

## 7. CENTRAL CITY ELECTRIC SHUTTLE REVIEW

<b>Officer responsible</b> Transport & City Streets Manager	<b>Author</b> Robert Woods, DDI 941-8060
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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's adoption of changes proposed to the route and timetable of the central city electric shuttle service.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to address the final stage of the central city shuttle review which began in March 2004. Following adoption by the Council of a preferred option for public consultation in September, this report presents the largely positive views and preferences of the people consulted and recommends adoption of the changes.

The preferred option consulted on was developed on the basis of earlier open consultation carried out as part of the review, the purpose of which was to define any problems/issues with the service to establish the objectives of any improvements. Options were then developed and assessed, and a decision taken by the Council on the preferred option for public consultation. A large proportion of the responses to consultation on this preferred option are in favour of the changes.

If approved, the changes will be incorporated into a new contract for the service, which will be put out to open tender in December 2004 and January 2005. The new contract (and the changes) will commence 1 July 2005.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A decision to adopt these service changes will result in an approximate 12% increase in kilometres travelled each year. Since, however, the service is to be retendered and will be open to market forces, it is quite possible (but indeterminable at this stage) that the increase in the level of service will not necessarily result in a commensurate increase in the annual contract price (currently met through a sum allocated in the Transport and City Streets operational expenditure programme).

It is also possible that the tender may come in higher than expected, in which case the Council may either decide to amend the shuttle operational expenditure budget through absorbing the increase within existing City Streets operational budgets or request that staff negotiate further with the preferred tenderer for a level of service improvement within or closer to existing budgets.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

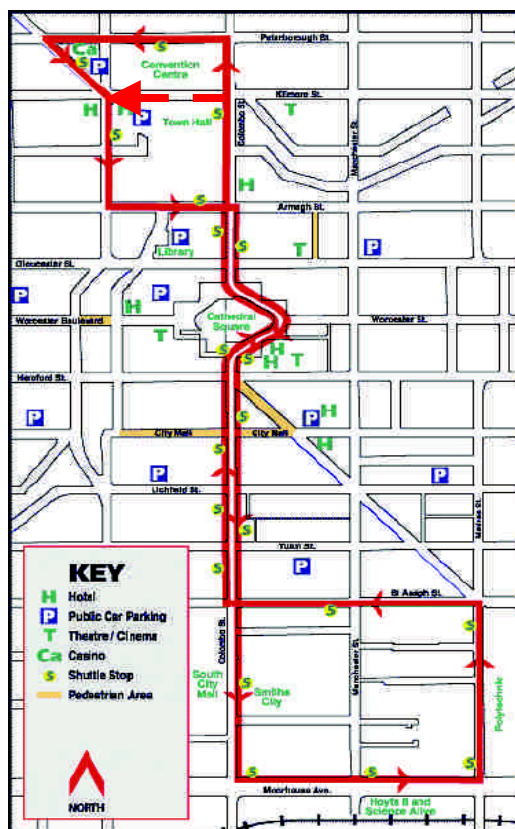
It is recommended that the following service changes be incorporated into a new contract for the free central city electric shuttle service, commencing on 1 July 2005:

1. That a contract for the central city electric shuttle be put out to open tender in December 2004/January 2005 for a commencement of 1/7/05 and an initial termination date of 1/7/08 with an option for 2 one year extensions.
2. That the following service changes be incorporated:
  - (i) That a single shuttle route be followed, that being the current night route via Peterborough Street and Victoria Street.
  - (ii) That the shuttle service commence at 7.30 am each weekday (except public holidays).
  - (iii) That the shuttle service run every 10 minutes all day each Friday (except public holidays).
  - (iv) That the shuttle service finish at 10.30 pm each Friday and Saturday (except public holidays).
  - (v) That the 10 minute frequency shuttle service on Sundays and public holidays be from 10 am to 5 pm, and the 15 minute frequency be from 5 pm to 8 pm.

3. That the Transport & City Streets Manager be given delegated authority to accept the tender as long as it is within budget.
4. Should the tender be higher than budget, the Transport & City Streets Manager should make a recommendation back to the Council.

