

**Report** 05.12  
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**Committee** Passenger Transport Committee  
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## Wellington Transport Project

### 1. Purpose

To receive the government's decision on the Wellington Transport Project.

### 2. Significance of Decision

The matters in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Background

In May 2004 the Council's Chairperson and Chief Executive met the Minister of Transport and expressed a desire to work with the central government to find a way to bridge the funding gap between the transport needs of the region and what funding was currently available (correspondence between the parties was circulated to Councillors at that time).

After some preliminary work undertaken by officials from Government and the Council the Wellington Transport Project Group (WTPG) was established following agreement between Ministers and the Council. Government formally agreed the proposed process at a 28 July 2004 Cabinet meeting (a copy of the cabinet paper and a questions and answers document were circulated to Councillors at that time).

The WTPG consisted of key officials from:

Government – The offices of Ministers Hodgson and Cullen

Treasury

Ministry of Transport

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Councils – Dave Watson, Joe Hewitt from Greater Wellington

Andrew McKenzie from Wellington City

Peter Bailey from Porirua City

This group was augmented by officials from Transfund NZ, Ministry of Economic Development, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, Department of Internal Affairs, Mr David Stimpson, an independent contractor, was jointly commissioned to facilitate and co-ordinate the project.

The WTPG formally met every second Monday afternoon throughout the project. After a preliminary assessment of the issue a series of work streams were established to focus on specific areas. These work streams covered:

- Passenger transport
- Rooding
- Travel demand management
- Funding
- Social and economic

A member of the WTPG was assigned as chairperson for each of the work streams. Work stream membership was a mix of WTPG members and others seconded from government departments or Councils for their expertise.

Each of the workstreams reported to the WTPG on a regular basis and produced written reports (all of which are available).

Throughout the project it was agreed that there would be only two spokespeople, Michael Parker from the Minister of Transport's office and Dave Watson from Greater Wellington. Also that any media release would be approved by the WTPG. The sensitive nature of the project meant that no media release was made, except at the time of the release of the July cabinet paper.

In November 2004 the final report of the Wellington Transport Project was finalised. A copy of the final report was provided to Mayors and Chief Executives only in November on a strictly confidential basis. The Chairperson of the Council and Mayors subsequently met Minister Hodgson to provide him with some feedback from that group. A proposal for the WTPG to make a presentation on the project with a broad non specific summary of the findings was not proceeded with as it was felt that unless the findings could be spelt out in detail any presentation would be counter productive.

The final report was considered by the government through December 2004 and their decision announced on 27 January 2005 to all Councillors from the region. Mayors were given a preview of the announcement at a meeting held on 25 January 2005. The government's decision together with a media release were made publicly available on the 27 January (**attachment 1** is a copy of the cabinet paper adopted by the government on 25 January 2005).

#### **4. Comment**

The impact of the government's decision has been incorporated into the 2005/06 Annual Plan and the review of transport element of LTCCP through to 2013. This is only the start of what will be at least a ten year journey. We have to consider how to progress travel demand management within the region, how to make best use of the additional funding provided for strategic roading and passenger transport (other than rail) and consequently how to best manage transport funding through rates, fares and government funding over time to achieve our outcomes.

#### **5. Communications**

There is nothing additional to communicate.

#### **6. Recommendation**

*That the report be received.*

Report prepared by:

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**Attachment 1 – Copy of the Cabinet paper adopted by the government**