

Report 14.458
Date 3 September 2014
File E/12/02/04

Committee Strategy and Policy Committee
Authors Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management
Nigel Corry, General Manager, Environment Management
Wayne Hastie, General Manager, Public Transport
Jane Davis, General Manager, Strategy and Community
Engagement
Chris Laidlow, General Manager, Water Supply

General Managers' report to the Strategy and Policy Committee 23 September 2014

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC's) activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility.

2. Catchment Management

2.1 Flood Protection

2.1.1 Te Kauru Floodplain Management Plan (FMP)

Consultation has started on the outcomes of Phase 1 of Te Kāuru FMP. Articles have been featured in the local Wairarapa newspapers and an open day in Masterton was held to discuss the findings. Most of the attention has been focused on the flood hazard information and there have been multiple questions about the effect of the flood hazard on property values and insurance. To date, most people appear happy with the responses to their questions.

Officers are now trying to move the focus on to Phase 2 which involves consideration of the options for mitigating the impacts of flooding.

2.1.2 Melling Bridge

Work is progressing with the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and Hutt City Council (HCC) on the development of a strategic case for replacing the Melling Bridge on the Hutt River. The work is being done as part of the development of an integrated concept design for the City Centre reach of the Hutt River that combines transportation, flood mitigation and 'making places' initiatives for Hutt City. The outcomes of the strategic business case will guide

the future direction of the project and are required before officers can progress with any community consultation.

2.1.3 Waikanae River Environmental Strategy

The Waikanae River Environmental Strategy review will receive final sign off by Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) on 11 September and can then proceed to publishing. This is a significant milestone as it has taken some time to finally get sign off from all parties involved in the Strategy.

2.1.4 Jim Cooke Park stopbank upgrade

Community consultation on the Jim Cooke Park stopbank upgrade is progressing. Officers expect to report on the consultation outcomes at the Council workshop on 14 October.

2.1.5 Infrastructure Strategy

Significant effort has been put into preparing the information required for the 30 year Infrastructure Strategy which is currently being prepared. The key effort has been around ensuring consistency of the information in the Asset Management Plan, the Long Term Plan and the Infrastructure Strategy, in preparation for Council's Long Term Plan workshops.

2.2 Biodiversity

2.2.1 Key Native Ecosystems (KNE) Programme

Feedback has been received from key stakeholders on the draft KNE plans for Waitohu Coast and Pakuratahi Forest. Seven further KNE plans for sites within regional parks are being finalised following stakeholder feedback.

Rat numbers rose to very high levels in the Wainuiomata and East Harbour Mainland Island areas, dramatically exceeding the operational target (5% or less). This is due to a beech and podocarp forest mast year in which seed production is high.

In response to rat tracking at 83% in the Wainuiomata Mainland Island, the rat poisoning programme was intensified during August and September. Bait stations will be stocked with faster-acting toxic bait and there will be a new presentation of the current toxin. 1080 bait will be laid on the ground by hand in early September away from any waterways, following pre-feeding with non-toxic bait by helicopter.

The mast event has had a different effect in the East Harbour Mainland Island. Though rat tracking did rise to 26%, it has subsequently come back down to 6%, meaning that intensified control at this site is no longer necessary.

The aerial 1080 operation at Kaitoke/Hutt Catchment was slightly delayed due to weather and the need to fill one of the water supply lakes. This meant that public notice advertisements and notification of adjoining landowners had to be repeated. The pre-feed was completed in late August so the operation can now commence when it is appropriate for the Water Supply Department.

Detailed planning of all ecological weed control for the 2014/15 year is progressing well. The majority of the work will be contracted out by Biosecurity, highlighting the need for skilled contractors who are able to work in sensitive ecological sites.

2.2.2 Collaborative Restoration Projects: Wairarapa Moana

Biodiversity staff (with the support of Enviroschools staff) facilitated a community planting event at Wairio Wetlands in July, which was run by Ducks Unlimited and involved a group from Kahutara and Martinborough Schools. The planting activity was followed by a nature study within the wetlands and the Martinborough School students also planted toetoe seedlings they had propagated as part of the Trees for Survival initiative.

