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Corporate Plan Output: Transport Policy Advice	

The purpose of this report is to inform Councillors of progress on the central city bus terminus/interchange relocation project, the current work programme and to seek the establishment of a consultation group for the project.

Two seminars were held for Councillors in July this year, to discuss this issue and present a report received from public transport consultants, PPK Infrastructure and Environment. These seminars covered the history of the project, an alternative operating system for the bus system in the central city (the peripheral termini concept), contrasted off and on-street interchanges, and some alternative sites for both interchanges and termini. The PPK report can be provided to new Councillors on request (all last-term Councillors were distributed copies in July).

In summary, the peripheral termini concept involves all central city bus routes passing through a central interchange location (an intersection of routes) and travel on to a termini at the periphery of the central city area (located where the last central city passenger alights). This peripheral terminus is where the bus has its route timing point and where it starts its return journey. The proposal has the substantial advantage of requiring half or less as much central kerb space/area as the present operation and serves the central city catchments far better.

In considering the last report to this committee, the Council adopted the peripheral termini concept for the central bus terminus/interchange relocation study. The Council also resolved:

*“That it be recommended to the incoming Council that a working party be established to oversee the further progress of the future central city bus terminus/interchange relocation study and, in the meantime, staff be requested to undertake preparatory work on the project.”*

Also at that August Council meeting, Councillor Diana Shand from the Regional Council made submissions on behalf of the Regional Council, requesting inclusion in any special committees or sub-committees to oversee the study.

It should be noted that the Canterbury Regional Council (which is responsible for route planning) has similarly endorsed the peripheral termini concept for central city bus operations.

The nature of the working party was not defined by the Council meeting. Nevertheless, it should be established soon to oversee the progress of the study more closely than is possible through the regular committee structure.

A vital component of the success of adopting an acceptable (to most of the community) solution lies in the level and process of consultation undertaken to engage the public and central city community in contributing to the evaluation of the options.

There are a number of models for addressing the above two issues. However, the option recommended is the establishment of a sub-committee comprising four Councillors from the City Services Committee with an invitation for representation of two Councillors from the Regional Council (recognising the Regional Council request for involvement). A public advisory group should also be established as a first line of feedback from and interface to the community (this should include central city retailers, businesses, bus users, bus operators and wider community representation).

This model is recommended, as having satisfactorily operated on projects previously, and allows separate consideration of matters according to respective levels of decision making.

An outline of the work programme for the study is attached. There is preparatory work underway at this time, such as establishing criteria for interchange and peripheral termini layouts, updating a central city traffic model and collection of further base operational data. PPK have undertaken some further preparatory work, to develop the concept further. However, the time frame for decision making will depend very much upon the number of options assessed and the number of assessment/evaluation iterations and other information Councillors will request at the time.

The sub-committee should ratify the project brief that is currently being used for the study and initiate communication with the public advisory group. It should also identify the base assumptions of the study at this point, the options (or a maximum number) to assess, timetables, consultation processes and reporting schedules. For the purpose of seeking to consider the implications of this study in the 1999/2000 Annual Plan process, it is proposed that sufficient work should be completed by and reported to the February 1999 Council meeting to enable at least initial budgetary provision to be included. This is a tight timeframe and will require considerable commitment by most involved.

There are three CANRIDE bus service contracts that will be re-tendered next February by the Regional Council. It intends to operate these services as trials for the peripheral terminal concept. Setting up this trial and integration of planning is in hand between officers. This trial will not compromise the outcomes of this study and could provide useful input to the detailing and operation of any options.

An important aspect of the study is to confirm its objectives. The following are the principal objectives proposed for the study, which need confirmation by the Committee. Other subsidiary objectives will be confirmed with the sub-committee.

- To establish a concept plan (identifying, amongst other matters, a specific interchange and termini proposal) for provision of a central city bus interchange and peripheral termini.
- To seek community views on the concept plan from bus users, bus operators, the Regional Council, central city interests and the wider community.
- To minimise and mitigate the adverse effects of the concept plan
- To establish an integrated implementation plan with the Regional Council.

The Senior Transport Planner recommended:

1. That the Committee establishes a sub-committee to oversee the further progress of this study, comprising four members from City Services Committee and invites the Canterbury Regional Council to nominate two Councillors to be part of this sub-committee.
2. That the sub-committee firstly considers and recommends whether to pursue an off-street or on-street interchange, and secondly develops a brief for a project team to undertake further study of this issue (including a target reporting date for budgetary input to the 1999/2000 Annual Plan).
3. That a public advisory group be formed, including membership from inner city retailer and business representatives, other central city interests, bus operators and bus users to provide input and preliminary evaluations for the study.
4. That the principal objectives for the study be confirmed as those listed above.

The Chairman commented:

1. There are three levels upon which this matter needs to progress:
  - (a) The Council must investigate the best solutions for a bus interchange in the central city. The most important choice is of an on-street or off-street facility. In either case the choice of site is critical. This work is best carried out by a sub-committee of this Committee with direct input by both City Council and Regional Council staff. The decision on whether the interchange will be off-street is essentially a political one for the City Council and it is therefore appropriate that it is handled by a sub-committee of the City Services Committee.
  - (b) The political level contribution for the Regional Council is best handled, not by adding Regional Councillors to the sub-committee but by using the existing CCC/CRC Joint Committee. This is the sort of issue that the Joint Committee is for. The Regional Council staff, however, can and should give advice on technical matters direct to the sub-committee.
  - (c) There must also be consultation by the sub-committee with central city interests and bus operators and other interested parties. Therefore a public advisory group is proposed.
2. I therefore do not believe that any of the options given in the report are appropriate. They are really a hang-over from the previous Council when Committee terms of reference were different and there was a Central City Committee. It is now important for a more focused process to be adopted and for it to be clearly a City Council process but with a high degree of support from Regional Council staff, and with comprehensive consultation with Regional Council politicians through the Joint CCC/CRC Committee, and with interested parties through the public advisory group.

It was **resolved**:

1. That the Committee appoints a Bus Interchange Sub-Committee of Councillors O'Rourke (Chairman), Thompson, Manning and Wright to investigate options and to recommend one of them to the Council for a central city bus interchange.
2. That Canterbury Regional Council staff be invited to assist City Council staff in advising the sub-committee.
3. That political level discussions be held between City and Regional Councillors at the CCC/CRC Joint Committee.
4. That a public advisory group be formed, including membership from inner city retailer and business representatives, other central city interests, bus operators and bus users to provide input and preliminary evaluations for the study.

5. That the principal objectives for the study be confirmed as those listed in the officer's report.