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Committee Passenger Transport
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Launch Of A New Network Of Buses In The Hutt Valley – Promotional Campaign

1. Purpose

To provide further details, following the Councillors' workshop on 12 August about the promotional campaign to support the launch of a new network of bus services in the Hutt Valley on 25 October.

2. Background

The promotional campaign was outlined at the workshop and officers were asked to:

- Ensure that there was consistent application of the arrow icon (see 3.1.1) and investigate using the arrow icon on a lime green background.
- Make it clear in the promotional material that some improvements would be phased in over time so as not to raise expectations too high.

3. The Promotional Campaign

In addition to promoting improvements to Hutt Valley bus services, we have also started to address issues that arose from the market research and that are prompting the introduction of a system identifier for public transport. For example, the need to improve information and perceptions of public transport, as well as creating greater visual integration.

3.1 The extent of the campaign

3.1.1 A distinctive new look

We have developed a new look, using market research, to provide a consistent visual link across all elements of the bus network in the Hutt Valley. This new look will be tested in the Hutt Valley and, if successful, will be applied across the region.

The new look includes the introduction of an arrow icon, which will be used with the message “your sign of things to come”. The icon will visually link improved services and help to integrate elements of the network, while the message will explain that further improvements can be expected over time. Initially the arrow will be used on all Hutt Valley printed material, the website and on the exterior of the new high frequency buses. This will then gradually be applied to other physical elements of the system, such as core route bus stops and signage. Eventually, this icon may be rolled out across the region as the symbol for public transport.

As requested by Councillors, we are looking at consistent application of the arrow and are currently testing a white arrow on a lime green background to ensure it has high visibility and can be seen from a distance at a bus stop.

3.1.2 A generic campaign message

The strong and clear message of “more buses, more places, more often” will be used on all promotional material.

3.1.3 Core route branding and message

A distinctive new livery has now been finalised for the 27 buses that will operate on the three new high frequency routes: the new 110, 120 and 130 bus routes (these operate from Stokes Valley, Naenae and Upper Hutt to Petone). The livery includes the use of the number of the route and arrow icon along the side of the bus, together with the message “going places every 15 minutes” to explain the distinguishing features of these services.

3.1.4 Supporting marketing and promotional activities

Other supporting activities include:

- New look timetables - we are expanding the distribution of timetables to all buses in the Hutt Valley and to dairies. We will provide stockists with window stickers to promote that they stock timetables.
- Colour coding of network maps, bus stops, bus blinds and timetables to make the network easier to understand.
- Improved signage at Waterloo and Queensgate.
- New look webpages.
- New style bus stop timetable strips.
- Timetable wallets for people to use to keep their timetables together and protect them from damage. A supply of these will be available as a promotional item.
- Free travel - we are investigating the possibility of offering free travel over Labour Weekend.

- Post campaign evaluation - we will test the success of the campaign to see whether we have achieved our objectives.

4. Communications

We will be undertaking the following communications activities:

- Newsletter – a newsletter will be delivered to all households in the Hutt Valley in early October. This will explain that some improvements, such as improvements to bus stops and signage, will be phased in over time.
- Advertising – there will be advertising on the exterior and interior of buses, as well as in the press and at bus stops and information centres in the Hutt Valley.
- Staff briefing – there will be a further briefing, close to the launch date, of Cityline bus drivers and Ridewell staff to explain and promote the changes.
- Promotions – we will have staff handing out information at interchanges pre and post launch.
- Media activities – we have a PR plan in place. This will include an article in Elements about the bus reviews.
- Direct mail – a letter and newsletter will be sent to community groups etc to explain the changes.

5. Recommendation

That this report be received.

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