

## 7. NORTH EAST CHRISTCHURCH BUS SERVICE REVIEW

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee on the current consultation being carried out by Environment Canterbury on the north east bus services and to seek approval to convey the following views on these services and how these might be improved from July 2005.

A graphical representation of the existing routes and these proposals will be made available at the Committee meeting and staff from Environment Canterbury will also be in attendance.

### BACKGROUND

Environment Canterbury is currently undertaking a preliminary round of consultation for bus services in north east Christchurch. These are routes No 40 Wainoni, No 41 Horseshoe Lake, No 42 Avondale, No 43 Burwood, No 46 Shirley, No 60 Parklands and No 70 Queenspark. The contracts for these routes expire in July 2005 and new services must be ready to operate from that time. Routes No's 40, 41 and 60 are currently operated by Red Bus Ltd, the remainder by Leopard Coachlines. The deadline for this preliminary consultation is 14 November 2003.

### DISCUSSION OF ROUTES

#### No 40 Wainoni

The route currently links New Brighton to Christchurch Hospital, terminating at the Rolleston Avenue or 'Riverside' layover. The journey takes 29 minutes on its outbound trip and 31 minutes on its inbound trip. Journey times to and from the exchange are 22 minutes each way. Services operate every day of the week, with a 15 minute frequency until 5pm Monday to Friday, a 20-40 minute frequency on Saturdays and a 40 minute frequency on Sundays.

This is a core service connecting the north east to the city and as such is direct, relatively fast and frequent. There is little to recommend by way of improvements to the route, however, making the frequencies consistent throughout a given period or day will improve the legibility of the service and enable passengers to rely on catching a bus with minimal need to refer to timetables.

#### No 41 Horseshoe Lake

This mainly hourly Monday to Friday commuter service runs between Kingsford Street, Burwood, and the Polytechnic, via the bus exchange. The route is short and could feasibly be extended within the context of other route changes, to improve the overall directness of some of the north east services, such as the No 49 North Shore, No 60 Parklands and No 70 Queens Park. The No 41 service could be extended via Burwood Road and Mairehau Road to pick up the end of the No 70 Queenspark route at Queenspark Drive. This would provide a more direct service for Queenspark residents and with a more frequent and longer timetable would benefit existing Horseshoe Lake residents and other passengers along the route. (Changes to the North Shore, Parklands and Queenspark routes are discussed below within the context of this proposal).

#### No 42 Avondale

This route could benefit from some straightening to reduce the 37 minute journey time from end to end. This could be achieved by removal of the Palmers Road and Baker Street running, (replaced by a route change to the No 43 Burwood service - see below). Whilst the daytime half hourly frequencies are appropriate for this route, the morning and evening peak frequencies could benefit from a consistent 15 minute frequency to improve legibility of the service (this currently varies between 15 and 50 minutes). Saturday half hourly daytime services (currently hourly) and hourly evening services (currently every 1 hour 20 minutes) would also be preferred to improve connectivity with the city for leisure and recreation activities.

#### No 43 Burwood

The route could be changed as discussed above to maintain a service for Palmers Road and Baker Street residents. The morning peak weekday frequencies would benefit from a standard 15 minute service. Whilst an all day hourly service on Sundays is satisfactory, the hourly Saturday service could benefit from improved half hour frequency.

## **No 46 Shirley**

Whilst the route is a little circuitous, the journey time of 23 minutes is satisfactory. The Innes Road loop picks up many passengers destined for the Palms shopping mall and this should be retained for its community value. The bus frequencies are appropriate for this route, however, there are inconsistencies in the timetable that could be re-scheduled to improve legibility of the system based on a 15 minute weekday peak frequency.

## **49 North Shore**

A minor route change to cover changes to the Parklands route (discussed below). This would involve extending the Marine Parade section of the trip, running further along to Lonsdale Street and returning along Keyes Road to pick up the existing route at Bowhill Road.

This service is currently a Monday to Friday commuter service, but with the loss of the 60 Parklands service (discussed below), it would be necessary to extend the service to weekends and lengthen the timetable into the evenings. Otherwise, residents east of Bower Avenue and north of Lonsdale Street would have no evening or weekend services.

## **60 Parklands**

This is a long route with a 45 minute journey time and is an extremely indirect means of reaching New Brighton from the City and vice versa. On its outbound journey the route is heading primarily north and offers potential as a direct route to Bottle Lake Forest Park (continuing along Burwood Road rather than turning right into Mairehau Road). This should be investigated together with a review of the bikes on buses trial as this would clearly be a requirement of any service to this popular cycling destination (City Streets have made contact with Brisbane City Council who have successfully trialled bike racks on buses for over a year). If this were to take place, a commensurate improvement in frequency and weekend operation would be required. This route extension would also support current development taking place around Waitikiri Golf Club and Burwood Hospital.

Whilst the timetable is comprehensive in length and service frequency, it could benefit from standardised frequency in the key periods. The service should be timetabled to match the latest closing times of the park (10 pm).

## **70 Queenspark**

This route benefits from the changes to the No 41 service (noted above). This enables the loop at the end of this service to be removed, reducing the lengthy 37 minute journey time to just over 30 minutes. It is proposed that the route could terminate somewhere along the Waimairi Beach golf course (Bower Avenue). The timetable is already comprehensive both during the week and at weekends, and this should be retained.

## **CONCLUSION**

In general, the north east routes serve their communities well, with frequent services and timetables generally into the late evenings. Some of the routes are quite lengthy though and by some minor adjustment to routes (as discussed above) can be made more direct with minimal loss of coverage. New Brighton would lose the No 60 Parklands service, however, given the number of services already serving central New Brighton, this will hardly be noticed (there are currently over 50 bus departures in the morning peak each week day from the centre of New Brighton).

### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** The above preliminary feedback on north east bus services be conveyed to Environment Canterbury.

### **Chairman's**

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