



**greater WELLINGTON**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Pane Matua Taiao

If calling please ask for: Democratic Services

29 September 2017

## **Sustainable Transport Committee**

Order Paper for the meeting of the Sustainable Transport Committee to be held in the Level 2 East meeting room, Westpac Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Wellington on:

**Wednesday, 4 October 2017 at 10.00am**

### **Membership**

Cr Donaldson (Chair)  
Cr Ponter (Deputy Chair)

Cr Blakeley  
Cr Gaylor  
Cr Laban  
Cr Lamason  
Cr Ogden  
Cr Swain

Cr Brash  
Cr Kedgley  
Cr Laidlaw  
Cr McKinnon  
Cr Staples

***Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council***

## Sustainable Transport Committee

Order Paper for the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 4 October 2017 in the Level 2 East meeting room, Westpac Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Wellington at 10.00am

### Public Business

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**Report** 17.373  
**Date** 22 September 2017  
**File** CCAB-20-354

**Committee** Sustainable Transport  
**Author** Alex Kirkwood, Democratic Services Advisor

## **Process for considering submissions and feedback for the Better Metlink Fares consultation**

### **1. Purpose**

To advise the Sustainable Transport Committee on the process for considering submissions and feedback on the Better Metlink Fares consultation.

### **2. Background**

At its meeting on 8 August 2017, the Sustainable Transport Committee approved the “Better Metlink Fares” consultation document. The consultation period was from 8:00am on 14 August 2017 to 4:00pm on 18 September 2017.

The scope of the consultation was guided by the fare changes proposed in the Better Metlink Fares public consultation document and the supporting documentation, which included the proposed variation to fares policies in the Regional Public Transport Plan (variation 3).

#### **2.1 Public Consultation**

This hearing completes the public consultation phase for Better Metlink Fares.

#### **2.2 Principles of consultation**

Six principles of consultation are set out in the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). One of these principles is that views presented to a local authority should be accepted with an open mind, and should be given due consideration by the local authority, in making a decision.

The Committee should also take into account that persons who wish to have their views on the decision or matter considered by the local authority should be provided by the local authority with a reasonable opportunity to present those views to the local authority.

It is consistent with best practice that members should be present for the substantial part of the hearing and deliberations in order to participate in the decision-making of the Committee.

### **3. Submissions and feedback received**

#### **3.1 Written submissions**

A total of 505 written submissions were received on the Better Metlink Fares proposals.

A copy of all the written submissions has been distributed to members of the Committee (under separate cover). It is suggested that written submissions are taken as read by the Committee, and that Committee members discuss submissions in more detail where further comment is warranted.

In addition, 253 submissions were received by the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) on three aspects of the fares review. VUWSA has requested that these, and its 1769 submissions received in April 2017 by Greater Wellington Regional Council on its draft Annual Plan 2017/18, be considered as part of the consultation on Better Metlink Fares. These VUWSA submissions have been distributed as an attachment to the submission made by VUWSA on Better Metlink Fares.

#### **3.2 Public meetings**

Eight public meetings were held around the region to discuss the proposed fares changes.

While attendance at the meetings was generally light (between 8 and 50 people) the meetings provided a useful forum for the public to comment on a wide range of fares and fares related issues. Many valid perspectives were brought to the attention of officers and councillors – the most prominent being strong opposition to the proposal to remove the 30-day bus pass in Wellington City.

#### **3.3 Feedback**

Feedback from the community on key issues in the consultation document was obtained through the Have Your Say website and written submissions, with a form provided in the consultation document for the Better Metlink Fares. Analysis on this feedback is detailed in Report 17.382.

### **4. Oral submission process**

The purpose of the hearing is to hear oral presentations in support of written submissions. At the time of writing this paper, 29 submitters confirmed that they wish to be heard on the Better Metlink Fares consultation.

Five minutes have been allocated to each individual submitter, with additional time allocated for organisations (total of 10 minutes). This time covers both speaking time and time for questions of clarification by the Committee. A hearing schedule will be provided on the day of the hearing.

It is proposed that deliberations commence following the hearing of oral submissions on each day.

## **5. Consideration of issues raised in submissions and feedback**

The Committee must consider all written submissions, regardless of whether or not an oral submission has been made. The Committee must also consider all of the feedback that was received on the consultation document.

There will be an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in both written and oral submissions, and the other forms of feedback, once all oral submissions on a topic have been heard.

### **5.1 Consideration of submissions outside of scope**

The Committee has the power to consider matters raised in submissions that fall outside the scope of the consultation document.

If the Committee, after consideration of an outside-scope submission, is of the view to recommend an additional change to the proposed fare initiatives, it would need to first consider whether the proposed change would constitute a material and/or significant deviation from the matter being consulted on. If a change is determined to be material and/or significant further consultation might be required.

### **5.2 Process after consideration of submissions and feedback**

The Committee will need to prepare a report to the Council setting out its recommendations on the adoption of the Better Metlink Fares proposals and variation to the Regional Public Transport Plan.

Each person who made a submission or provided feedback on the proposed fare changes and provided a contact address will, subsequent to Council adopting the proposed fare changes, receive a response outlining the decisions of the Council and any key changes.

A press release will be published, outlining the decisions of the Council and any key changes, for those who did not provide a contact address.

## **6. Consideration of climate change**

The matters addressed in this report are of a procedural nature, and there is no need to conduct a climate change assessment.

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

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **7.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## 8. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

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

Report prepared by:

**Alex Kirkwood**  
Democratic Services Advisor

Report approved by:

**Francis Ryan**  
Manager, Democratic  
Services



**Report** 2017.382  
**Date** 28 September 2017  
**File** CCAB-20-354

**Committee** Sustainable Transport  
**Author** Paul Kos, Manager, Public Transport Planning

## **Feedback received on consultation document for the Better Metlink Fares review**

### **1. Purpose**

This report provides an overview on the feedback received on the consultation on *Better Metlink Fares*, together with officers' comments on submission points and issues. The report will assist the Committee in making recommendations to Council on the make-up of the final fares package and consequential change to the Regional Public Transport Plan 2014.

Report 17.373 sets out the process for handling submissions, both at this meeting and following the consideration of submissions.

### **2. Consultation process**

The consultation document for the Better Metlink Fares review was approved by the Committee for consultation on 8 August 2017 (Report 17.269 refers). The consultation period was from 14 August to 18 September 2017.

