

Report 17.58
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Committee Sustainable Transport Committee

Authors Wayne Hastie, General Manager, Public Transport
Luke Troy, General Manager, Strategy

General Managers' report to the Sustainable Transport Committee meeting 21 March 2017

1. Purpose

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

- progress with key programmes
- progress towards key outcomes and targets

It is intended to read in conjunction with the Quarterly Performance Report.

It is intended that continuous improvements to the format and content of the report will be made to improve linkages to strategic priorities and outcomes.

2. Metlink Public Transport

2.1 PTOM

(a) Rail

Transdev Wellington was granted a full rail licence on 27 February 2017. Timetable changes to increase the frequency of off-peak services have been agreed for implementation in September 2017. These timetable changes necessitate changes in connecting bus timetables and we will use this opportunity to implement most PTOM bus network changes outside Wellington City ahead of the new PTOM contracts.

(b) Bus

The tender evaluation process continues to run well and to schedule.

Significant progress continues to be made with the new 2018 Wellington City bus network. Double decker clearance work in the CBD is now complete.

Design for interchanges is underway in association with Wellington City Council (WCC) and a community engagement plan is under development, with an early focus on the new large interchanges at Johnsonville and Kilbirnie. GWRC is heavily dependent on WCC input and assistance to develop and consult on options.

2.2 Fares and ticketing

Subsequent to contracting Snapper Services for provision of interim bus ticketing across the regional bus network from the point of PTOM contract commencement, it has also been agreed that Snapper will provide on-vehicle ticketing equipment ‘as a service’. User workshops have commenced with Snapper.

PT Fares Review

Council has signalled that no PT fare increase will be proposed for the 2017/18 financial year but that it does intend to introduce fare initiatives (developed through the PT Fares Review) in mid-2018 to align with bus contract commencement and the extension of Snapper to all regional Metlink buses. A paper setting out the outcomes of the PT Fares Review and timing for implementation of fare initiatives (and any associated fare increases) will be brought to the Committee for consideration in the near future.

2.3 Service planning and reviews

March is always a busy time of the year for public transport and we are receiving and reviewing evidence of some Wellington bus services at or near capacity. The most consistent instances occur on routes 1, 4, 7 and 14.

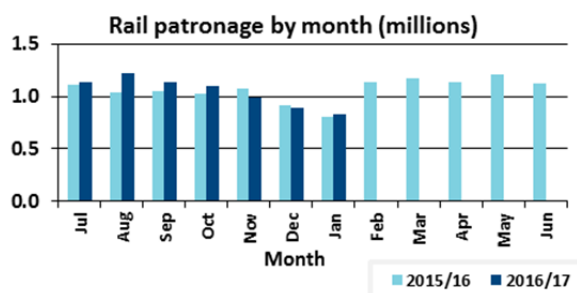
While we have no formal plans or budget for further capacity improvements prior to the new Wellington City Network (from July 2018), we are reviewing at capacity services urgently to see if there is anything we can do before a service change ‘freeze’ takes effect from October 2017.

Once the remaining investigations are complete, we will undertake detailed design and identify any additional costs. We are hopeful we can make effective changes within the existing budget.

