. Recommendation

That the report be received.

Report prepared by:

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