The consultation document and supporting information was available at various locations across the region and online.

A Have Your Say website was developed where the consultation document, supporting information and an online submission tool was available. The website was supported by a communications programme including advertising in local newspapers and on social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

Eight public meetings were held throughout the region to discuss the proposed fares changes. The public meetings provided a useful forum for the public to comment on a wide range of fares and fares related issues.

### **3. Feedback Received**

#### **3.1 Better Metlink Fares consultation document and submission form**

The Better Metlink Fares consultation document set out a wide range of fare initiatives for consultation:

- General 3% fare increase
- 25% discounts for full-time tertiary students, and blind and disabled customers
- 50% discount for all school children
- 25% premium for all cash fares
- 24% off-peak discount
- Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass
- Move Porirua zone boundary north
- Metlink explorer day pass, replacing other day passes
- Discontinue school term passes.

The submission form provided guidance for submitters to comment on the changes. The following questions were asked:

- Overall, do you support the changes?
- Do you support a discount for full-time tertiary students?
- Do you support a discount for the blind and disabled?
- Do you support a new policy to encourage more frequent use of public transport, more off-peak travel and greater use of electronic ticketing?
- Do you support funding the proposed changes through a combination of fares increases, regional rates and NZ Transport Agency subsidies?
- Do you have any other comments?

Submitters were also provided with the opportunity to identify if they wished to attend a hearing a present their views on these changes.

### **3.2 Submissions**

505 submissions were received via the submission form. Seven of these were from tertiary education agencies and a further 18 from other organisations, including local councils and community organisations.

Over 250 submissions on related matters were also received from Victoria University Students Association, although it is not clear exactly which components of the fares package submitters supported because feedback was based different questions to those in the Better Metlink Fares document. Victoria University Students Association also asked that the 1769 submissions presented to this year's annual plan process be considered as part of their submission.

Submissions were received from all parts of the region, with the majority from Wellington City and Hutt Valley.



A summary of the key points raised by submitters and officer comments for the Council to consider in their deliberations is contained in [Attachment 1](#). A full set of submissions has been provided separately to Councillors.

29 submitters have confirmed that they would like to speak to their submission at the hearing. A schedule of speaking slots to the hearing is contained in [Attachment 2](#).

#### **4. Communication**

All submitters who made submissions on the Metlink fares review will, subsequent to Council adopting the final fares package, receive a response outlining the decisions of the Council and any key changes.

The Metlink fares review and associated package of changes will be considered for approval by Council on 26 October 2017, and this will be notified by public notice and media release.

#### **5. Consideration of Climate Change**

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

##### **5.1 Mitigation assessment**

*Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.*

Fare initiatives are designed to increase public transport patronage which can contribute to an overall reduction in gross regional greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the number of trips made in private vehicles.

##### **5.2 Adaptation assessment**

*Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.*

Officers recommend that climate change impacts have no direct relevance to the matters addressed by this paper.

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

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

##### **6.1 Significance of the decision**

The subject matter of this report is part of a decision-making process that will lead to the Council making a decision of medium significance within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2002.

The decision-making process for the proposed variation to the Regional Public Transport Plan is set out in the Land Transport Management Act 2003. In

accordance with section 125 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003, the special consultative procedure has been followed for the proposed variation to the Regional Public Transport Plan.

The decision-making process for the proposed fares changes will follow the same process for the variation as set out above.

## 6.2 Engagement

In accordance with the Significance and Engagement Policy, officers determined that the appropriate level of engagement was 'consulting'. Engagement was carried out as set out in Section 2 above.

Consultation was carried out on the proposed fares changes and variation to the Regional Public Transport Plan, consistent with section 125 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Considers the information in this report and attachments in determining its findings and recommendations to Council.*
4. *Recommends to the Council that it adopt Variation 3 to the Regional Public Transport Plan, enabling new fares policies to be enacted in time for the new bus network in mid-2018.*
5. *Recommends to the Council that it adopt the final fares package, incorporating changes proposed by the Committee.*
6. *Notes to the Council that a separate pricing project will be undertaken to review fare equity between modes and develop the capping approach as part of the transition to IFT.*

Report prepared by:

**Paul Kos**  
Manager PT Planning

Report approved by:

**Angus Gabara**  
Acting General Manager,  
Public Transport

**Attachment 1:** Summary of key submission points and officer comments

**Attachment 2:** Draft hearings schedule

# Summary of key submission themes and officer comments

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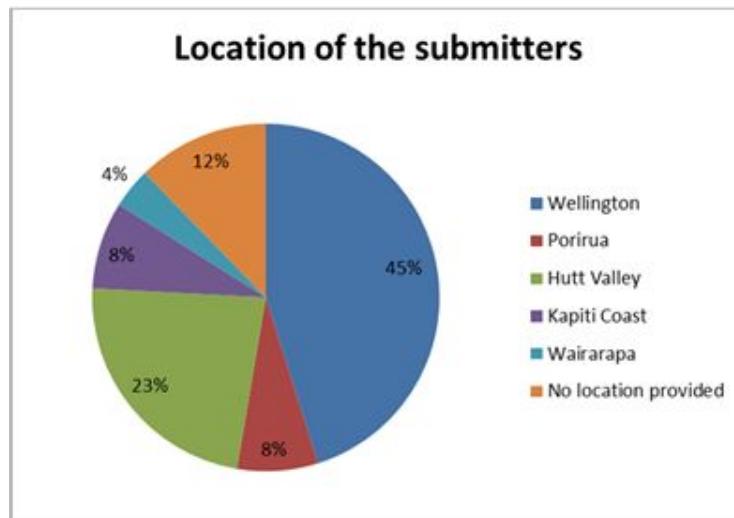
## 1 Overview

This report summarises feedback from Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC's) public consultation on "Better Metlink Fares". The consultation sought feedback about proposed changes to public transport fares and tickets, with consequential changes to the Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2014. The consultation period ran from 14 August to 18 September 2017.

Any fare changes approved by Council are proposed to be implemented from mid-2018, in conjunction with the start of PTOM bus services, the new bus network in Wellington City and extension of the Snapper bus ticketing system across all buses in the Metlink network.

Over 500 submissions were received via Metlink channels. Seven of these were from tertiary education agencies and a further 18 from other organisations, including local councils and community organisations. Over 250 submissions on related matters were also received from Victoria University Students Association, although it is not clear exactly which components of the fares package submitters supported because feedback was based on different questions to those in the Better Metlink Fares document. Victoria University Students Association also asked that the 1769 submissions presented to this year's annual plan process be considered as part of their submission.