2.4 Rail operations

2.4.1 Service performance

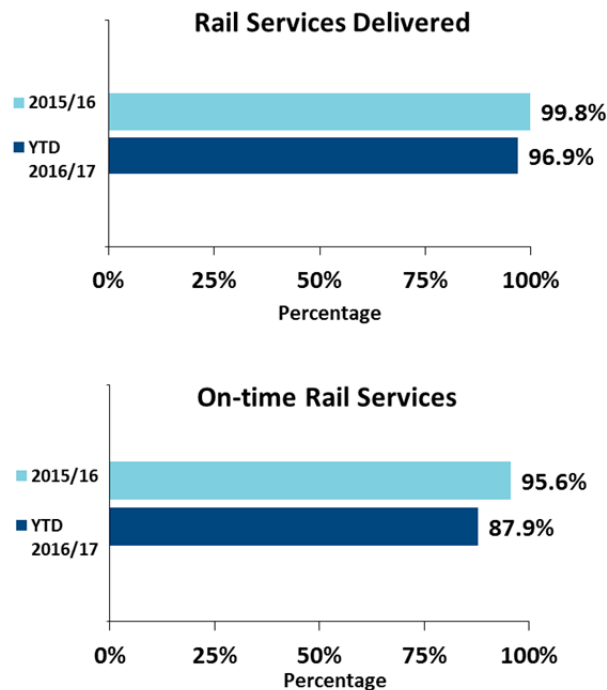
(a) Patronage – year to date January



Rail patronage by line (thousands)				
	YTD	YTD		%
	2015/16	2016/17	Change	Change
Kapiti	2,976.7	3,031.3	54.6	1.8%
Hutt Valley	2,910.0	3,084.5	174.5	6.0%
Johnsonville	722.1	786.0	64.0	8.9%
Wairarapa	411.2	419.2	8.0	1.9%
Total	7,020.0	7,321.0	301.0	4.3%

Patronage is slowly recovering from the drop seen after the November earthquake, with an overall increase in January of 2%, including a 7% increase on the Hutt Line.

(b) Punctuality and reliability – year to date January



Year-to-date on-time performance has been significantly affected by the earthquake and storms in November and the continuing speed restrictions in Tunnel 2 on the Kapiti Line. Overall network wide punctuality significantly improved in January and was 88.1% in January and overall year-to-date performance is 87.9%.

Reliability continues to improve and year to date reliability is now almost 97%.

(c) Wairarapa line peak punctuality – year-to-date

Punctuality on the Wairarapa line is still well below an acceptable performance level, currently at 68% on-time performance year to date and was 74% in January. The main cause of this is still speed restrictions due to maintenance work. We have agreed to contribute extra budgeted funding for work to be completed before June, which together with a KiwiRail contribution will see an extra \$1million targeted at reducing speed restrictions.

2.4.2 Asset management

(a) Rolling stock

The first Heavy Maintenance for the Matangi fleet is almost complete.

(b) Park and ride

Waikanae car park continues to be developed with few issues arising now that asbestos has been cleared. Two further areas were separated and work halted due to the discovery of bones and crockery, but these areas have now been cleared by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga and work continues. While we expect full completion of end of May, partial opening of some spaces earlier may be possible.

The Upper Hutt Goodshed road car park is now open providing a further 93 spaces for commuters who use Upper Hutt station. The car park includes full lighting and CCTV cameras.

Pomare car park extension will begin late March or early April and will provide an additional 35 off road parking spaces.

2.4.3 KiwiRail Network

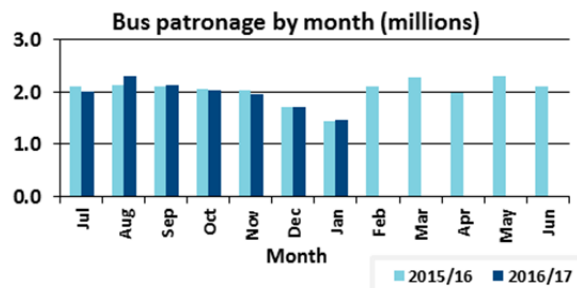
Work on the drain blockage in tunnel 2 on the Kapiti line has continued. A temporary drain has been installed which has enabled the speed restrictions on the way into Wellington to be lifted completely – passenger services can now run at line speed all the way through the tunnel. There is still a speed restriction on services heading out of Wellington, but this has now been reduced to a 400 metre section of line. KiwiRail are monitoring the situation.

As noted earlier in the report, we are currently working with Transdev and KiwiRail to introduce a new timetable in September, and as a consequence KiwiRail will not be able to continue daytime work while services are still running. They are planning to move to undertaking more night work, but are also considering daytime off-peak block of lines. A trial took place on the Johnsonville Line in January and was very successful, with KiwiRail able to do more work for less cost.