## BACKGROUND

The current routes and timetable are shown below (the day route is shown dashed, via Kilmore Street, with the night route shown via Peterborough Street and Victoria Street):



	day route (10 minutes)	night route (15 minutes)
Mon - Thur	0800 - 1900	1900 - 2230
Fri	0800 - 2130	2130 - 0000
Sat	0900 - 2130	2130 - 0000 (10 minute frequency)
Sun & Public Holidays	1000 - 1800	1800 - 2000

In March 2004 a formal review of the service began in line with targets of the Public Passenger Transport Strategy to establish whether the service was still achieving its original objectives and whether any improvements could be made. The structure of the review was modelled on the decision making process outlined in the Local Government Act 2002 with activities aligned to each stage as follows:

Stage 1 – Defining problems and objectives (stage 1 and 2 LGA 2002). This stage undertook to establish stakeholder views on the service and gather relevant data on the service in terms of infrastructure standards and the performance of vehicles in meeting the objectives of the service. At this stage passenger volume data was also collected to establish the most popular destinations and any locations on the route that had low passenger movements. With this data the problems associated with the service were established.

Stage 2 – Identifying options (stage 3 LGA 2002). This stage took the results of stages 1 and 2 and used them to develop options for improving the service, and also made some initial recommendations for adoption. Decisions made at this stage included approval of a study into an east/west route to be undertaken separately, and also some minor improvements to bus stop infrastructure such as the provision of a new shelter on Moorhouse Avenue. A preferred option for changes to the service was developed and approved for public consultation by the Council in September 2004.

Stage 3 – Assess options (stage 4 and 5 LGA 2002). This stage has just been completed and is the subject of this report, in which the preferred option approved for public consultation has been consulted on. The assessment of the option is presented in this report as well as the outcomes of maintaining the status quo.

Stage 4 – Making the decision (stage 6 LGA 2002). Completion of this stage is the objective of this report.

Implementation, evaluation and monitoring will commence with the new contract on 1 July 2005. The contract will be for a period of three years with allowance for two further one year extensions, and during that time monitoring and evaluating of the service will be an ongoing process and will govern any renewal decisions made in the lead up to the end of the contract term.

## **THE OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the shuttle service, as outlined at the inception of the shuttle project in 1998 were:

- to operate a successful service which improves the viability of the central city.
- to actively promote environmentally friendly transport.
- the trial electric transport technology with a view to all bus services in Christchurch becoming electric in the long term.
- to promote public transport.
- to demonstrate the City Council's commitment to the use and development of clean, environmentally and user friendly transport.
- to address the transport needs of people within the central city.

The objectives of the review were to establish whether the service in its current form was still achieving these original objectives. In the course of defining the problems at stage 1 of the review, stakeholders were asked relevant questions to establish whether the objectives were being met. Other technical surveys were also undertaken to establish whether the service was successful in the use of electric vehicle technology and meeting the transport needs of people in the central city.

The key issues arising from the problem identification stage are summarised below and form the specific objectives that led to the development of options discussed in the next section.

- The environmentally friendly electric vehicles, design and colour scheme remained very popular and were a positive image for the city.
- The frequency of the service was acceptable, but that Friday evenings should be more frequent.
- The two different routes sometimes confuse passengers, particularly the elderly and people new to the city such as tourists. The previous Council requested that any options developed include a single route following the current night route to address this problem.
- Local people wanted an earlier weekday service for commuting.
- The surveys established that passenger numbers were low on Friday and Saturday after 10 pm, and reduced after 5 pm on Sundays.

## **THE OPTIONS**

Two options were developed to address the identified problems. These were assessed and then presented to the Council in September 2004 in order to approve a preferred option for further public consultation. The two options presented are outlined below:

**OPTION 1 – NIGHT ROUTE AT ALL TIMES  
EARLY WEEKDAY START, INCREASED FRIDAY FREQUENCY  
EARLY FRI/SAT FINISH, REDUCED SUNDAY 10 MINUTE FREQUENCY**

The potential advantages of this option were:

1. A single route improving service legibility and providing improved daytime access to casino and Victoria Street.
2. Earlier start on weekdays to assist commuters.
3. A 10 minute frequency all day Friday.