Submissions were received from all parts of the region, with the majority from Wellington City and Hutt Valley.



Eight public meetings were also held around the region to discuss the proposed fares changes. The public meetings provided a useful forum for the public to comment on a wide range of fares and fares related issues. Issues raised at the public meetings closely reflect the feedback received via written submissions.

This report also includes officers' comments and recommendations for consideration by the hearings committee. The full text of submissions is available separately.

## 2 Key themes from consultation

This section summarises the seven key themes that emerged from consultation:

- Transition to Integrated Fares and Ticketing
- Bus/rail equity
- Affordability of fares
- Targeted concessions
- 30-day bus pass
- Funding
- Fare structure (boundary adjustments).

### 2.1 Transition to Integrated Fares and Ticketing (IFT)

#### Summary of issue

Many submissions asked for features or raised issues that cannot be delivered or resolved until IFT is available across all modes. This included capping, fares transfers across all modes and issues with bus/rail equity (which is discussed below) that cannot be resolved fully at this time. Some submitters requested that IFT be delivered sooner than planned.

#### Officer comments

The proposed changes are part of a transition towards integrated fares and ticketing. The transition includes a number of steps to rationalise and simplify fares and ticketing.

Significant progress has been made towards IFT with the current package of proposals, which includes an interim ticketing system for all buses, as the most significant step so far. But the full package of benefits cannot be achieved until IFT which is planned to be rolled out from 2020. This will introduce the following changes:

- One electronic ticketing system covering all modes
- Free transfers between all modes
- Smartcard to replace 10-trip tickets on rail
- Weekly fare caps to replace monthly passes
- Daily fare caps to replace day passes.

Other changes being considered by Council but not included in the proposed changes are:

- Changes to the farebox recovery policy – this will be part of the PT Plan review
- Changes in rates funding formulas – this is being addressed in a separate review of the revenue and finance policy for public transport
- Changes in operating costs – contract negotiations are still underway and will feed into budget decisions
- Charging for park and ride – a separate strategy is being developed for park and ride, which will include consideration of demand management measures such as charging.

#### Officer recommendation

Note the submissions received and officer comments that these issues will be addressed either separately or as part of the next phase of transition to IFT.

## 2.2 Bus/rail equity

### Summary of issue

A key theme that emerged from feedback was the need to address a perceived lack of equity between bus and rail fares. The majority of submissions on this issue followed the submission (and associated media coverage) from Wellington City Council. The submissions focussed on the real or perceived high cost of fares for bus in Wellington city given the small size of zones when compared to larger zones in the outer parts of the network, and also the high level of discount provided to rail passengers and not bus users through monthly passes. The proposal to discontinue 30-day bus passes drew focus to this issue (see below).

### Officer comments

The issue of equity between modes does not have a simple answer. A wide range of factors needs to be considered including fare levels, distance travelled, service levels, population densities, communities serviced, demography, passenger type, role of PT modes, cost of delivering services, infrastructure requirements, ticketing systems and funding sources.

The role of the different modes is important to consider:

- Bus – buses are effective at connecting people from many dispersed origins and destinations and provide core services along some strategic corridors. Buses form the backbone of the public transport system serving the southern, eastern and western Wellington City suburbs. Buses also have an important role in providing connector services to rail stations. Bus services cater effectively for short and medium trips.
- Rail – in the Wellington region, passenger rail provides services along core strategic corridors north of Wellington City CBD, primarily over medium to long distances, providing for access between regional centres and to and from the Wellington CBD. Being the core routes, passenger rail services are the main competitors with car and hence contribute significantly to congestion relief on the main transport corridors, and better use of urban spaces that otherwise could have been used for car parking.

The consideration of fare levels is also relevant to the affordability and structure of fares. In most cases, any significant change to levels and structure will have a corresponding impact on ratepayers or require significant fare increases for some passengers. This issue is more pronounced now given the limitations of the ticketing system prior to IFT being available.

The other main area of concern related to rail/bus equity is the high level of discount provided to rail passengers using monthly passes when compared to bus travel. Rail monthly passes are a long-established, legacy fare product used by the majority of rail commuters. They also provide revenue protection benefits in the absence of electronic ticketing. The intention is to replace monthly passes with weekly fare caps across all modes in the future but this is not possible until IFT is delivered. The pricing and mechanics of fare caps will be considered in the next phase of transition leading up to IFT.

While the proposed changes largely retain the existing fare structure, they are an important step towards integrated fares and ticketing across all modes. The changes as proposed generally improve equity between modes, particularly for bus users relative to rail users, although this is not the perception of many submitters.

Table 1 provides a qualitative summary of the relative change in equity between bus and rail modes as a result of the changes to fares and network. These changes should be considered relative to the current status of the benefits that rail and bus network provide to users in


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different parts of the region.

Officers recommend a separate pricing project be undertaken to develop the capping approach and that this will consider fare equity between modes as part of the transition to IFT. This work should consider all relevant factors, including fare levels, distance travelled, service levels, population densities, communities serviced, demography, passenger type, role of PT modes, cost of delivering services, infrastructure requirements, ticketing systems and funding sources.

Officers recommend retaining the 30-day bus passes for bus travel in zones 1-3 (see discussion below in Section 2.5).

**Table 1 Relative change in equity between bus and rail modes due to proposed fare changes**



Bus changes	Rail changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in child fares for shorter distances to align with 50% discount available for longer distance travel</li> <li>Fares kept down through growth in rail patronage and revenue while bus has remained static (no general fare increase since 2013)</li> <li>Porirua boundary adjustment will lead to significant reduction in fares for Titahi Bay and Porirua East bus passengers</li> <li>Free transfers available on bus and greater flexibility with Snapper</li> <li>Off-peak and concession fares available through Snapper and do not require the upfront cost of a 10-trip ticket</li> <li>Discontinue school term passes for bus as no monthly pass alternatives available (note the significant reduction in child fares, extended coverage of Snapper and free transfers as better and more convenient alternatives)</li> <li>Discontinue bus 30-day passes (note officer recommendation below to retain 30-day pass for zones 1-3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metlink Explorer to replace all other day passes</li> <li>Free bus connections to rail using rail monthly pass</li> <li>Consistent concessions on rail and bus across the regions</li> <li>Allowing rail monthly on more than one line</li> <li>Free transfers not available on rail as widely and conveniently as on bus, except with rail transfer tickets and some pass products such as monthly pass</li> <li>Rail monthly pass being not valid within Wellington city requires additional fares for bus travels beyond the interchange</li> <li>Fare per km travelled for rail remains lower than fare per km for bus uses</li> <li>Paper-based ticketing on rail an impediment to full delivery of benefits (note the need for monthly pass users to pay additional fares for Wellington trips)</li> </ul>

**Officer recommendation**

That a separate pricing project be undertaken to review fare equity between modes and develop the capping approach as part of the transition to IFT.