Biodiversity staff also organised planting of over 900 trees at Lake Domain by the Catchment Management Group in July.

Biodiversity staff also supported and coordinated a Matariki event with Enviroschools and Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, which was held in Featherston in August. 60 students from Greytown, St Theresa's and Martinborough Schools participated.

2.2.3 Collaborative Restoration Projects: Porirua Harbour

The new Porirua Harbour and Catchment Joint Committee has been established. This consists of councillors from Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Wellington City Council (WCC) and Porirua City Council (PCC), and a representative of Te Rūnanga O Toa Rangātira. The inaugural meeting of the Joint Committee on 26 August was preceded by a fieldtrip to consolidate the Joint Committee's knowledge of projects undertaken to implement the Porirua Harbour and Catchment Strategy.

The Biodiversity Department has engaged the Marine Education Centre to deliver the Healthy Harbours Porirua Programme, an environmental programme tailored to the Porirua Catchment for local schools.

On behalf of the GWRC Biodiversity Working Group, staff have contributed to the review of two draft chapters for the 'refreshed' New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy. The process is being led by the Department of Conservation, with GWRC Biodiversity staff assisting to provide a local government perspective.

2.3 Biosecurity

2.3.1 Regional Pest Management Strategy

Rainbow skinks

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is developing a draft rainbow skink and invasive ant management plan for the Kapiti expressway. This is to address the threat where native plants will be brought into the region from locations where these species are present. This is a guideline and will not be an enforcement document.

Rooks

The extreme wind events last year destroyed nests and impacted on the annual aerial nest poisoning. What impact the failed breeding season will have on the overall rook population is unknown. Surveys are planned for 19 September, and all approvals and contracts have been prepared.

Boneseed

Annual inspections are well advanced at sites on the Wairarapa coast, in Kapiti and on Wellington's south coast. Suitable weather is needed before aerial contracts for south Wairarapa and south Wellington coastal escarpments can get underway. A small abseil contract is underway on Wellington's south coast, adjoining the aerial site. Officers are finding a significantly reduced number of adult plants and seedlings, except in the areas that have had significant soil disturbance caused by burning, building sites, tree removal or otherwise.

Rabbits

The overall rabbit population in the Wairarapa and Kapiti Coast remains relatively low, with a few rabbit prone areas showing moderate numbers. Day and night inspections in a number of rabbit prone properties across the Wairarapa struggled to find evidence of rabbits. Blood sampling for rabbit calicivirus (RCV) resistance has been completed, with 160 samples taken.

Control assistance

Public enquiries for control assistance are increasing coming into spring. Nightshooting on behalf of local authorities was undertaken around Wellington, Lower Hutt and Kapiti reserves. PF Olsen have requested some hare control in Puketiro Forest.

TbFree NZ

BioWorks has started work in Mt Bruce Waipoua, (18,478 hectares, detection and survey) and Whangaehu Eradication (11,475 hectares, output contract). Implementing control has been difficult in drystock areas due to lambing.

BioWorks has been awarded an 11,000 hectare aerial control operation to be planned in the 2014/15 year and completed in the 2015/16 year. The area extends along the Tararua Range bush pasture margin between Cross Creek and the Mangatarere Valley.

Prefeeding for the Project Aorangi aerial 1080 operation was carried out on 4 and 5 August, followed by the 1080 application on 26,400 hectares on 18 August and 2,700 hectares on 27 August. There are approximately 900 hectares still to be treated once stock has been removed.

2.4 Land Management

2.4.1 Forestry Cutting Rights

The cutting rights sale process is nearing completion with only the reconciliation of three partially harvested blocks to be agreed. Harvesting has continued in both Metro and Wairarapa forests, despite the fall in log prices in

May/June. In recent weeks the price has lifted by \$10/tonne which has recovered part of the \$40/tonne fall.

