

“Greater transport, greater Wellington”

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

**COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - SUMMARY**

8 October 2015



# Public Transport Transformation Programme Communication & Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Overview

<b>Our aim:</b>	To celebrate our PT culture and support GWRC's initiatives to transform people's public transport experience
<b>Why?</b>	To grow public transport use
<b>How?</b>	By providing a better customer experience
<b>What?</b>	A programme of improvements to the Metlink public transport network to deliver faster, more frequent and reliable services

**Key message**  
**"We want to move even more people onto public transport to become a smarter, cleaner region and make greater Wellington an even greater place to live, work and play."**

GWRC Councillors & Staff	NZ Transport Agency/WCC/TAs	PT users/ratepayers	Special interest/community groups
3 key messages each month	Cultivate champions	Real Time Info milestone announcements	Emails to PTTTP database including media releases
Updates to Sustainable Transport Committee & Council workshops	Leverage Paul Swain/Andy Foster interchange	Community paper advertorial "Making greater Wellington greater"	GWRC website PTTTP pages +Joe's story DVD
Quarterly Leaders Forum briefings	Quarterly WCC briefings jointly fronted by GWRC/WCC/Transport Agency	Insert in rates bills	'Greater Say' online forum
Email from CE to staff	Targeted meetings with other TAs and key officers/influencers	Face of PT – real stories from PT users	Targeted briefings
Brown bag session on PTTTP overview	Presentations to CE's' Forum	PT Pride day/week	GWRC and Metlink Twitter/Facebook
Gwennie PTTTP content	Presentation to Regional Transport Committee/regional TAs	3D visual displays/Westpac Stadium electronic billboard	Feedback channel greatertransport@gw.govt.nz
Milestone morning teas	Amplify WCC's "The Wellington way"	Paint the bus	My Wellington WCC e-newsletter
Common email signature with graphic		Metlink website carousel promo	Christmas Parade float
Metlink Contact Centre briefing/updates		Media programme	

## 1. Purpose

This paper presents an outline of a communication and stakeholder engagement strategy that has been developed to support the Public Transport Transformation Programme (PTTP) being led by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). It provides a framework to facilitate integrated communication across all projects sitting under the PTTP umbrella. These include:

- A new bus network for Wellington City including Bus Rapid Transit
- Integrated and streamlined fares combined with electronic ticketing
- A new bus fleet including high capacity, low emission vehicles
- Introduction of a second fleet of new Matangi electric trains
- New performance-based partnering contracts to operate bus, train and ferry services under the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) mandated by the Government and NZ Transport Agency
- Ensuring GWRC is ready to implement and support these improvements effectively.

Together, these improvements will transform the customer experience, making public transport a more desirable travel choice.

As yet, the full transformation story has not been told publicly so projects may appear piecemeal and ill conceived. We want to position the programme and its component projects to showcase the great improvements public transport customers will experience as a result of GWRC's delivery, in collaboration with the Transport Agency, WCC and other TAs and key stakeholders.

A separate action plan with timetabled activities will be developed to partner this strategy.

## 2. Objectives

### 2.1 Business objectives

- To increase PT patronage and reduce public subsidies
- To provide a better PT customer experience
- To ensure an integrated approach to improving the Metlink public transport network
- To future-proof the network.

### 2.2 Communication objectives

- To celebrate Wellington Region's PT culture

- To build understanding of and support for GWRC's Public Transport Transformation Programme
- To raise awareness of the planned improvements being made to the Metlink public transport network and the benefits they will deliver
- To tell the transformation story so people can see how the component projects fit together to maximise benefits and value for money
- To manage expectations including progress towards sustainable transport solutions.

### **3. What success looks like**

- People understand the vision and shape of public transport in their region
- Trade-offs and decisions are understood
- Councillors, GWRC staff and staff of partner agencies act as advocates for what we are doing
- Customers respond positively to the improvements we are making to the Metlink public transport network
- Ratepayers and NZ Transport Agency believe their investment in the Metlink network provides value for money
- People in greater Wellington feel proud of our public transport culture.

### **4. Strategic communications approach**

The strategy recommends a dual-pronged communications approach:

1. Communicate the collective improvements being made to the Metlink public transport network to transform the customer experience – giving you a better ride.
2. At the same time, build pride in Wellington Region's outstanding public transport culture.

#### **4.1 Communication principles**

Principles guiding PTPP communication are:

- Tell a simple story
- Visualise the story where possible (to make info readily accessible)
- Put people first (take a citizen-centric perspective)
- Promote PT as the preferred travel choice – we're making it easier, simpler, faster
- Position PT as supporting what you do – work/life/play
- Articulate ratepayer value
- Engage well but less frequently (tell me what I need to know, when I need to know it).

## **5. Tactics**

### **5.1 Branding**

It's recommended that PTTP communications build the existing Metlink brand and make its connection with GWRC more visible. The PTTP can successfully leverage and amplify GWRC branding such as "making Greater Wellington even greater".