2.5 Bus and ferry operations

2.5.1 Service performance

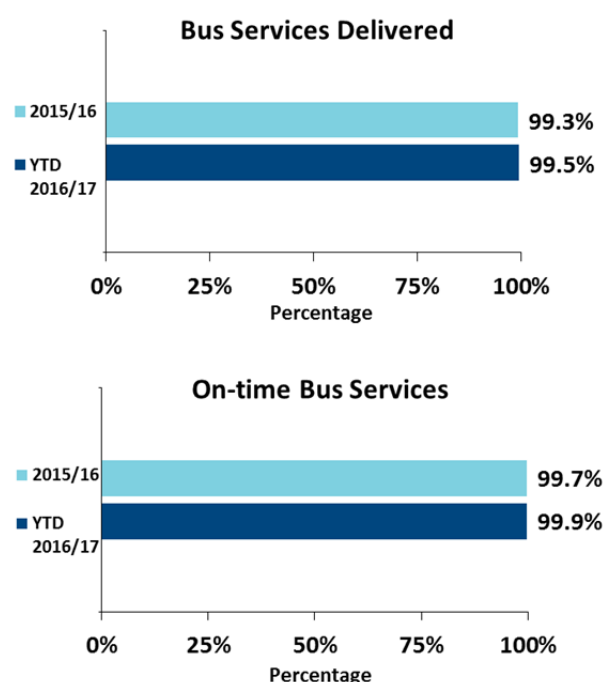
(a) Patronage – year to date January



Bus patronage by area (thousands)				
	YTD	YTD		%
	2015/16	2016/17	Change	Change
Wellington	9,440.1	9,466.5	26.4	0.3%
Hutt Valley	3,058.8	3,003.7	-55.1	-1.8%
Porirua	649.1	632.2	-16.9	-2.6%
Kapiti	367.4	360.6	-6.8	-1.8%
Wairarapa	88.4	96.9	8.5	9.7%
Total	13,603.9	13,560.0	-43.8	-0.3%

Although bus patronage is not materially different to the same period last year, anecdotally January was affected by the number of people still displaced from their normal place of work following the November 2016 earthquake.

(b) Punctuality and reliability– year to date January



Punctuality traditionally is good over the Christmas period with less pressure on the network. Longer term effects of the November 2016 earthquake have also not had a material effect with minor route deviations caused by the temporary closure of Molesworth Street in Wellington City, and Waterloo Road in Lower Hutt.

2.5.2 Service changes

Work continues to ensure a smooth transition to new timetables for Johnsonville / Churton Park and Karori. These new timetables previously reported on are designed to improve reliability and capacity on these routes, and are effective from 30 April 2017.

We have also introduced minor changes to some school services, to better meet this year’s demand. These schools include Aotea College and Our Lady of Kapiti (formerly St Patricks School).

Later in the term we will be introducing changes that improve service for Hutt Intermediate. We are also considering additional capacity for Wellington High School and an improved route design for a St Mary's College/Wellington Girls College/Queen Margaret's College shared service.

(a) Levin to Waikanae bus trial

The Levin to Waikanae bus trial commenced with its first service on 7 March 2017, attended by Cr Gaylor and Cr Keedwell (Chair of Horizons Regional Transport Committee). The bus departed with an almost full load of primarily SuperGold card customers. The service is operated by Uzabus and departs Levin at 9.30am every Tuesday and Thursday to connect (via Otaki and Manukau) to the 10.30am rail service from Waikanae. The return bus service departs Waikanae just prior to 3pm.

Progress on the trial will be reported to the Committee, initially after a 12 month period.