A new crew has started harvesting the 1989 block in the Wairarapa forests. This is one of the best blocks in Hiwinui. Yields and log quality are extremely good and are providing good returns despite the drop in prices. It is predicted that prices will rise again in the next quarter.

A review of the Woodpecker firewood sales in the Metro forest is currently underway. Members of the public have traditionally paid a small fee to access firewood in the weekends. There have been a number of issues with this community service over the last few years, with health and safety clearly the number one priority.

2.4.2 Akura Conservation Centre

The Centre has been operating since early June and has experienced a busy season. In particular, a large number of native plants have been sold. Riparian planting programmes associated with Wairarapa Moana and the Mangatarere catchment scheme have been major players in this regard.

The last 2 hectares of ground on the PK Trust land is being prepared for planting. This will complete the planting on 13 hectares of lease land carried out over a three year period. The first crop of poplar and willow poles from the 2012 planting will be available next year. Once fully operational, the total annual yield of poles from the entire 38 hectares of the nursery will be 36,000.

2.4.3 Farm Plans

The last of the pole and riparian planting will be completed by the end of September. This has been a particularly busy year with 27,400 poles and 55,000 native seedlings planted to date. The number of native plants is particularly significant and has occurred as a result of the Farm Environment Plan work in the Mangatarere catchment and the on-farm works programme associated with the Wairarapa Moana Freshstart for Freshwater Clean-up project.

Discussions with MPI have been successful in securing additional funding for the Wellington Regional Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI) Programme in 2014/15. A further round of funding is about to be announced and an application will be lodged in November for funding from 2015/16 – 2018/19. A farmer survey is currently being conducted to gain feedback from those who have participated since the Programme began in 2009. The survey will also include comments that will assist with structure of the new application.

3. Environment Management

3.1 Parks

A plan has been finalised and agreed with the NZTA and the licence holder Landcorp for the establishment of a new farm hub to be constructed at the Hill Road entrance to Belmont Regional Park. Timelines are tight for this work, with the woolshed, yards, outbuildings and fencing needing to be built by the

end of December 2014, to free up space for Transmission Gully Motorway enabling works. The new farm manager's house will be in place by the end of March 2015. To formally celebrate this new facility the Parks Department will be running an Open Day at Hill Road as part of the Great Outdoors Summer Events programme.

Two structures on the historic Rimutaka Railway formation require significant work over the summer. Drainage issues on the roof of the southern portal of the Mangaroa Tunnel require specialist engineering attention, while a new retaining structure will be needed to fix a large washout near the Pakuratahi Tunnel. Both of these projects will affect public access to the rail formation.

4. Public Transport

4.1 Response to public participation by Raumati Station Action Group

At the Council meeting on 27 August, the Raumati Station Action Group presented a report titled 'Kris Faafoi, M.P. - Report on Raumati Station Survey June 2014.' In the report and presentation the Raumati Station Action Group questioned the difference between their 'surveyed' 480 new users and the number of 17-20 new users which was generated by the patronage modelling performed using the Wellington Transport Strategy Model (WTSM) and the Wellington Passenger Transport Model (WPTM).

WTSM is used extensively by the NZTA for planning and funding purposes, and is subject to regular reviews and updates. WPTM was successfully used for the recent Public Transport Spine Study.

The 'surveyed' results presented by the Raumati Station Action Group and the WTSM/WPTM results do not compare 'apples with apples'.

Both WTSM and WPTM generate around 20 new peak-time users per day. These may not be all the same people, but on average 20 users will be new users per day; that is, not users of the rail network before the station was built. Whilst off-peak patronage has not explicitly been modelled, evidence from nearby Paraparaumu and Waikanae stations suggests that a maximum of additional 20 daily off-peak new user trips might be generated by a new station at Raumati.

The Kris Faafoi (KF) survey results simply state that 560 people in the households are current users of rail services and 480 may be new users if Raumati Station existed; that is, that they may use the station at some point. The survey questions do not generate a split of how often new users would use the station.

