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Corporate Plan Output: Elected Member Representation 3.1.text.10	

The purpose of this report is to outline the changes that are being proposed as part of the 1999/2000 review of the bus service. This review pertains to the following 13 routes:

<i>Route</i>	<i>Day of the Week</i>	<i>Operator</i>
New Brighton/Southshore (5)	Monday – Sunday	Redbus
Mall Link(6)	Monday – Friday	Redbus
New Brighton/Parklands (10)	Monday – Sunday	Redbus
Dallington (11)	Monday – Sunday	Redbus
Mairehau/Shirley (16)	Monday – Saturday	Redbus
St Albans (18)	Monday – Friday	Astro
North Beach (19)	Monday – Sunday	Redbus
Bromley (23)	Monday – Saturday	Redbus
Lyttelton (28)	Monday – Sunday	Leopard
New Brighton/Queenspark (29)	Monday – Sunday	Redbus
Lyttelton – Diamond Harbour Ferry Cruises		
Shorelink	Monday – Friday	Astro
Kainga/Brooklands	Monday – Friday	Gold Band

## INTRODUCTION

As noted above, 13 routes are being reviewed as part of the 1999/2000 service review process. Eleven of these routes fall within the north east portion of the city with the exception of the Lyttelton (28) and St Albans (18) services. These routes total approximately 37% of the CANRIDE system patronage and 33% of total trip numbers within the greater Christchurch.

In 1996 Canterbury Regional Council took a decision to approve the move towards the geographical tendering of routes. It was identified that significant benefits were to be had if those routes having a close geographical relationship were to be reviewed concurrently. This would present an opportunity to improve connectivity, coverage and service levels to an entire geographic area as opposed to individual routes, the result being a more efficient public transport system that better meets the needs of passengers.

The 1999/2000 service review is the first of its kind where all the routes within a geographic area are up for re-tender at the same time. This has resulted in the review becoming more of a network review for the north east of the city, rather than just a service review. As such, the review is a complex one, involving significant alterations to certain routes, and the combination of portions of other routes into new routes.

## **PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

It is important that the changes being proposed by this review process align closely with the policies outlined in the Canterbury Regional Council's Passenger Transport Strategy and encourage patronage growth from bus users and non-bus users.

The main milestones listed in the Passenger Transport Strategy and subsequently the Long Term Financial Strategy, which these improvements are intended to address, are:

- Increased frequency – a 20% service frequency increase over the 1999/2000 period
- A growth in patronage across Canride passenger transport services of at least 5% (from a 1997/98 baseline)
- Reduction in commuter public transport travel time on key corridors from 200% currently to 150% of car travel time (introduction of express and limited stop routes)
- New buses – the introduction of around 20 new Super Low Floor vehicles per year

## **CONSULTATION PROCESS**

A vital part of any service review process is public consultation. To date, for the 1999/2000 service review, the following forms of consultation have taken place:

- Newspaper articles in local papers and The Press
- Letters to Community Boards, Runanga, Schools, Residents Associations
- Discussions with operators
- Preliminary meetings with Christchurch City Council officers
- On-Bus survey of 3 of the routes, not previously surveyed (North Beach,19; Dallington,11; Lyttelton,28)
- Focus group work

Four focus groups (Lyttelton, Dallington, Burwood and Queenspark) have been held over the past couple of weeks. This is a new step that has been added to the consultation process for the 1999/2000 service review and was deemed necessary given the complexity of the review being undertaken. The purpose of these groups, each area specific, was threefold:

- to gain a better understanding of bus and non bus users' perceptions of Christchurch's passenger transport system and to identify what changes would be required for the system to better meet their needs;
- to identify which of the key attractions they desire access to for work, recreation and shopping purposes;
- to gauge their reactions to the proposed changes (albeit at a very preliminary level).

The focus groups were enormously successful and it has been recognised that this method of consultation is highly effective.

Once this report is finalised, the secondary consultation phase will be initiated. These proposals will be taken out to the community in a variety of forms for consultation. As many methods of reaching the public as possible will be used. One in particular that has not been used before, but is felt to have great potential, is the placing of displays and comments boxes at major malls, libraries and community centres. Regional Council staff will be on hand at designated times to interact with the public and elicit feedback on the proposals.

#### **FEEDBACK FROM PRIMARY CONSULTATION**

The following is a summary of the key themes that have arisen from the consultation process to date:

- fast, direct travel to the city during peaks (express trips desirable);
- increased frequency during peaks, preferably on a “walk out” basis (i.e. bus frequent enough that a timetable does not need to be consulted);
- improved access to key destinations including malls and areas of employment; access to key destinations without having to travel into the square (cross-suburban bus services);
- smaller, wheelchair accessible buses that have eye-catching, modern livery;
- additional late night services (particularly after midnight for which passengers would pay a higher fare);
- increased frequency of service over weekends;
- improved integration of services providing greater opportunity for transfers without a long wait between buses;
- real time information at major transfer points such as malls;
- integrated ticketing system such that all types of tickets can be used system wide;
- improved, easier access to timetable information;
- frequency, bus quality and punctuality are all equally important and cannot be traded off against one another.

Another frequently mentioned issue was that of the provision of adequate shelters and seating both along the route as well as at major transfer points. This issue will be discussed with the Christchurch City Council.

The feedback obtained during primary consultation and the focus groups has played a significant role in assisting the passenger services team identify those changes that have the greatest potential to improve patronage. The outcome is the proposal discussed in the following section.

#### **PROPOSAL**

A number of key principles underpin the proposed changes. These are:

- Fast, direct and frequent services to the city in the peaks.
- Better connectivity between key attractions (e.g. malls, recreation facilities)
- Improved inter-peak frequency.
- A “walk out” service wherever possible which means passengers know that there is a bus every 10 to 15 minutes and thus do not specifically need to consult a timetable.

- Improved weekend frequency.

Whilst each of the routes has been evaluated with these principles in mind, clearly it will not be possible (nor appropriate in some cases) to apply these principles equally across all routes. For this reason the network has been categorised as follows:

### **Primary Network**

These are the core routes of the system and form the backbone of the network. They offer a direct, frequent service to the city. As such, they will receive the highest frequency – preferably an all day frequency of 15 minutes, but this may be 10 minutes in the peaks. They are also strong candidates for express trips if the length of the route warrants it.

### **Secondary Network**

These routes provide vital connections between key attractions, but do not always offer the most direct route to the city. For them to be successful, they need to operate at an all day frequency of 20 – 30 minutes although this could increase to 15 minutes in the peaks.

### **Tertiary Network**

These are the lowest order in the system. They are generally indirect, but have broad coverage of the residential areas ensuring that as many people as possible have access to a bus service. They will operate at a less than half hourly daytime frequency.

**Recommendation:** That the Board comments on the current bus review be conveyed to the Canterbury Regional Council.

### **Chairperson's**

**Recommendation:** That a public meeting be held to receive feedback on the bus service review and that its recommendations be forwarded to the Canterbury Regional Council.