2.5.3 Special Events and Disruption Events

(a) Trolley Bus Network

During the week beginning 27 February we experienced delays to some trolley bus services due to problems within a substation affecting the power supply to a busy section of the trolley bus overhead network. The section affected was along Adelaide Road between the Basin Reserve and Newtown School. John Street was also affected. This directly affected trolley bus routes 1, 3, 10 and 11. Routes 2, 7 and 9 are run with the same buses that also go through Newtown so there was potential for a cascading delay to these services.

Various mitigations were put in place by both NZ Bus and Wellington Electricity (owners of the power supply network) and disruption was thankfully fairly minor. By Thursday morning a replacement part was installed in the substation and services were returned to normal.

(b) Petone Rotary Fair

The Petone Rotary Fair took place on Saturday, 18 February 2017. This event takes place around the same time every year and has become very popular, not only with residents of Petone itself, but for people all over the city. The fair takes place along Jackson Street and this main thoroughfare was closed to all traffic. Our bus services were diverted along the Esplanade in order to navigate this closure.

Overall the event went very well and there were no additional bus capacity requirements.

(c) Round the Bays Fun Run

The annual Round the Bays event took place this year on Sunday, 19 February. Additional capacity was provided for some key routes to help competitors to get to the event while minimising the effect for regular bus users. The key routes included services from Karori, Island Bay, Seatoun and Kingston.

The event always takes a lot of planning to coordinate the running of free shuttle buses (courtesy of NZ Bus) to transport competitors away from the

event in the afternoon. This year, the running of the after event shuttles went relatively smoothly however there were some delays getting buses back to Kilbirnie Park, from the City, for any additional trips due to traffic congestion. Competitors queueing for their buses were well looked after by the event organisers with bottles of water and energy bars.

(d) Newtown Fair

The Newtown Fair took place on Saturday, 5 March 2017. This year the fair again attracted over 80,000 people throughout the day, putting a huge amount of pressure on our bus network to and from the CBD.

A few challenges arose during the day, the most significant was overcrowding on the buses travelling through Newtown. As the fair takes place between 9am and 9pm it is difficult to predict the peaks in demand however we will review requirements again with the event organisers and bus operator prior to planning for next year. The other significant issue was the management of temporary bus stops where private cars were left parked in our designated spaces. We will be discussing a refined approach to managing these spaces with WCC.

(e) Other events

There have been several other roadworks events that have caused delays and diversions around the network. There is still ongoing water main maintenance on The Terrace, and a building project at Stokes Valley Shops that has not been completed. The effects of the November earthquakes on our services are beginning to lessen. Molesworth Street and parts of the area affected by the demolition of sections of the Queensgate complex have reopened.

Other recent special events and disruption events include:

- Guns & Roses Concert – Thursday, 2 February 2017
- Martinborough Fair – Saturday, 4 February and Saturday, 4 March 2017
- Island Bay Festival – Saturday, 11 February 2017
- Chinese New Year – Sunday, 12 February 2017
- Black Caps vs South Africa – Saturday, 25 February 2017

2.5.4 Asset management

(a) New Shelter Programme

We have 23 new shelters on the work programme this year and consultation is in progress on the majority. Two shelters have been removed from the list due to the sites being unsuitable for a shelter. Three shelters, not requiring any consultation, are in the build phase.