The KF survey then reports results of how often people in the households would likely use the new station. The KF survey reports that 458 would use the station 'four times plus' a week. This is less than the 560 current users. Conceivably, and somewhat logically, all of the 'four times plus' a week people are likely represented by current users. 582 reported users would use the station once a week or less and 382 would use the station once a month or less. It is very likely that the reported 480 new users are very infrequent users.

The KF survey then goes on to report household use of Raumati Station by 'peak' and 'off-peak'. 578 are reported as off-peak (or mainly off-peak). Again, no distinction is offered and it is discernible from the survey questions whether these are current users or new users. It is conceivable that most, if not all, of the new users are off-peak users.

Whilst peak-time users might be considered regular users (i.e. take the train most days during the week), a typical off-peak user would use the train far less frequently. Therefore, while a certain number of people might say that they'd consider using the new station during the off-peak, this is likely to translate into a relatively small number of total off-peak trips on a particular day in time.

In summary, from the survey form, methodology and reported results of the KF Raumati Station survey it is likely that most, if not all, of the reported 480 new users are very infrequent, off-peak users.

While not directly comparable, this conclusion is supported by the WTSM and the WPTM results of very low daily usage by new users.

Government funding for public transport is provided on the basis of decongesting roads during peak periods and funding must be spread and prioritised across the entire region.

Comparing the 2006 and 2013 Kapiti District census data, there are 300 more people catching the train, 243 more taking the car and 204 more working from home. The percentage catching the train is 2.7% higher than the rest of the Wellington region. The percentage taking the car has decreased by 0.6%, while the percentage taking the train has increased by 1.2%. This is consistent with the rail capital spend of over \$120 million over the last 7 years in the Kapiti district.

Apart from the very low number of daily peak new users, the proposed development of Raumati Station has significant and well documented cost, access, locational and operational challenges.

It is recommended that no further work is considered until the start of the next review of the Regional Rail Plan in approximately 3 years' time.

4.2 New Porirua carpark receives recognition from commuters

A very positive story entitled 'At last a carpark we can be proud of' ran in last week's *Kapi-Mana News*. The story was about the new park and ride facilities at Porirua Station, which is receiving great feedback from commuters who contacted the *Kapi-Mana News* to say how pleased they were. The purchase of the land from NZTA was a protracted process, but as soon as it was finalised officers worked quickly to transform the land into an attractive, secure, well lit space for 250 additional cars. Titahi Bay resident Paul Marlow told the *Kapi-Mana News* he was delighted, stating 'my wife who parks there every day hasn't been boxed in once. It's a fantastic win-win.'



Fig. 1. The new park and ride carpark at Porirua Station

4.3 Rail Monitoring Centre

The new Rail Monitoring Centre, which began operating in June this year, is already proving its worth with several trespassers and vandals arrested over the last few months.

Technology used at the Centre enables disturbances to the fences around the rail yards to trigger an alarm which focuses monitoring screens on that particular zoned area.

Monitoring staff can contact police immediately when a disturbance is detected and this has resulted in a number of arrests and thousands of dollars saved through not needing to pay for graffiti removal.

Arrangements are being made for media to visit the Centre soon to see how it works and to be made aware of the successful work being done.

4.4 Matangi 2 progress and Matangi 1 reliability

The Matangi 2 Project is progressing well, with production activities occurring to schedule. Hyundai-Rotem are aiming to ship the first units in early 2015.

The Matangi 1 software upgrade is largely complete, and the hardware upgrade has commenced. The first new autocoupler is expected to be installed on a Matangi 1 train before Christmas.

Matangi 1 reliability continues to exceed targets, and has an improving trend, often exceeding 40,000km between faults.