The potential disadvantages of this option were:

1. Service ends 10.30pm on Friday and Saturday nights.
2. One hour less of 10 minute frequency on Sunday.

The timetable for this option would have been:

Day	10 minute frequency	15 minute frequency
Monday to Thursday	7.30 am to 7 pm	7 pm to 10.30 pm
Friday	7.30 am to 10.30 pm	-
Saturday	8 am to 10.30 pm	-
Sunday and Bank Holidays	10 am to 5 pm	5 pm to 8 pm

This option would have met demand for early weekday services, and provided a consistent 10 minute frequency on Friday and Saturday, running the night route at all times. To mitigate some of the increased cost of providing these improvements, services could be stopped at 10.30 pm (currently midnight) on Fridays and Saturdays, when demand reduces significantly. Some cost increase would also be offset by reducing the Sunday time period of 10 minute frequency from 10 am to 6 pm to 10 am to 5 pm. This is another period in which demand is lower than at other times.

**OPTION 2 – NIGHT ROUTE AT ALL TIMES  
EARLY WEEKDAY START, EXISTING FRIDAY AND SATURDAY SERVICE  
REDUCED SUNDAY 10 MINUTE FREQUENCY**

The potential advantages of this option were:

- A single route improving service legibility and providing improved daytime access to casino and Victoria Street.
- Earlier start on weekdays to assist commuters.

The potential disadvantages of this option were:

- One hour less of 10 minute frequency on Sunday.
- Greater additional cost than option 1.

The timetable would have been:

Day	10 minute frequency	15 minute frequency
Monday to Thursday	7.30 am to 7 pm	7 pm to 10.30 pm
Friday	7.30 am to 9.30 pm	9.30 to midnight
Saturday	8 am to midnight	-
Sunday and Bank Holidays	10 am to 5 pm	5 pm to 8 pm

Again, this option would have met demand for early weekday services and maintain the service to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays at existing frequencies. Some cost increase owing to the increased route length and earlier weekday running could be offset by reducing the period of 10 minute frequency from 10 am to 6 pm to 10 am to 5 pm, when demand is lower. The benefit of this in terms of cost however would be minimal. Overall, the hours of operation would increase by 2.5 hours (half an hour earlier each weekday).

**THE PREFERRED OPTION**

On 23 September Council adopted Option 1 for public consultation and this proceeded in November 2004.

The advantages of this option were that a single route would improve service legibility whilst also providing improved daytime access to the Casino and Victoria Street. The option would also introduce an earlier start on weekdays to assist commuters and increase Friday evening frequency to every 10 minutes, in line with user requests.

The potential disadvantages of this option were that the service would end at 10.30pm on Friday and Saturday nights, and with one hour less of 10 minute frequency on Sundays. These measures were proposed as a means to mitigate any cost increase associated with the other improvements, whilst also optimising the service by reducing the times of operation when demand is low.

## ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS

### The Preferred Option

The following table assesses how the preferred option for changes to the shuttle service would impact upon current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic values.

Value	Benefits	Disbenefits
Social	Improved accessibility for central city workers getting to work in mornings and improved equity for workers on lower incomes. More frequent Friday evening service provides added convenience to users.	Reduced late night Friday and Saturday service may disadvantage central city visitors and workers after 10.30 pm
Cultural	Improved access to Peterborough Street entrance to convention centre.	Nominal reduced accessibility for access to convention centre and town hall.
Environmental	Reduced commuter traffic into the city centre in the am peak.	Reduced weekend late night service may encourage more car trips in the city at night at weekends.
Economic	Improvements will support an increase in central city vitality and consumer spending.	Nominal increase in cost to ratepayers possible.