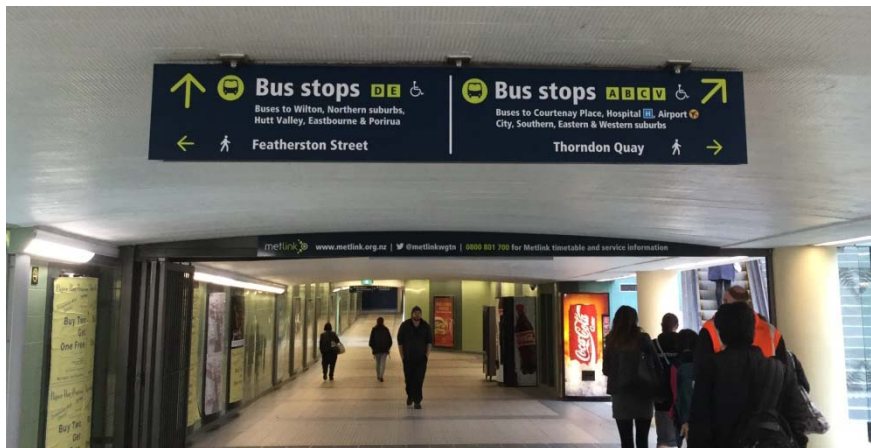
(b) Shelter Renewal Programme

There are 38 shelters on the renewal programme this year. So far 23 have been completed, one is under negotiation with Porirua City Council, five are in the build phase and eight remain outstanding.

(c) Signage

Installation of the Oriental Parade RTI sign is complete.

Updating and improvement of the Wellington Interchange wayfinding signage is also complete.





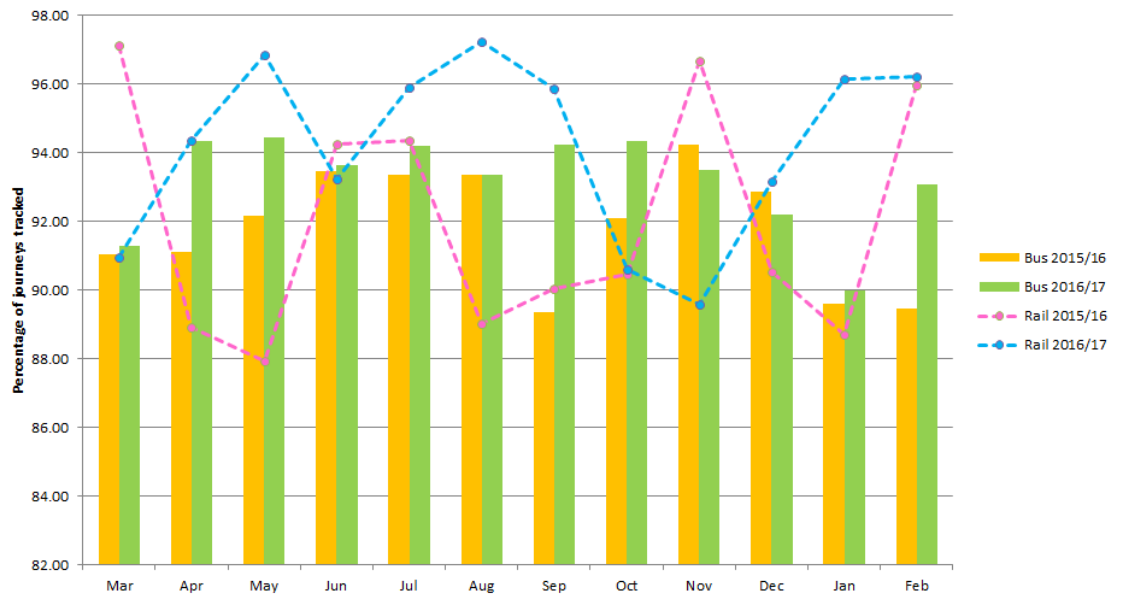
(d) Other activities

Over the summer we completed a full audit of our bus and ferry assets and are in the process of uploading this data to the asset management system. We will use this information to inform the updated Asset Management Plan which is now underway. We have also been working on a report for the integrated asset management of the major bus and rail interchange facilities which is nearing completion.

2.6 Metlink customer services and information

2.6.1 Printed timetable and publications

Real time tracking levels for February have improved by over 3% compared to 2016. There has been a slight increase in complaints related to inaccurate RTI information which we are currently looking into. The task of rewiring the tracking units on Mana buses so that they are permanently on is currently underway which should see tracking levels rise on these services.



2.6.2 Media and events

Another successful meet the train managers event was held 15 February. We are expecting the feedback from Transdev soon.