### **5.2 Tactics**

The strategy presents a broad range of tactics that can be implemented over the next 12 months and beyond, as resources allow. A sample follows.

### **5.3 Three key messages**

Each month, agree the top three PTTP key messages and email these to Councillors and other GWRC leaders so they can speak confidently and consistently about public transport developments.

### **5.4 Cultivate PT champions**

Paul Swain and Andy Foster are non-voting attendees at each other's transport committee meetings – GWRC's Sustainable Transport Committee and WCC's Transport and Urban Development Committee respectively. Use this interchange strategically and ensure they are kept well informed on PTTP initiatives so they can be effective advocates.

### **5.5 Targeted stakeholder briefings**

Continue a rolling programme of face to face briefings with key stakeholders to give them an overview of the PTTP so they understand the future vision for public transport in the region and how we plan to reach it.

### **5.6 The Face of PT**

Identify a range of current public transport users who reflect greater Wellington today – from hi tech executives, film industry high flyers, sports heroes, lifestyleers from the Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa, public servants, disabled users and students – and develop a short story for each featuring the part public transport plays in their life. Feature this core group across PTTP collateral and in editorial to "give PT a face" and use real people who current and future users can relate to. Build public pride in Wellington's PT culture through them.

### **5.7 Direct mail insert with rates bills**

Produce a flyer (A4) summarising the PTTTP improvements with shared GWRC/WCC branding to be posted out to ratepayers with regional rates bills. This will demonstrate a joined up approach to providing effective transport solutions to “future proof” our region. An electronic version can be produced for ratepayers who receive their bills electronically. This initiative can be extended to other regional TAs.

### **5.8 Paint the bus**

Signal the arrival of next generation low emission buses by inviting the next generation of users – primary school children – to paint their name on a “flagship” bus. Children would enter a draw for their name to be chosen. Their signatures would be scanned and professionally painted on the vehicle. This initiative could be a joint venture with Infratil (NZ Bus). The bus would be a focal point for community pride in public transport.

### **5.9 Hurricanes “training” session**

Mark the full Maitangi 2 fleet in operation with a special event where all of the Hurricanes take the train to the Westpac Stadium. Build publicity and a competition around this where PT users can win a seat on the train and get to ride with the team.

### **5.10 3D visual displays at PT touch points**

Develop a virtual PT “journey” that shows the seamless travel on the Metlink network that public transport users will be able to enjoy when all parts of the PTTTP are in place. Show how BRT will operate along the Golden Mile in concert with other road users (pedestrians, cyclists, cars) so people can see the shared space model in practice. This could be jointly produced and promoted by GWRC, WCC and the NZ Transport Agency to highlight cross-agency collaboration on Wellington Region’s PT transformation.

Virtual displays can be set up in areas with high PT traffic areas. A giant display could be screened before major sports games on the electronic billboard at Westpac Stadium where there will be a captive audience, many of whom will have travelled to the event by public transport.

### **5.11 RTI messaging**

Alert Metlink customers when a PTTTP milestone is reached via announcements on Real Time Information signs (general messages can run along the bottom of signs). RTI messages will automatically update the banner at the top of the new Metlink website home page and be relayed to Metlink smartphone apps, extending their reach to a broad customer base.

### **5.12 PT pride week – “greater coffee, greater smarts, greater arts, greater public transport, greater Wellington”**

Celebrate all that’s good about public transport in the Wellington Region and give people a view to the future state in a one week or one day festival. This could dovetail the NZ Festival of the Arts. PT Pride week/day could bring together a whole lot of different elements including information booths in Civic Square/Wellington railway station, free rides in a prototype double decker bus along the Golden Mile, PT themed

buskers, celebrity stunts, competitions for customers (eg, a mystery seat on each key route that receives a free travel prize). Invite communities to decorate a local bus shelter (any theme) and encourage community paper coverage/photos. The public could vote for the best.

Position public transport use as much a part of Wellington's distinct culture as great coffee, great smarts and great performing arts.

Promote a "like" public transport campaign on Facebook (enlist special interest groups to join the campaign).

### **5.13 Christmas parade float**

Introduce a "giving you a better ride" float to Wellington's Christmas parade, positioning public transport as a cool way to travel with the next generation, as well as grabbing parents' attention and demonstrating good corporate citizenship. GWRC staff could volunteer to design and build the float as a fun, team exercise. Cycling, walking advocacy groups could be invited to join in or cycle/walk alongside the float during the procession.

### **5.14 Greater Say – engagement HQ**

Use GWRC's online citizen panel to engage public transport users and ratepayers in the roll-out of PTPP projects and seek feedback on it, as required.

### **5.15 Media management**

Spokespersons for the PTPP will be Paul Swain (policy matters) and Wayne Hastie (operational matters). Subject matter experts for each project can provide specialist information.

### **5.16 Evaluation**

The effectiveness of PTPP communications and stakeholder engagement will be measured.