## 2.3 Affordability of fares

### Summary of issue

Several territorial authorities (Wellington City Council, Kapiti Coast City Council, Porirua City Council), the Wellington Regional Public Health and Community Networks Wellington and some individual submitters raised concerns about affordability of fares as a result of the proposed fare increase – particularly for people on a low income, beneficiaries or those living in areas of high social deprivation. Several submitters who opposed the proposed fare increase felt that fares are already too high and should at a minimum be kept constant.

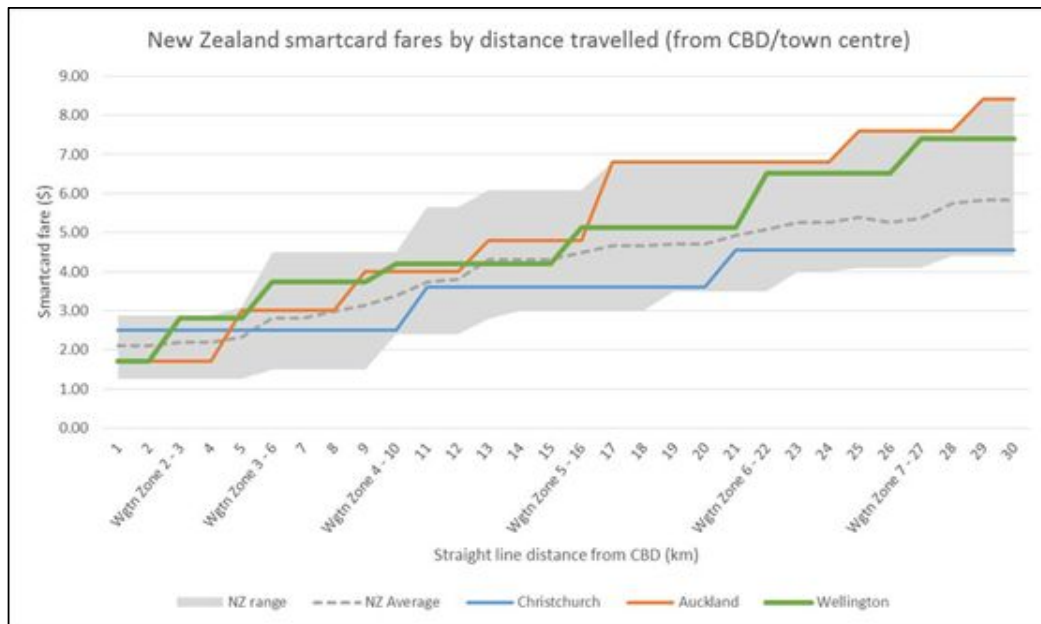
Those who supported the proposed fare changes acknowledged the positive effects of providing concessions especially for tertiary students, and blind and disabled people in terms of making public transport more accessible. The Wellington City Youth Council commented that the proposed 3% fare increase is lower than inflation.

There were, however, some comments that fares must be affordable for all and targeting subsidised fares to certain groups would be unfair for other groups who are in most need, such as low income workers and beneficiaries. A number of submitters also suggested that the tertiary concession should be extended to part-time students on affordability grounds.

Some submitters noted that increasing fares or removing the 30-day passes would make driving more attractive and affordable compared to bus or rail.

### Officer comments

The fare levels for Wellington, although at the higher end for shorter distance fares, are comparable to fares per km in the rest of the country, as shown in the following chart which compares the proposed Snapper fare (2018) against other fares in New Zealand in 2015.



GWRC’s customer satisfaction survey also provides a useful comparison for affordability. The survey is conducted annually (in 2017, it was based on the views of over 4000 passengers) and shows that customers were either satisfied or very satisfied with the “value for \$ of the fare” increased from 70% in 2014 to 75% in 2017. With a combined revenue



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impact of \$7.5m, the proposed fares package represents a significant improvement in value for \$ for customers. It is also worth re-iterating the view of some submitters that even with the 3% fare increase and when inflation is taken into account, customers in 2018 will be paying proportionally less of their income for fares than they were in 2013.

Affordability in relation to cash versus smartcard fare was also raised in submissions. Our current policy is to promote the use of electronic fares to improve operational efficiency and to ensure better value for money for customers. Survey information and evidence in other regions indicates a move away from cash as the preferred payment method for most customers – e.g. in Taranaki/Waikato/Auckland over 90% of transactions are non-cash. Notwithstanding these trends, GWRC recognises that some segments of the population will always prefer the use of cash.

Customers concerned about affordability will get cheaper fares if they use Snapper or ten-trip rail tickets than using cash. The roll out of Snapper to all buses in the region and (over the longer term) the move to IFT provides an opportunity for GWRC to consider ways to encourage greater uptake of smartcard use and reduce the impact for customers.

Community groups may also be able to assist their clients and low income customers in getting Snapper cards if the current cost (\$10) is considered an impediment.

**Officer recommendation**

Note that affordability of fares will continue to be an issue for some customers, but overall, the proposed fare initiatives represent improved value for money for customers, ratepayers and taxpayers.

As part of the transition process to Snapper and IFT, officers will consider ways to encourage greater uptake of smartcard use and reduce the impact for customers.

**2.4 Targeted concessions****Summary of issues**

There was a wide range of comments and perspectives on targeted concessions.

A number of submissions raised concerns that the proposed disability discount of 25% would disadvantage the blind and disabled people who are currently receiving about 50% discount.

Some submissions suggested that the concession should be extended to wider groups including SuperGold card passengers travelling during peak hours or lower income people on welfare benefits.

Other submitters requested that discounts be designed and implemented so that they will be fairly available to those truly in need.

Some tertiary education institutions, while supportive of the proposed tertiary student concession, suggested it should be extended to apply to all students (not just full-time).

