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Committee Council  
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## **Report on the Economic Wellbeing Committee meeting 12 September 2013**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Council of the Economic Wellbeing Committee meeting of 12 September 2013.

### **2. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **3. Report**

#### **3.1 General Managers' report to the Economic Wellbeing Committee on 12 September 2013**

The Committee commended officers for their active response to public participation at the previous Economic Wellbeing Committee meeting. It was noted that, in response to Alexia Pickering's requests, accessible symbols have now been added to Metlink signs in the subway and external signage should be up by next week.

The Committee discussed the purchase of additional land at Porirua Station from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for car parks. Once the area has been sealed and marked there will be space for 130 – 150 cars, an improvement on the capacity of the current, unmarked space.

The Committee discussed major projects scheduled for 2014; the Basin Reserve Bridge proposal and seismic strengthening of the Hataitai Bus Tunnel. Officers informed the Committee that they had good lead time on these projects which would enable them to make suitable arrangements to deal with any disruptions to the public transport network.

The Committee received an update on SE cars on the Wairarapa line. In response to feedback about the tighter seat pitch, maintenance has been scheduled to remove 20 seats from the carriages which will create more space. The cost of this maintenance will be covered by the current maintenance budget.

The Committee discussed the proposed repair of the overbridge at Trentham station, in light of recent feedback from elderly residents about the steep slope of the current bridge and the request for a level crossing over the railway tracks, similar to the one at Silverstream station. Residents are planning a public meeting at the Summerset retirement home, to which KiwiRail and Greater Wellington Regional Council representatives will be invited. The Committee discussed the safety problems associated with level crossings and suggested these concerns be conveyed by KiwiRail at the meeting.

The Committee acknowledged that the 95% punctuality figure for rail services in August applied to trains that arrived at and departed from Wellington Station on-time (within five minutes) only. Currently, punctuality at all stations along a route is not monitored by KiwiRail, but there will be opportunity for this to be improved with the new Metro Service Operator contract that will commence from July 2016. The imminent introduction of Real Time Information for rail services will assist in broader monitoring of punctuality as the measurement data and systems are developed over time.

The Committee acknowledged the work of officers involved in the Wellington Bus Review.

The Committee discussed the Basin Bridge proposal and the Board of Inquiry recommending process. The Minister of Transport announced in late 2010 that all applications for Roads of National Significance projects (RoNS) would be made to the Environmental Protection Authority to be heard by the Board of Inquiry. One benefit of the Board of Inquiry process is that it allows for a collaborative approach between GWRC, the Environmental Protection Authority and NZTA, which helps achieve a positive outcome from both a community and environmental perspective.

### **3.2 Year-end review for the period ending 30 June 2013**

The Committee discussed the Year-end review for the Public Transport Group. Noted highlights include the significant increase in overall satisfaction for train users (outlined in the 2013 Greater Wellington Public transport Satisfaction Monitor); the signing of a contract for the procurement of a further 35 2-car Matangi trains; the signing of an 85 year Track Access Agreement with KiwiRail; a 177% increase in visits to the mobile website and Council's agreement on a preferred fare structure for further consultation.

The Committee received an update on rail contracting, which is now part of the Public Transport Operating Model process. Officers are currently undertaking the preparatory work necessary to enable GWRC to go to the market to procure

a performance based metro rail operating and rolling stock maintenance services contract. The aim is to have the new contract in place before the current contract expires to ensure a seamless transition.

While discussing service performance and rail service reliability, the Committee acknowledged the Wairarapa line's decrease in on-time performance. KiwiRail struggled to maintain punctuality above 78%, a result of the 8-car consist which was introduced in November and the required changes and refuelling. This particular issue was mitigated through the introduction of the SE cars in July this year. Officers informed the Committee that they were aware of the punctuality issue and were discussing their concerns with KiwiRail.

On-time performance on the Hutt line was 96.2%, an improvement on last year and a result of the introduction of the Matangi trains.

Officers provided an update on the recent safety checks performed by the Commercial Vehicle Investigation unit and the NZTA, which caused disruption to Wellington City and Hutt Valley bus services. It was reiterated that it is the responsibility of the bus operators to organise replacement buses for those that fail the safety checks and are removed from service. However, GWRC officers have attended, at NZTA's invitation, a series of roadside inspections to better understand the checking process and will incorporate these learnings in to GWRC's own audit and compliance processes.

The Committee discussed the 85-year Wellington Network Agreement which secures access to the region's rail network, its maintenance and operation (such as signalling, traction, train control). This Agreement provides Council with the security that is necessary to continue making substantial capital investments in rolling stock and land based rail assets, as well as conducting network upgrades and entering into operator contracts.

The Committee also discussed the Year-end review for the Strategy and Community Engagement (SCEG) Group. SCEG worked on a series of major projects in the year ending 30 June 2013, including the Public Transport Spine Study and the Wellington Transport Models Project.

The Committee received an overview of the ID Community Profile Tool. This tool will present Census data in a way which is relevant to communities and provide a platform to quickly present 2013 Census data. Seven councils in the region have joined with GWRC to purchase the tool.

#### **4. Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

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