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Committee Council
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Report on the Regional Transport Committee meeting held on 23 June 2009

1. Purpose

To inform Council about the meeting of the Regional Transport Committee that took place on 23 June 2009.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision 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. Report

3.1 Public participation

Chris Horne spoke to the committee about the recently released Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding and the Regional Land Transport Programme.

3.2 New Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding

Nick Brown, from the Ministry of Transport, made a presentation to the committee on the new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS). The GPS is the second statement released under the 2008 Land Transport Management Amendment Act.

The new GPS is a significant change in policy direction for government transport investment. The committee was told that the priorities for the Government are:

- Economic growth and productivity

- Economic efficiency in the use of funds
- Economic stimulus
- Safety.

The GPS sets out the impacts the Government expects to be achieved from its transport funding. These are:

Impacts that contribute to economic growth and productivity

- *Improvements in the provision of infrastructure and services that enhance transport efficiency and lower the cost of transportation through:*
 - *improvements in journey time reliability*
 - *easing of severe congestion*
 - *more efficient freight supply chains*
- *Better use of existing transport capacity.*
- *Better access to markets, employment and areas that contribute to economic growth.*
- *A secure and resilient transport network.*

Other impacts

- *Reductions in deaths and serious injuries as a result of road crashes.*
- *More transport choices, particularly for those with limited access to a car where appropriate.*
- *Reductions in adverse environmental effects from land transport.*
- *Contributions to positive health outcomes.*

Mr Brown outlined the funding levels the Government is to make available for different transport activities through the GPS. Nationally, state highway investment has increased to approximately \$10.7 billion over the next ten years (around a third of the total fund over that period). Indicative allocations for the other activities (including public transport) has increased over previous expenditure levels, but generally at a lower level than provided for in the previous GPS. The funding of rail infrastructure improvements is signalled in the GPS to come from Crown funds, outside the National Land Transport Fund.

The GPS includes a list of seven “Roads of National Significance” (RoNS) including “*Wellington Northern Corridor (Levin to Wellington) – State Highway 1*”. The GPS emphasises the importance of improving the RoNS quickly. The committee was told that the Government will be focussing on improving these routes as a priority over the short term.

Dr Hume, the New Zealand Transport Agency’s representative on the committee, talked to the committee about how the Agency will implement the

GPS through its funding decisions. A draft set of guidelines has been prepared to assist the Agency. She confirmed projects that benefit a RoNS will be given high funding priority. In response to this some committee members expressed concern about funding support for projects on the other strategic roads in the region (especially SH2, including the Rimutaka Road) in the short to medium term. The committee was advised by Dr Hume that funding for these projects is now much less certain.

4. Regional Land Transport Programme

The committee considered a report from the Land Transport Programme (RLTP) Hearings Subcommittee on changes to the proposed programme. A proposed RLTP was prepared by the committee and consulted on during March/April.

The recommended changes were agreed by the committee. A final RLTP must be approved by the Regional Council, in accordance with the Land Transport Management Amendment Act. A separate report from the Regional Transport Committee recommended approval of the RLTP is on the Council's agenda.

Prior to its debate on the final RLTP the committee received a presentation from Research NZ. Research NZ was commissioned to carry out a survey of residents on the proposed RLTP during the consultation period. The survey findings showed overall support for the proposed programme. Of the major new projects included in the programme, the highest overall priority ratings were for Rail Scenario 1 and the Region-wide Bus Service Improvements. The projects that received the lowest ratings were the Westchester to Glenside link, the Masterton Eastern Bypass and the Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades.

The Chair acknowledged the efforts of the Hearing Subcommittee and of the officers involved with the RLTP process.

5. Road safety advocacy matters

In response to the region's deteriorating road safety environment (statistics on this were presented to the committee in April) officers presented a report on possible initiatives to be advocated to central government to improve road safety. The recommendations came from work undertaken by the region's Transport Officers' Technical Working Group.

The Ministry of Transport has also recently released a discussion document entitled "*Proposals for the 2020 Road Safety Strategy*". David Eyre from the Ministry provided a briefing to the committee on the Ministry's work. He confirmed that the feedback from the committee on options to improve road safety would be considered as the Ministry further develops the national strategy.

6. Agency report on implementing the Regional Land Transport Strategy

The committee received the quarterly monitoring report on activities to implement the Regional Land Transport Strategy. No specific issues were highlighted.

7. Unconfirmed minutes

The unconfirmed minutes of the committee meeting are in **Attachment 1**.

8. Recommendations

That the Council:

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

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Unconfirmed Public Minutes