Fig. 2. The first Matangi 2 unit begins the outfitting phase at Hyundai-Rotem's Changwon factory in South Korea

4.5 GWRC rail projects chosen as finalists at New Zealand Engineering Awards

We are very proud and pleased to announce that we have been selected as finalists in 2 categories at the New Zealand Engineering Excellence Awards, for the following projects and award categories:

- Project & Product - Transportation Infrastructure
Matangi Electric Multiple Unit Project
- Engineering Practice Awards: Excellence in Community Engagement
Tawa Station Project

4.6 Update on Wairarapa line performance

There has been a significant improvement in on-time performance (OTP) on the Wairarapa line over the last six weeks as is demonstrated in the graph below:

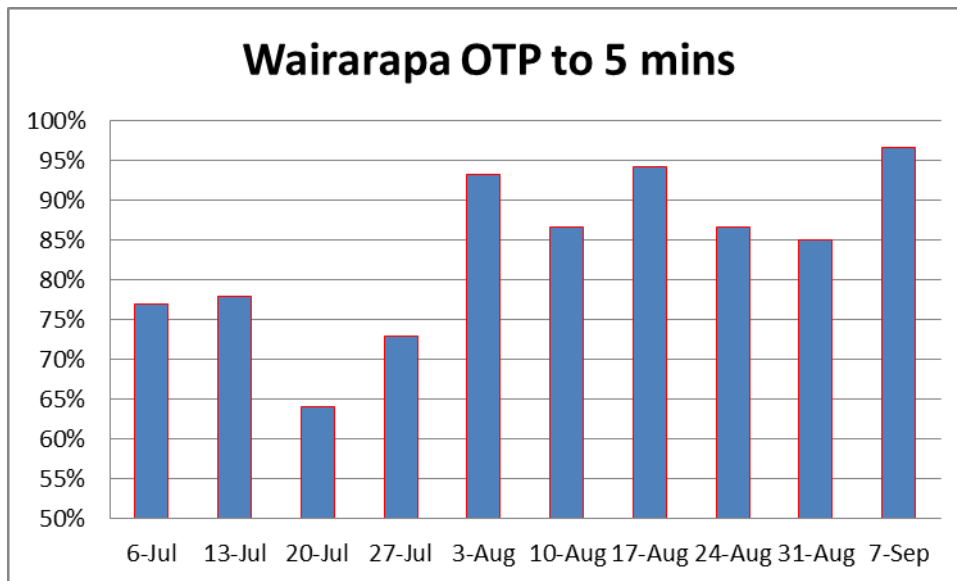


Fig. 3. On-time performance of the Wairarapa line

The total on-time performance figure for last year was 74%, while the last six weeks have seen an average of above 90%. Changes to priorities in the train paths have been made and this may have had an impact on running time. We will continue to monitor this performance and provide an update in the next report.

4.7 Wellington City bus network

The undertaking of further consultation was requested by the Annual Plan Hearings Committee (who concurrently heard submissions on the Regional Public Transport Plan), where local communities have identified concerns. These communities were Victoria University of Wellington (VUW), Khandallah and Churton Park.

VUW Route 18 service

Gravitas Research was commissioned by GWRC to survey the likely impacts for existing users of replacing the current Route 18 Campus Connection with a system of connecting services at hubs, as proposed in the new Wellington City bus network. Between 28 July and 6 August, 321 passengers on the Route 18 service were surveyed, capturing a representative range of travel times and trip purposes.

Just over half (53%) of passengers reported that the proposed change would have no adverse impact on them, either feeling that they would be better off (35%), or saying that the removal of the Route 18 service and its replacement with free connections at hubs wouldn't make a difference to them (18%). In contrast, just less than half (47%) of all Route 18 passengers felt that they would be worse off as a result of the proposed change.

Despite almost half feeling that they would be worse off, three-quarters of all passengers (74%) said that the change would not have an adverse effect on the frequency with which they travel by bus and 22% of passengers actually indicated that the change would encourage them to use buses more often, due

to the greater frequency of services and the availability of more routes (which offers greater flexibility).