- Extent to which community outcomes are achieved

The improvements to the service contributes to “A city with a sustainable and natural environment” by providing an improved service that is a more convenient alternative to private car movements in the central city. The improvements also contribute to “A prosperous city” by further promoting central city revitalisation. Pedestrian activity is also associated with shuttle trips in the central city and accordingly it promotes “A city of healthy and active people”. The shuttle also contributes to “A safe city” and “A cultural and fun city” by providing improved infrastructure and a service that compliments personal safety and mobility to enjoy arts, leisure and recreation around the central city.

- Impact on the Council’s capacity and responsibilities

The central city shuttle is a key contributor to ongoing long term efforts to revitalise the central city. These improvements are a modest readjustment of the existing service to maintain the contribution made and to align the service with the recently stated needs of users.

- Consistency with existing Council policies

These shuttle service improvements are consistent with the Council’s policy on public transport and its joint public transport strategy with Environment Canterbury. These documents outline the Council’s commitment to the goals, objectives, targets and programmes in the provision of the public transport fabric of Christchurch. The ongoing and improved provision of the service is also consistent with the Council’s leadership role in revitalisation of the central city.

- Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest

The following table summarises the results of the public consultation exercise undertaken to establish the views of people affected or interested in the proposal to change the shuttle service. These people comprised key central city stakeholders, properties along the route and users of the shuttle. Key central city stakeholders received a letter outlining the proposals, the review context, the way views could be received and the consultation deadline. The remaining stakeholders had the opportunity to respond via a reply paid leaflet (Attachment 1).

Responses to the leaflet were as follows :

	In favour of route change	In favour of earlier weekday start	In favour of 10 minute frequency on Friday	In favour of earlier finish on Friday and Saturday
Agree	81%	84%	92%	81%
Disagree	14%	8%	5%	8%
Don't know	5%	9%	3%	11%
Total responses	171	173	174	169

Responses from other stakeholders :

The casino responded in favour of the proposals.

Friends of the Botanic gardens responded in favour of the proposals, also noting their desire for an east/west service to the cultural precinct.

Age Concern expressed no specific view on the proposals, however strongly urged a service to the cultural precinct.

Central City Mayoral Forum views to be tabled at the meeting as they are not meeting to consider this matter until shortly prior to this Council meeting.

### **Maintain The Status Quo**

The following table assesses how maintaining the status quo would impact upon current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic values.

<b>Value</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Disbenefits</b>
Social	Equity of access retained for late night workers on Friday and Saturday.	Less access before 8 am for central city workers as compared to the preferred option.
Cultural	Doorstep access to town hall and convention centre main entrances.	None.
Environmental	May influence reduced car movements in the central city late on Fridays and Saturdays	Does nothing to influence reduced car movements in the central city before 8 am.
Economic	Maintains current level of contribution to central city revitalisation.	None.

- Extent to which community outcomes are achieved

The same community outcomes are achieved as the preferred option, but to a lesser degree.

- Impact on the Council's capacity and responsibilities

Maintaining the existing level of service would be inconsistent with the Council's responsibilities to encourage greater use public transport through improvements in levels of service.

- Consistency with existing Council policies

As above. The Council's public transport policy and its commitment to the vision and goals of the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy require that ongoing improvements to the public transport take place to encourage more trips by public transport.

- Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest

The stage 1 consultation indicated a high level of satisfaction with the status quo, with the exception of some areas for which the preferred option was designed to address. Other common comments made included bus stop standards (being addressed on an ongoing basis) and requests for a service to the cultural precinct and environs (being addressed by a study over the next 1-2 years).

### **Other Options**

No other options have been assessed as these were discarded at stage 2 of the review.

### **ATTACHMENTS AND DOCUMENTS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED**

Attachment 1 is a copy of the consultation leaflet circulated to all properties along the route and positioned on each shuttle bus for users to respond to.

Attachment 2 is a specimen copy of the letter sent to key central city stakeholders.

A consultation report of 650 users and central city stakeholders arising from the problem identification stage was previously circulated to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee. Also circulated at that stage were results of passenger boarding and alighting counts and journey time surveys in support of the development of the two options considered in stage 2 of the review.