2.6.3 Digital – website, social media and app

(a) Website

Traffic to the Metlink website returned to more normal levels as we moved on from the holiday period. When compared with February 2016 we have 4% more people using the site, but visiting more frequently (+14%) and looking at more content (+10.5%).

Measure	Feb	January	
Sessions	713,170	628,255	+13.5%
Users	244,879	224,722	+9%
Pageviews	2,026,271	1,825,984	+11%
Comparison with Feb 16			
	Feb 17	Feb 16	
Sessions	713,170	623,288	+14%
Users	244,879	236,859	+4%
Pageviews	2,026,271	1,832,249	+10.5%

(b) Twitter

We are continuing to see good growth in Twitter followers, now at 9,692 and up by 117 in the last four weeks. We send out 284 tweets with 330k impressions, up 23% on the previous month. As our number of followers grow the reach of our tweets increases substantially.

We used a promoted tweet to let people know about the new Metlink Commuter App. This got a very good response with 13,000 impressions, 393 engagements and 109 click throughs to the website for more information:



(c) Metlink Commuter App

The Metlink Commuter App was launched six weeks ago and has had the following downloads:

Total downloads to date	8,024
iOS	3,799
Android	4,225

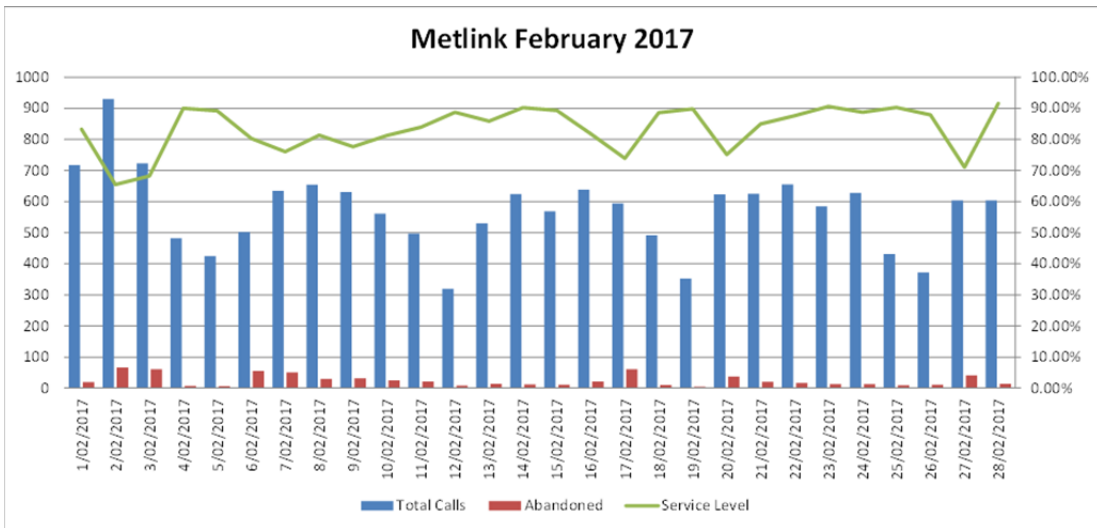
We continue to get mostly positive feedback.

