

Wellington City Bus Review

Draft Consultation Plan

Introduction

This document sets out the draft Consultation Plan for the Final Consultation stage of the Wellington City Bus Review. This stage involves the consultation of the public on the network proposal developed during the Option Design stage. The feedback from this process will be used to inform the following Final Design stage.

Overview

This stage encompasses the following three tasks that are specified in the Terms of Reference:

- targeted consultation to test specific aspects of the network proposal;
- general public consultation on the proposal; and
- direct consultation and workshops with key stakeholders.

Each of these is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Targeted consultation

Targeted consultation will entail the use of focus groups to test specific aspects of the proposal prior to the main consultation commencing. This will provide an opportunity to discuss potentially contentious aspects of the proposals directly with users and allow adjustments to be made to the network proposal prior to confirmation, and offer a basis on which to assess the results of the subsequent general public consultation.

Targeted consultation will take place in mid-November 2011. Eight focus groups will be held over four nights and reported later in that month.

General public consultation

General public consultation is planned to run over a five week period from late January to early March 2012. The circa 50,000 households in the study area will be sent a leaflet providing a high-level summary of the network proposal, and invited to seek further information and provide feedback via the internet or a separate paper pamphlet/questionnaire.

We hope to make considerable use of the internet for this consultation process, since the changes proposed are complex and therefore difficult to communicate via the more traditional methods. This approach will allow more information to be put before the public than would otherwise be the case,

and enable individuals to consider what the proposal would mean for their current and future use of public transport. It will be particularly useful in allowing them to assess the changes in their local area. This is the first time that we have made the internet central to a service review consultation, but we have confidence in this approach will be successful, given that eighty percent of households have access to the internet¹.

We will also produce a separate pamphlet/questionnaire for those who are unable to access the internet. This will be available locally or on request from Greater Wellington, and provide similar information and matching questions to the internet.

Information events will be held at several locations throughout the study area, and provide the public with an opportunity to discuss the proposal with Greater Wellington staff, and pick up and complete the questionnaire with assistance.

This process will be supported by an extensive advertising programme, with radio and print advertising, posters on buses, and other marketing. Considerable effort will be put into ensuring that the public are aware of the consultation and know where to go to get more information or make a submission.

We expect a high level of response to this consultation. Over 3,200 responses were received to the initial issues and needs consultation in 2009, and consultations on specific service change proposals usually draw a greater response than issues and needs consultations.

Consultation with key stakeholders

Consultation with key stakeholders and stakeholder groups will be undertaken in parallel with general public consultation.

Wellington City Council and the bus operators are involved on an ongoing basis and won't be separately consulted through this process.

Residents' and progressive associations, secondary schools and major organisations with public transport interest (e.g. the district health board, airport and universities) will be contacted by letter and invited to make a submission on the proposal. A representative of each residents/progressive association will also be invited to a workshop session, which will be held early in the consultation period, where the network proposal will be fully discussed.

Separate workshops will be held with disability representatives and public transport interest groups, as representatives of users.

Reporting

The results of the consultation process and the conclusions drawn from it will be reported to the Economic Wellbeing Committee in April. It is anticipated that public feedback will require some amendments to the proposal to ensure public acceptability at this point.

¹ Statistics New Zealand 2009 ICT survey