Several individual submitters objected from the perspective that peak commuters should not subsidise tertiary students, or disabled and blind customers.

Some submitters also suggested that subsidising free or discounted travel for blind and disabled customers should be the responsibility of government agencies, rather than GWRC, and that tertiary student concessions should be funded by local councils and/or tertiary institutions themselves.

**Att 1 to Report 17.382 submission summary report****Officer comments**

The approach proposed for targeted concessions in the Better Metlink Fares document differs from the current policy in the PT Plan, which promotes an off-peak discount only.

The revised approach to provide targeted concessions for full-time tertiary and blind and disabled customers was proposed following significant feedback from the tertiary sector over the last two years on a range of issues including:

- Parity with other regions and cities with public transport networks
- Affordability concerns and rising housing costs
- Changing travel patterns associated with variable lecture times and the need to live in locations further from the Wellington CBD with cheaper housing.

These issues and more were re-confirmed through submissions. Significant support for the new policy approach for targeted concessions was also noted as part of the feedback – on the basis that it would help to provide access to public transport services at affordable prices for those in most need. A few submitters opposed this approach on the basis that other fares (or rates) would need to increase to pay for this.

Submissions provided many different viewpoints on both the level of discount and extent of its application to different groups. More detailed responses are included in the fare initiatives section below.

In summary, the approach proposed via a combination of targeted concessions and an off-peak discount is considered a good balance. It provides relief for those (including the transport disadvantaged) who are able to travel in the off-peak; it is further targeted to enable discounted travel during the peak for students and blind and disabled customers; the concession is set at a consistent level which helps with simplicity and ticketing; and the concession is applied equitably across the entire network. Furthermore, the overall cost for providing the 25% targeted concessions is considered manageable, as the additional revenue loss relates to travel in the peak period.

**Officer recommendation**

Support the policy and approach proposed for targeted concessions.

**2.5 30-day bus passes****Summary of issue**

The proposal to discontinue the 30-day bus pass generated many submissions during consultation. It was also the predominant issue raised at public meetings in Wellington City.

The majority of submitters who provided comment on 30-day passes (62) requested the 30-day pass be retained.

Most comments were generated from frequent bus users in Wellington City who use the Go Wellington 30-day travel pass. Several submissions were also received from Hutt Valley customers who use the GetAbout or Hutt Commuter 30-day pass.

The primary issues raised relate to convenience, cost and pricing relative to rail monthly passes:

- For submitters from Wellington City the main concerns were about additional cost of travel if relying on stored value with free transfers. Based on high frequency travel,

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some customers claimed their costs would increase by 30% or more, but this would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis as many customers currently using these passes would benefit from free bus transfers.

- Some submitters from Wellington City also requested greater parity to the rail monthly pass, comparing travel on the Johnsonville line at \$112.50 per month compared to \$150 for the current Go Wellington 30-day pass.
- Cost was also raised as an issue for Hutt Valley submitters, however convenience was at the forefront of submissions due to the current ability to use the GetAbout and Hutt Commuter 30-day passes on both contracted and commercial services (such as the Airport Flyer, Stokes Valley Commuter (route 90), Upper Hutt Commuter (routes 92,93) and Wainuiomata Commuter (route 80))
- Following the theme of equity and consistency between bus and rail, some submitters also suggested that a single monthly pass allowing bus connections to rail should be available to cover all zones.

**Officer comments**

While the end-goal is to replace all monthly passes with capping, the submissions raise some valid points for high-frequency travel on bus.

The issue is certainly more pronounced in Wellington City, where alternatives such as rail with free bus connections are not a viable alternative, and where reliance on commercial services is not so relevant. Retention of a 30-day pass in zones 1-3 is considered an appropriate interim response prior to IFT and capping being introduced across the Metlink network.

Pricing of monthly passes/capping is a complex issue that will be further considered as part of the next phase of work to prepare for capping. In the interim, keeping the bus pass price at the current level of \$150 is recommended as this reflects its current relatively high usage and will result in broadly equivalent fares per journey as rail monthly passes.

Introduction of a new bus network in Wellington City along with free bus-to-bus transfers in mid-2018 is expected to reduce the need for the 30-day pass. Just over half of existing customers who use the 30-day pass make more than 45 boardings per month and would benefit from the pass, the remainder will get the same or better value from stored value and free transfers. As a comparison, rail monthly pass customers are estimated to make between 32 and 36 boardings per month.

The retention of a 30-day pass for zones 1 to 3 will have revenue implications – which we estimate to be approximately \$200k per year to retain.

The retention of a 30-day pass for zones 1 to 3 will also enable us to address an unintended consequence from the proposal to allow free bus connections with the rail monthly on the Johnsonville line. Under the current proposal, customers travelling into Wellington City from zone 3 could use a rail monthly pass for bus travel into and beyond the Wellington Railway Station without using rail at all. The 30-day bus pass is proposed to replace free bus connections on the Johnsonville line for rail monthly pass holders, although the three-zone rail monthly pass will still be available for rail only (free bus connections for rail monthly pass holders are proposed to be available in zones 4-14).

For the Hutt Valley, the need to remove the 30-day pass is more pronounced due to the overlap of commercial services the availability of alternative Metlink services (e.g. existing

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bus network, free bus transfers, free bus connections to rail with monthly). Commercial services are defined as ‘exempt services’ under the new contracting environment, and will not be part of the Metlink public transport network. These exempt services will likely still operate, but will be subject to their own commercial pricing structures.

Expanding the rail monthly with free bus connections to apply to all zones is not proposed, due to revenue impacts, network implications, and ticketing constraints associated with separate bus/rail systems. This will be addressed with IFT across all modes.