2.6.4 Digital – Customer Contact Centre

(a) Inbound Calls

Key Performance Measures

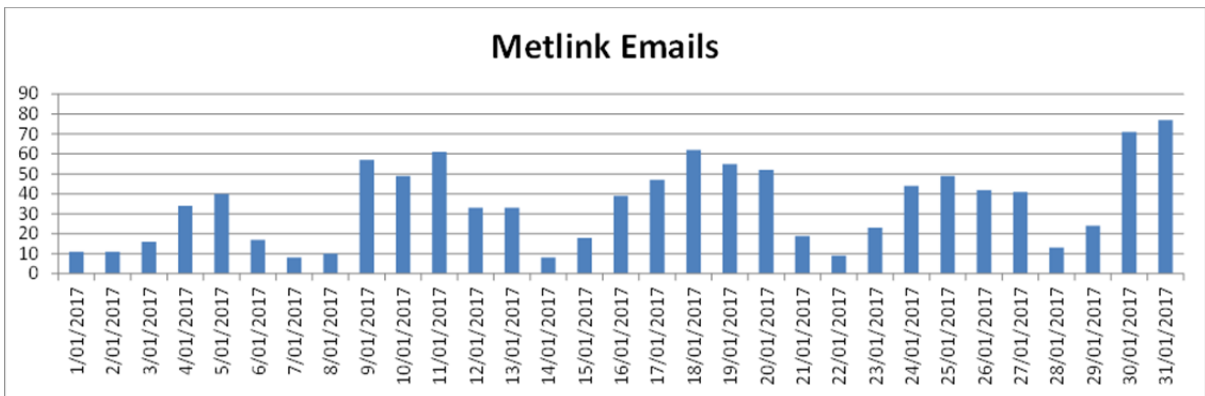
- Number of calls: 16,003 calls
- Service Level: 82% of calls answered within 20 secs.
- Abandonment rate: 4.27%.
- Average handling Time: 90 seconds



The Contact Centre team are now monitoring all GWRC and PT social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Neighbourly) which in conjunction with our traditional phone and email channels are providing a much richer view and oversight of how are customers are feeling across the region. Also, as part of PTOM, our Customer Resolution team are now monitoring and responding to all Metlink customer complaints that were previously handled by the various operators.

(b) Emails Received

Metlink received 1616 emails (a considerable increase of 543 more than January). Average speed to answer was 3 hours 15 minutes which is just under 30 minutes longer than last month.



2.7 Total Mobility

2.7.1 Service performance

Total Mobility usage for the 2016/17 period to date is up by 4% compared to the same period in 2015/16.

Number of active Total Mobility customers	9,858
Total trips taken (YTD)	185,523

2.7.2 Disability Transport Have A Go Day

Total Mobility was well represented at the recent 'Have A Go Day' hosted by disability organisation 'My Life My Way' at Melling Station.

The purpose of the event was to break down any perceived barriers and encourage disabled people to experience public transport in a safe environment that was not restricted by schedules or other patrons.

Three Hutt based Total Mobility Transport Operators participated with six vehicles used to display the different range of services available to Total Mobility customers. A Metlink train was also static at the station allowing people to experience boarding and alighting the train – both under normal passenger operation and emergency detrainment.

3. Regional Transport Planning

3.1 Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) / Ngauranga to Airport (N2A)

A progress report was released on 9 February and is available on the LGWM website www.getwellymoving.co.nz/. The project partners are currently preparing for a series of stakeholder/community workshops to assist with scenario development. These workshops will take place between 20 and 30 March and will be followed by a councillor workshop in April.

Communications are planned leading up to the workshops to explain how they fit in the overall context of the wider project and to introduce the need to consider trade-offs. Full public consultation is expected to take place in June-July.

3.2 Other projects

The draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018 was released by the Ministry of Transport on 22 February and submissions close on 31 March. A draft submission from GWRC is being prepared and is presented with a separate report to this STC meeting. An additional submission will be sent from the Regional Transport Committee, and the LGNZ Transport Special Interest Group will also consider the draft GPS at its forum in March.

Public consultation on the Wellington to Hutt Valley Walkway / Cycleway will be taking place in April with a series of open days to be held at various locations in Lower Hutt and Wellington City between 8 and 13 April.

4. Sustainable Transport

The national Aotearoa Bike Challenge, ended on 28 February with 1,138 organisations participating and 14,130 individuals logging their cycling trips. In the Wellington region 167 organisations participated with 1,894 individuals logging their cycling trips. This was a very successful result.

The active travel promotion for schools – Movin' March commenced on 1 March with 68 schools registering. This is an increase of 8 schools compared with last year's programme.