Of the 26% of passengers who anticipate using buses less often as a result of the proposed change, only 13% expect to use a private vehicle more. 10% are likely to walk/run more as a result of the change, whilst 2% anticipate cycling more often. This compares with 9% of passengers reporting that they are likely to use a private vehicle less as a result of the change, while a further 2% anticipate using fewer taxis.

The proposed change would have only a limited impact on residential location decisions, with 13% of Route 18 passengers saying that the change may force them to move somewhere more accessible to public transport. In contrast, the proposed change would offer 27% of users greater freedom of choice of where to live, as they would not be constrained to suburbs on the current Route 18 service.

In conclusion, whilst perceptions of the personal impact of the removal of the Route 18 service are mixed, the impact on bus-use is likely to be minimal (around a quarter of passengers anticipate using buses less as a result of the change, with almost as many anticipating using the bus more). Of those that would use the bus less, almost half of the mode switching is likely to be to other sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling, rather than to private vehicles.

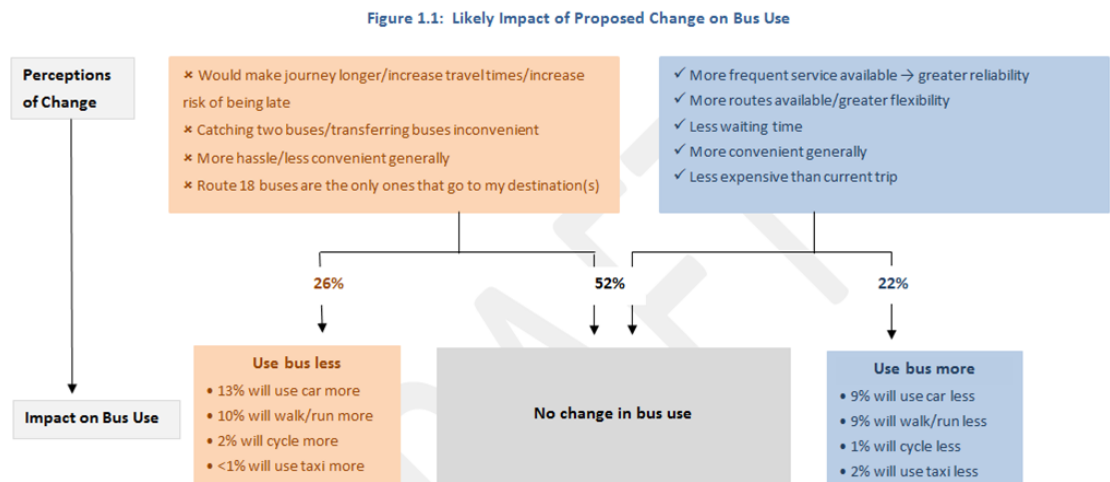


Fig. 4. Likely impact of proposed change to Route 18 service on bus use

Officers will be circulating and discussing the survey results with VUW and the Victoria University of Wellington Students Association (VUWSA) in order to consider what the next steps may be.

Khandallah

Two bus service workshops were held on 30 July and 6 August which were attended by around 30 volunteer representatives from the communities of Broadmeadows, Khandallah and Ngaio. Discussion at the first workshop focused on the issue that mattered most to the communities, which is a service

that is first and foremost reliable. It was also indicated that there is a preference for a direct service with minimum travel time.

In the second workshop, some bus route suggestions were discussed which would provide a more reliable service, but each had some different trade-offs in terms of bus route directness, coverage, frequency and local access. At the end of the night the representatives indicated their most and least favoured suggested options.

A focus on direct bus routes was most favoured overall, followed by coverage which extended all-day and all-week bus services to Broadmeadows. Options for local access and frequency were least favoured. However, it should be noted that the two options that provided all-day service to Broadmeadows collectively still received just under half of the 'likes' on the night, indicating the trade-off between having two all-day bus routes focussed on Khandallah/Ngaio versus one each for Khandallah/Ngaio and Khandallah/Broadmeadows may not be so clear cut.

An option developed on the night to provide all-day access to Broadmeadows, along with directness and local access, also emerged.