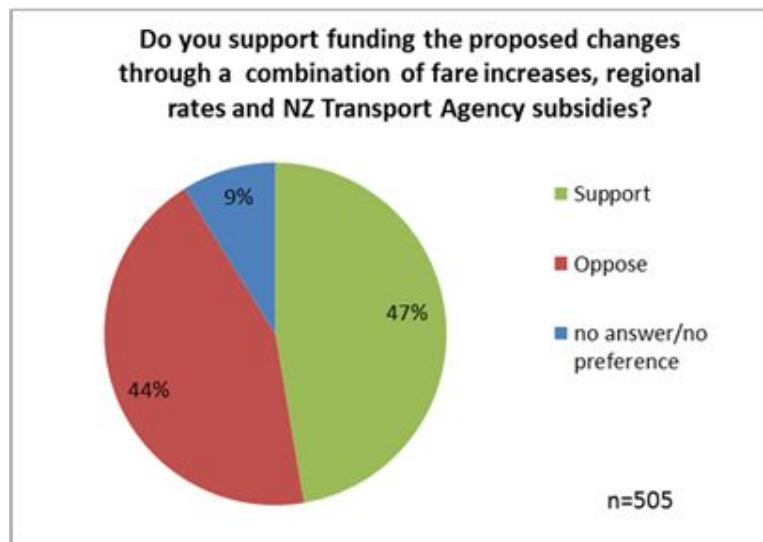
### Officer recommendation

Amend the proposals to:

- Retain a 30-day bus pass for high frequency bus customers in zones 1 to 3 of the Metlink network
- Amend the proposals for free bus connections with the rail monthly to be available in zones 4-14.

## 2.6 Funding

The following funding question was included in the submission form.



### Summary of issue

There were mixed views overall on the proposed funding model. Submitters who did not support the proposed funding sources suggested various alternative funding models – the most popular alternatives being the NZ Transport Agency, rates and via network efficiencies.

More detailed submissions on funding were received one individual (submitter 503) and several organisations (Wellington City Council, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Living Streets Aotearoa). Detailed comments included:

- Criticism of the assumption for this fares package that operating costs remain the same and therefore ignore any operating cost savings from PTOM (as previously announced publically). And if these cost savings were included then there would be no need for a fare increase.
- Concern that a full fare box recovery was not included as part of the proposal and that if it was targeted to reduce to 50% (as signalled in 2014 PT Plan) then a fare increase

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- would not be needed
- Concern that our farebox recovery target is too high, and should be 50% like the rest of New Zealand
  - A request from Wellington City Council for more information on fares and rating policy settings across modes, zones and cities.

**Officer comments**

Overall feedback on the funding proposal is positive, with 47% supporting the approach.

For funding, the approach for the review was based on delivering fare proposals within Council budgets set out in the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan. For farebox recovery this assumed operating costs remain the same but any savings/increase will be taken account of in the Council's budget setting. Also important to note that farebox recovery is only one measure of performance, although one which the NZ Transport Agency is very interested in.

Officers note that emphasis on farebox was based on the 55-60% target range, not 50% that the PT Plan indicated we expect to move to. The PT Plan policy to reduce to 50% needs review, as this was based on a past set of fare initiatives and IFT being in place. A review is proposed next year with the PT Plan review.

It is also important to note that any reduction in farebox recovery will result in a corresponding increase in rates. Under the current rates model (which is based on an approach that surrogates congestion pricing) Wellington City businesses would pay a larger proportion of any increase in rates necessary to fund the changes.

**Officer recommendation**

Support the proposed funding approach, based on a 3% fare increase, regional public transport rates and NZ Transport Agency subsidy.

**2.7 Fare structure (boundary adjustments)****Summary of issue**

Several individual submitters, Wellington City Council and Living Streets Aotearoa requested changes to the geographical fare structure:

- More equitable fare structure across the region based on distance, with cheaper fares per zone for smaller Wellington City zones
- Combine zones 1 and 2 to be more equitable in size compared to outer zones
- Better to locate zone boundaries at bus stops.

Wellington City Council submission included GIS analysis with overlapping of zones to illustrate the difference in the size of zones and distance from town centres.

**Officer comments**

The current fare structure with 14 zones radiating out from Wellington City CBD was established in 2006 following a major fare structure review. This was subject to a significant amount of public consultation with broad community support for the new zone structure.

The zone structure was again reviewed comprehensively in 2013. The 2013 review considered simplifying further by moving to seven zones or eight zones (with a short distance fare). Overall, the 2013 review neither a distance based nor a coarse zonal system performs

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significantly better than the current 14 zone fare structure against the two top criteria of simplicity and encouraging patronage. Against all other criteria, none of the options significantly outperforms the current 14 zone structure, except for the level of revenue generated from distance based fares. Given the negative impact of distance based fares on short and medium length trips outside Wellington city, transitioning to a distance based fare structure was not recommended.

The current review, using a similar set of objectives (simple and easy to understand; fare and affordable; attracts and retains customers; supports transition to IFT) not surprisingly came to the same conclusion, with only a minor change proposed in Porirua.

The Metlink fare zone system provides a broad relationship between the fare charged and distance travelled with the fare charged depending on the number and size of fare zones. This in turn determines the size of the fare increments as distance increases. The fare zone boundaries are designed with the consideration of balancing simplicity, equity and affordability of fares with GWRC's obligations to recover the costs of providing public transport services through fares. In general, fare zones are set up to satisfy the following conditions:

- Where possible, each fare zone encompasses an entire locality which typically includes one or more suburbs. This rule is set to avoid penalising those who travel short distances within their local areas;
- Zone boundaries are closely spaced in Wellington City (where urban density is high and the level of service is high) and increase in spacing in outer zones (where passengers have to travel further to reach their destinations)
- Zone boundaries are set up to minimise the number of bus stops and train stations locating at or clustering around the boundaries. Therefore while some zone boundaries are at bus stops or train stations, the preference is for most to be located between stops or stations.

The reason why Wellington City has a lot of bus stops on boundaries is because of the density of urban form, geography and related overlapping of communities. For example, Kilbirnie town centre area is the logical location for a zone boundary but it is not separable from other neighbouring communities (Hataitai, Newtown, Rongotai) and therefore has a cluster of stops at the town centre. Likewise, it is difficult to separate communities of Mt Cook and Te Aro and Mt Vic – and therefore has a series of boundary stops in and around the Basin reserve. Again, geography and urban form at Northland/Karori tunnel area means there is an overlapping of communities in a logical boundary location.