5. Responses to public participation – 14 February 2017

- **Lynn Sleath, spoke about the recent summer train replacement service on the Kapiti Line**

Response

KiwiRail carries out work on the train network as part of an essential maintenance programme. The rail works that take place at Christmas are planned well in advance and are generally for works that cannot take place at night or over the period of a weekend. For example this year the level crossing work that took place at Paekakariki was a 6 day job that could not have been carried out at any other time. The Christmas period is chosen because significantly less people travel over this time when compared to a normal working week (for example we might have 4,000 people travel on the Kapiti line on a weekday over the Christmas period compared to over 15,000 on a normal weekday).

We meet regularly with KiwiRail to ensure as few passengers are affected by planned maintenance work as possible, normally focussing on large events to ensure that trains are running on these days. This year, knowing that there were also roadworks on SH1 we worked with KiwiRail to change the usual Wellington to Waikanae full line shutdown to Waikanae to Porirua in order to reduce the impact on passengers as much as we could. We also introduced a new bus replacement timetable to help passengers plan their travel better than they had been able to do in the past. This timetable had longer journeys listed for the bus services and had some services leaving Waikanae earlier in order to meet the train at Porirua. We also had two or three buses running most services (both express and all stoppers) and a number of standby buses in place in case there were any problems. We made sure that this information was publicised nearly a month before Christmas to ensure that passengers were familiar with the new timetable.

However, there were still severe road delays, and although the services ran a lot better than they had in previous years, there were occasions when the road was at a complete standstill and all traffic was caught in this. We have used the performance over Christmas, to ensure that future train replacement services run a lot better. We made some slight changes for Wellington anniversary weekend, mainly improving communications between the bus and train services to ensure that connections were made wherever possible. With the service performance information that we have now we will ensure the bus timetable can better reflect the actual running times.

- **Murray Jaspers and Lance Prattley spoke about proposed changes to the Number 43 and 44 bus routes**

Response

Our primary source of patronage data for planning bus frequencies and bus capacities are the operators' bus ticketing systems. The ticketing systems provide us with a large amount of data and, in the case of Snapper (on Go Wellington services, which includes routes 43 and 44 to/from Khandallah), we are able to collect excellent information about where people get off as well as where they get on. When we feel additional information is needed to supplement the ticketing information we undertake physical observations and obtain data from other surveys, including an annual cordon count. Service levels (i.e. frequencies) for bus services are generally based on accommodating demand during the network's busiest months (February and March) rather than the quieter months such as December and January.

Decisions on future evening service frequencies to Khandallah have been based on patronage figures collected in March 2015. These indicate a halving of demand between the first and second services after 7pm. Average weekday figures for the number 43 service of those customers who alighted between the CBD and the last stop in Khandallah in March 2015 were 31.6 passengers on services that left the city at 7.22pm and 15.7 passengers on services that left half an hour later at 7.52pm. (Note that there are currently no evening services on route number 44.)

The service frequencies planned for Khandallah that will come into effect with the new bus network for Wellington city in mid-2018, are consistent with other suburbs of similar patronage demand.

We are regularly reviewing patronage figures and will adjust the proposed new timetables and bus sizes where necessary to ensure that the right capacity is provided at the right time when the new Wellington city bus network goes live in mid-2018.

- **Paul Bruce spoke about retaining the trolley buses**

Response

Council has decided to not renew the trolley bus contract when it reaches the end of its term on 30 June 2017, although some short extensions are possible to aid transition to a new fleet pre the PTOM contracts commencing in July 2018. GWRC's current bus procurement process is the first in New Zealand to incentivise operators to provide low emission bus fleets.

- **Michael Barnett spoke about the Let's Get Wellington Moving scenarios**

Response

Let's Get Wellington Moving is planning public consultation on a number of options later this year. Prior to that there will be stakeholder workshops in April to input to the development and assessment process.

6. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

7. Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report approved by:

Wayne Hastie
General Manager
Public Transport

Report approved by:

Luke Troy
General Manager
Strategy