Officers are currently preparing a consultation brochure which includes all three options. The wider community of Khandallah, Ngaio and Broadmeadows will then be asked to rank the options and give their feedback and suggestions. Officers are working towards getting this consultation brochure out from early October, so that future bus routes can be finalised by the end of the year. Options for the timeline for introducing new bus routes will be considered once it is known which bus route option is preferred by the wider community.

Final bus timetables will be based on actual numbers boarding at each bus stop, to ensure sufficient capacity is provided at the times and locations where it is needed. Additional buses will be provided under all three options, particularly along Homebush Road at peak times where capacity issues are most acute for Broadmeadows and east Khandallah passengers. Currently, periods of up to 29 minutes exist between buses along Homebush Road in the morning (Routes 43 and 46) which places extra pressure on the more frequent Route 44. Addressing peak timetable issues in east Khandallah is therefore likely to benefit bus users in both the eastern and western areas of Khandallah.

Churton Park

Discussions with the Churton Park community are anticipated to begin at the end of October and run through November.

5. Strategy and Community Engagement

5.1 Regional Transport Planning

5.1.1 Petone to Grenada (P2G)

A summary of consultation responses was recently released by NZTA and can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/petone-grenada-link-road/docs/p2g-engagement-report-201408.pdf>

Further analysis of options is currently being undertaken using a suite of transport models including the WTSM. These options include consideration of:

- whether additional capacity is needed north of Tawa
- additional public transport measures
- travel demand management measures, including tolling; and
- inclusion of the Cross Valley Link to Seaview.

This analysis will inform the Chief Executives' Group, which is aiming to recommend a preferred option for the Regional Transport Committee's consideration before the end of this year.

5.1.2 Basin Reserve

The final decision on the Basin Bridge Proposal was released on 5 September by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and can be accessed at the following link:

http://www.epa.govt.nz/Resource-management/Basin_Bridge/Final_Report_and_Decision/Pages/default.aspx

The final decision has made only minor technical changes to the draft decision.

An appeal can be lodged in the High Court on any points of law by submitters and other specified parties within 15 working days of the notification of the final decision. It is not known if any party will lodge an appeal at this point in time. If there is an appeal, certainty about the final outcome would not be expected before the end of 2015 (assuming there is no further appeal to the Supreme Court).

The Regional Transport Committee agreed, at its meeting of 26 August, to establish a governance group comprising NZTA, WCC and GWRC, to oversee the planning and design of a suite of integrated transport projects, including the Basin Reserve, as well as other state highway projects, local road improvements and Bus Rapid Transit. This is aiming to accelerate work on these projects to enable them to be integrated into a solution for the Basin Reserve. Work is underway to draft and agree a Memorandum of Understanding for this work.

5.1.3 Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP)

At its meeting on 26 August the Regional Transport Committee agreed to pre-consultation on the draft RLTP. Pre-consultation is now underway and will close on 3 October. More information on this consultation is available on our website at <http://www.gw.govt.nz/RLTPlan/>.

The pre-consultation focuses on issues and challenges and will inform the development of the draft RLTP. Formal consultation on the draft RLTP will take place in January/February 2015.

6. Water Supply

6.1 Wellington Water Limited

The management team have been extremely busy preparing for the transfer to Wellington Water Limited (previously Capacity Infrastructure Services Limited). The management team has placed a high priority on communicating with staff and this has helped engender a good level of engagement in the process.

6.2 Stuart Macaskill Lakes

Refilling of Lake 2 has commenced, following some modifications to the plastic liner as recommended by the design engineers. The filling process will be slower than usual to allow for calibration of level sensors.

7. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report approved by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager,
Catchment Management

Report approved by:

Nigel Corry
General Manager,
Environment Management

Report approved by:

Wayne Hastie
General Manager, Public
Transport

Report approved by:

Jane Davis
General Manager,
Strategy and Community
Engagement

Report approved by:

Chris Laidlow
General Manager, Water
Supply