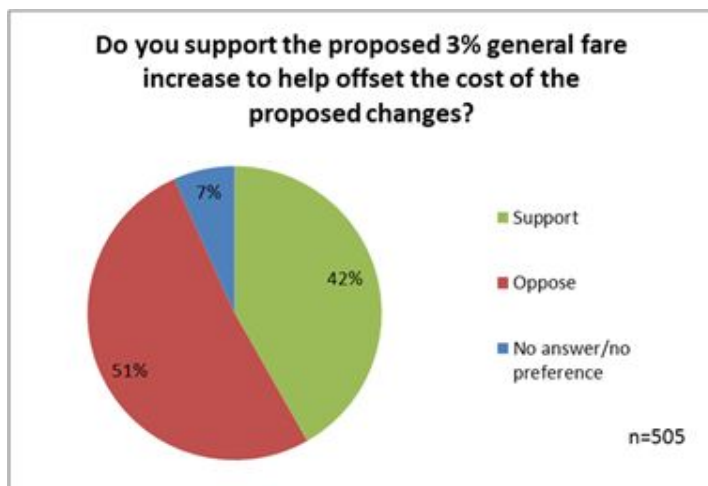
**Officer recommendation**

Retain the existing 14 zone fare structure, with the proposed change in Porirua.

### 3 Proposed fare initiatives

This section summarises the proposed fares initiatives in order that they were set out in the discussion document Better Metlink Fares.

#### 3.1 General 3% fare increase



#### Summary of issues

As illustrated above, 42% of submitters supported and 51% of submitters opposed the proposed fare increase.

Opposition to the fare increase was based on:

- Affordability, especially for people on a low income
- Association with poor service levels, especially in Wairarapa
- Opposition to commuters (who already contribute a significant amount to public services through their taxes) paying for other groups
- Concern a fare increase would discourage public transport and encourage private vehicle use
- Wellington having higher farebox recovery rates than most other regions
- Savings from the new contracts and more efficient operations should be used to fund the fare initiatives.

Support for the fare increase was based on:

- The increase is fair, reasonable and small compared with the benefits expected from the package of changes
- There has been no fare change (increase) for several years
- Some submitters expressed support for a higher fare increase provided more services are made available especially over weekends, and to cover higher concessions.
- Some submitters supported the 3% increase on the condition that there would be no fare increases for a few years

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- Some submitters suggested lower fare increase (1% to 2%) on the basis that it is sufficient to cover the discounted fares
- Some submitters noted the fare increase should reflect the rising living and housing costs, and general inflation. For example, the submission by the Wellington City Youth Council noted that the fare increase needs to be viewed in the context of other price rises, and that considering the inflation of 4.3% between 2013 and 2017, users of public transport facing a fare increase will still pay less in real terms than in 2013.

**Officer comments**

The comments in the earlier section on the theme of affordability are relevant when considering the proposed 3% fare increase.

The proposed 3% fare increase is needed to implement the fare package and estimated to cover only about one third of the total cost. The remaining two third of the cost will be funded through regional rates and national funding. Therefore, no or lower fare increase would require all or high proportion of costs to be covered by rate payers and NZTA funding.

The rates impact is expected to be higher in some areas. Not increasing fares may result in a significant increase in rates for Wellington residents of about half of the estimated \$2.6m.

It is also worth noting that with the 3% fare increase and when inflation is taken into account, customers in 2018 will be paying less of their income for fares than they were in 2013.

Some submissions refer to high farebox as an issue, when compared to other regions. Another perspective is that high farebox recovery reflects a good value proposition for customers based on a high level of service. Comparing farebox recovery rates to other regions can be problematic as farebox recovery depends on factors specific to each network such as levels of service, density, mode, and network. Formulas also differ between regions and the New Zealand Transport agency, which can create confusion. For example, our estimate of 57.2% for 2016/17 differs from the NZTA calculation of 53.4% due to differences in the way improvements are categorised.

Levels of service for public transport have been improving steadily over the last decade and will continue to improve with the new network changes, infrastructure upgrades and improvements to fleet and ticketing. The fare initiatives are timed specifically to be aligned with the new Wellington City bus network and extension of Snapper.

While some savings will be made from the new bus contracts, the extent of improvements proposed to public transport in the future is likely to outweigh efficiencies gained via the new contracts. Clarity on overall costs for public transport will be determined as part of the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan processes.

The reduced fares are set by applying the discounts to current smartcard fares after the 3 percent fare increase. In effect, this will result in all fare paying passengers to pay their share of the fare increase. The benefit of aligning fare increase with new fare concessions is that the targeted groups will pay their share of the related costs upfront while still benefiting from the proposed reduced fares.

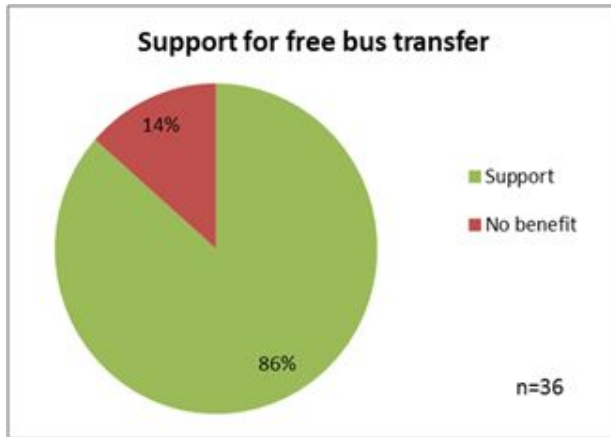
In addition, depending on their journeys, peak travellers will benefit from the proposed changes to monthly passes and introduction of free transfers, and equally from the off-peak discount if they need to travel during off-peak times or weekends.

**Officer recommendation**

Support 3% fare increase.



### 3.2 Free bus transfers



#### Summary of issues

There was overwhelming support for free bus transfers, with only a small number of submitters (primarily users of the 30-day pass) commenting that they would see no benefit in the free bus transfer. Some submitters requested a longer transfer window to enable better connections to services.

#### Officer comments

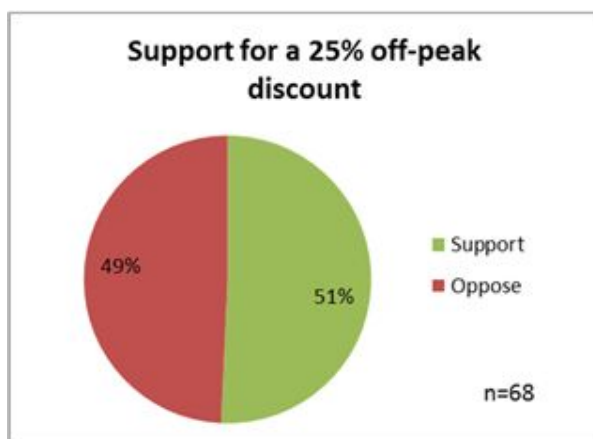
Free bus transfers represents a significant improvement for customers travelling on the bus network as it promotes the concept of a seamless journey and reduces costs for those who will need to transfer as part of their journey. The ability to transfer anywhere within the same zone also provides good flexibility for customers.

