

1. ROLLESTON AVENUE – BUS ISSUES

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Authors Peter Atkinson, DDI 371-1662 Dave Hinman, DDI 371-1804
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The purpose of the report was to indicate progress on the issues concerning the peripheral bus terminal on the corner of Rolleston Ave/Cashel Street (hospital terminal).

THE CURRENT SITUATION

There are some 14 services that terminate at the hospital terminal. This number of services results in some 367 bus movements to and from the locality. The buses travel from the bus exchange via Colombo Street, Gloucester Street to Rolleston Avenue exiting via Cashel Street, Montreal and then to Gloucester Street where the major stop north of the Square is located. Other bus stops have been provided in Gloucester Street near the new Art Gallery site east of Montreal Street and adjacent to Christs College day room east of Rolleston Ave. In November 2000, three bus stops in Rolleston Ave and one in Cashel Street were provided for the peripheral terminal. This number met with the demand of the system at that time with little adverse comment. In April however with the completion of the removal of buses from Cathedral Square, the number of stops were increased to include an additional stop in Cashel Street and three further (temporary) stops in Rolleston Ave.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

Because of the substantial increase in the number of buses and the extent of bus parking since the April changeover, there has been public concerns raised, from the Art Centre, Rainui House, YMCA, and a number of local residents. These were expressed at a meeting held in the Arts Centre at which both Councils and the bus operator (Red Bus) were represented. Council action to date subsequent to the Art Centre meeting and the matter being raised at the May meeting of the joint Committee, has included two meetings of the City Council's Bus Stops and Shelters Subcommittee and additional meetings involving the officers of both Councils and the operator.

It is possible that this problem at Rolleston Ave can be largely eliminated by a combination of through routing and changing Lichfield Street to two way and the relocation of the terminal to Oxford Terrace and Antigua Street, although this latter will disadvantage passengers board or alight north of Cathedral Square. This is the "cross" option of bus operation is different from the as the present "spine" option.

However these changes could take up to two years to implement and all parties acknowledge there is a need to find some interim solutions to reduce the impact of buses in this area now. There is a concern from both the operator and Environment Canterbury about changes to the bus system as these can have a significant impact on patronage levels.

Matters being considered include:

1. Rerouting buses to other peripheral termini.
2. Reducing the size of the existing terminal and creating a new terminal in Hereford Street.
3. Improving the consistency of travel times to reduce the number of stops required.

The options or combinations are presently being evaluated. Surveys are being conducted to determine the present usage pattern and the impact of these options. A point to note that since the service has been introduced number of bus patrons has been steadily increasing. Present indications are that this will continue as the services become more established. The results of these investigations will be considered by committees of both Councils and it is anticipated that a positive recommendation will be forthcoming in July.

Peter Atkinson in speaking to his report, detailed the current routes taken by buses going to and from the Rolleston Avenue bus stop and benefits of the new system to both people visiting the public hospital or travelling to the north side of Cathedral Square.

Dave Hinman referred to the importance of the timing points allowed in the bus routes and the compounding effects of any move to reroute some of the buses away from Gloucester Street.

Councillor Shand reminded members that the situation could get worse with vehicles travelling to either the Museum, the Arts Centre or new Art Gallery. The matter needed to be looked at as a whole, as at any time a change was made to a contract there is a cost of implementation. People generally did not like change, resulting in a fall-off of patronage.

As an alternative to matters in the report being considered, she suggested the introduction of the proposed bus priority system.

Councillor Harrow raised the question of bus contracts specifying the use of cleaner low sulphur diesel fuel. Councillor Shand said such changes could not be done immediately because of the impact of variations. However current contracts did specify the use of more environmentally friendly Euro 1 and 2 engines.

Mr Greg Campbell, Chief Executive of the Red Bus Company suggested there were three options:

1. Shifting the buses to another termini.
2. Moving the current bus stop into Hereford Street.
3. Increase the travel efficiency by having through routes implemented.
4. In relation to cleaner diesel he advised that the Red Bus fleet used Mobil Synergy fuel and the Euro 1 and 2 engines. Note the low sulphur diesel fuel was a product imported by BP.

- Recommendation:**
1. That a further report be brought to the July meeting of the Joint Committee detailing:
 - (i) How the new Art Gallery was factored into the bus routes.
 - (ii) The effect of the Christchurch Women's Hospital being combined into the Public Hospital site.
 - (iii) The effect of utilising cleaner diesel fuel.
 2. That the Joint Committee support the Christchurch City Council in accelerating the programme for investigating and expediting the Lichfield/Tuam Street one-way system swap.
 3. That the Council be asked to address the problem of tour buses parking in Rolleston Avenue before the tour season commencing in November.
 4. That the above recommendations be referred to the City Services Committee for its information and action as appropriate.

Councillor Wells abstained from voting on clause 3.