

## 9. ADOPTION OF THE CHRISTCHURCH PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGY UPDATE

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy Update (draft text is attached) for adoption by the Council. This is an update of the strategy first produced jointly by the Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury in 1998, entitled 'Our Future - Our Choice'. A full review of the strategy will be undertaken in two-three years time. The final document will be similar in style and layout to the 1998 document and will be as widely distributed.

### BACKGROUND OF THE UPDATED STRATEGY

The document 'Our Future - Our Choice' published in 1998, stated that the strategy would have a shelf life of two-five years. Nearly five years has now passed and in mid 2002, the Council and Environment Canterbury commissioned Ian McChesney, a consultant passenger transport expert, to investigate the need and extent to which the strategy should be reviewed in its fifth year following publication. He presented his findings to the Council in the form of a seminar on 22 November 2002. His presentation detailed how the strategy came about, the successes of the strategy and also its shortcomings and new priorities that should form a basis for the future direction of the strategy. In summary, his findings were that the institutional capacity of both the Council and Environment Canterbury were not sufficiently resourced to carry out a full review of the strategy at this time but that in any case this was not required. What was required was a new updated document to reflect the current needs of passenger transport in Christchurch and to communicate these as effectively as the original document. Ian McChesney identified the key processes to be undertaken in achieving this goal by 30 June 2003 and these were supported by the Committee. Details of the work undertaken since that time are provided below.

### STRATEGY UPDATE WORK UNDERTAKEN SINCE NOVEMBER 2002

In line with the recommendations of Ian McChesney and approval by the Committee and Environment Canterbury, staff from both organisations adopted a framework for developing the update document. This involved:

- Agreeing on working relationships.  
A joint staff project team was established (a working group).
- Defining the scope and purpose of the review.  
It was confirmed that the review would be an update and would highlight the successes achieved so far and the work that remained to be done.
- Developing a project management plan and timeline.  
Action points and workstreams identified for completion and sign off by 30 June 2003.
- Engaging the political process.  
Determined key Environment Canterbury and Christchurch City Council meeting dates to work to.
- Organising technical workstreams.  
Produced a set of updated statistics, re-prioritised targets and improvements for the update document.
- Developing public consultation and engagement processes.  
The Passenger Transport Advisory Group was convened twice to feed into process.

- Developing key strategy communication messages and approaches.

Principles and commitments are retained, achievements reported, targets are restated and restructured (where appropriate) and short term priority improvements are listed.

### **SUCCESSSES OF THE CURRENT STRATEGY**

Since adoption of the first strategy in 1998, much has been achieved. Christchurch patronage growth is tracking well ahead of the forecasts made in 1998. Passenger trips made in 2002/03 are predicted to reach in excess of 14.5 million trips; 2.5 million trips more than predicted. Contributors to this success include:

- The introduction of six express routes.
- Faster ticketing with gold coin fares (Metrocard also starts in September 2003).
- Frequency increases to services.
- New super low floor buses, approaching 100% of all buses on the road.
- Doubling of the number of bus stop shelters and opening of the Bus Exchange.
- Real Time Information.
- Roll out of the friendly driver programme.
- Improved image and livery on buses and new system branding.
- Introduction of the cross suburban Orbiter service.
- Introduction of the Shuttle service with cleaner hybrid fuelled buses.
- Improved customer communications (timetables, newsletters, metroinfo).

### **CONTENT AND STYLE OF THE UPDATED STRATEGY**

The style and layout of the new document will be similar to the existing document, since it is an update. New photographs will be taken to insert alongside the text and form the cover of the strategy update (a picture of the Orbiter). The document opens by restating where the original strategy came from and includes latest figures on traffic growth and the latest twenty year predictions. The vision and goals of the strategy are restated as in the original document. The next section details what has been achieved since 1998, highlighting the growth in patronage and tables itemising specific achievements. Following this is a section that restates the high level objectives of the strategy with specific new short and long term targets and the performance to date against these. The final section of the update discusses the future and what needs to happen to achieve the remaining short term targets and the long term targets. Tables are provided detailing work items that each of the Councils will be working on until June 2006. Within this section are the predicted levels of investment for the next four years set against the benefits this investment will bring in terms of the reduced costs of crashes and road maintenance and the reduction in transport related pollution. The final pages discuss a 'do nothing' scenario and present a vision of congestion in 15 years time, detailing the likely congestion hotspots in and around the city if nothing is done to address the possible future.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The draft 2003/04 Annual Plan includes sufficient funding (both capital and operational) to meet the Council's commitments as outlined in the strategy update for years 2003/04 and 2004/05. Beyond that date there is insufficient capital funding and this will need to be addressed as part of the Asset Management Plan review later this year.

### **ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY ADOPTION PROCESS**

Being a joint strategy requires both Environment Canterbury and the Council to adopt the update. Initially the update is being reported to this Committee for comment and adoption. The draft strategy update will be presented to the Environment Canterbury Passenger Transport Workshop on 5 June 2003. A short period will then be available to incorporate any changes requested by the Environment Canterbury Workshop and the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee before the Christchurch City Council meeting on 26 June 2003 and the Environment Canterbury Council meeting on 17 June 2003, where it is intended that the update will be signed off.

## **BUS OPERATORS ROLE**

The Operators role in updating the strategy was considered essential to ensure an ongoing commitment to the aims of the strategy and also to take advantage of their obvious expertise in the industry and unique position at the customer interface. Representatives from both Redbus Ltd and Leopard Coachlines were members of the Passenger Transport Advisory Group and attended both workshops held to scope opinion and review draft proposals. Their involvement in implementing the updated strategy will be crucial to its success. Their involvement will include delivering reliability, good customer service, new vehicles, branding and image, the ongoing friendly driver programme and commenting on/feeding into bus priority proposals.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

To maintain the success and impetus of the current strategy will require significant commitment in terms of staff resources and co-operation, funding, community and political support. Many of the commonly perceived quick wins and much of the 'easy' work is complete. What remains are the fundamental and more challenging tasks to achieving a mature, sustainable, efficient and convenient public passenger transport system that will truly influence a change in travel habits.

## **SUMMARY**

This report has presented and discussed the content of the updated Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy. It will replace the existing strategy 'Our Future - Our Choice', which is now nearly five years old and considered in need of a 'refresh'. The need for an update (as opposed to a full review) was identified by consultant Ian McChesney, following his investigations of the current position of passenger transport in Christchurch and the resources available to both Councils to carry out a full review. The update document reflects the successes achieved as a result of the 1998 strategy, re-prioritises actions for the short and long term future and states the most recent statistics about Christchurch roads to put the priorities in context. The update shows in outline how the Councils propose to invest in Passenger Transport in the coming years and also commit to various independent and joint investigations that may lead to further innovations in Passenger Transport in the future. The document is a commentary on where we were, where we are and where we are going in order to maintain Christchurch's quality of life. A full review of the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy is due in two-three years time.

### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** That the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy Update be adopted by Council.

### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.