The 30 minute transfer window was determined based on our knowledge of the current journeys involving chained trips and availability and frequency of services under the new bus network. It should be noted that the current transfer function on Snapper (used only in the Hutt Valley) is based on a 20 minute transfer window.

#### Officer recommendation

Support free bus transfers.

### 3.3 25% off-peak discount



#### Summary of issues

Submitters who responded directly on the off-peak fare initiative were equally split between those who supported and those who did not support the proposed off-peak fares. It is important to note that much broader support for the proposed off-peak discount was provided in general feedback, but this is not reflected in the graph above.

Those who supported acknowledged the benefits of the off-peak discount in spreading peak demand, increasing access to affordable services for non-peak travellers and encouraging patronage during off-peak times including weekends, hence resulting in less dependency on private vehicles.

A few submitters suggested higher off-peak discount similar to the discounts provided under the Total Mobility Scheme or higher. Some submitters suggested that extending off-peak hours and more off-peak services would be needed for the proposal to be effective.

Those who did not support the off-peak discount expressed concerns that reducing off-peak fares would not deliver expected benefits due to lower service levels in some areas (including in Wairarapa, Porirua and Kapiti Coast) and that people who need to travel during peak times including workers would not have choice to easily change their travel hours and therefore should not be forced to pay more than off-peak travellers.

A few submitters also commented that increasing fares for peak travellers to subsidise off-peak travellers is unfair, and that peak travellers, as the most frequent and loyal users of public transports, should be rewarded rather than being overcharged and disadvantaged.

Some organisations and individual submitters noted that the requirement to buy 10-trip tickets to benefit from the off-peak discount would be an impediment for occasional travellers.

#### Officer comments

Provision of a 25% off-peak discount for all users is the current policy in the Regional Public Transport Plan (the PT Plan). The main justification in the PT Plan for this policy is to shift demand from the peak and better utilise off-peak service capacity and that the fare structure should reward behaviours rather than advantage particular groups within the community.

While this policy provides for affordability of fares for people travelling during off-peak periods, the fares review has identified that the issues of affordability and access need to be addressed by a concession policy with a specific focus on investment towards improving the

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affordability of fares for those groups most in need. It also signals future policies including fare capping and free transfers between all Metlink services through the Integrated Fares and Ticketing project. The discount is targeted for the wider community and once introduced, anyone travelling during off-peak period will benefit from these changes.

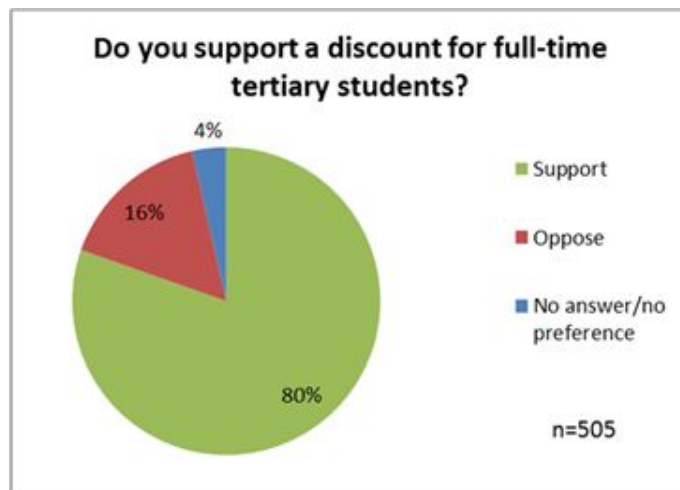
Providing higher off-peak discounts would be more costly than the proposed 25% discount.

The need for off-peak 10-trip tickets is an interim transition issue that will be resolved when IFT becomes available across all modes.

#### Officer recommendation

Support 25% off-peak discount.

### 3.4 25% discount for full-time tertiary students



#### Summary of issues

The majority of submitters supported the proposed concession for tertiary students, noting that fares are unaffordable for tertiary students and that the higher cost of living in Wellington City is a major impediment for tertiary students.

Supporters also commented that many tertiary students are dependent on public transport and therefore need access to public transport services at affordable prices. Some also felt that their significant contribution to economic growth and development in the region and in Wellington City justified the concession.

Some submitters supported the tertiary student discount, but suggested that the discount should be subsidised by tertiary institutions rather than peak commuters who will face fare increases. The majority of submitters who opposed the proposal also expressed their disagreement with cross-subsidisation of tertiary discounts through cost increases for other passengers and/or ratepayers.

While a few of the submitters suggested higher discounts of 50%, others suggested a lower discount of 10% to 20%, commenting that tertiary students are generally in a better economic position than the average single parent or low wage worker.

A few submitters including the Wellington Chamber of Commerce noted that a student discount scheme needs to be considered as part of a student benefits package (not the

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responsibility of GWRC) rather than being treated in isolation; and that the scheme needs to be designed and implemented in a manner that ensures the discounted products and benefits will not be abused.

The Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association, Massey University's Wellington Students' Association, WelTec/Whitireia and Massey University supported tertiary student discounts generally but also requested that the tertiary student discount be extended to at least some part-time students. They noted a variety of reasons for students studying part time, including family commitments, disability, health, academic workload, or simply because they cannot afford transport costs. Extending to part time students was considered to improve administrative ease.

A few of the supporters of the tertiary concession suggested that a discounted pass product such as monthly or annual pass rather than a discount on each trip would encourage students to commit to public transport as their primary mode.

A few of the submitters commented that part-time students and recent graduates, who are also in financial hardship, should be subsidised given they had to pay full fares for the last years of their time at university.

**Officer comments**

The comments provided in the section "Targeted concessions" and on the submissions on 3% fare increase and concessions for blind and disabled customers are also relevant to the concerns raised regarding cross-subsidisation of tertiary student discounts by peak travellers and widening of the range of the discounts.

In its simplest form and given the limitations of the current ticketing systems, the 25% concession for tertiary students will be available only on bus via Snapper card and 10-trip tickets on rail. Providing the concession in the form of other pass products such as a monthly or annual passes would further complicate the ticketing and fare structure, something that is at odds with the intention to simplify and improve consistency of the products and processes.

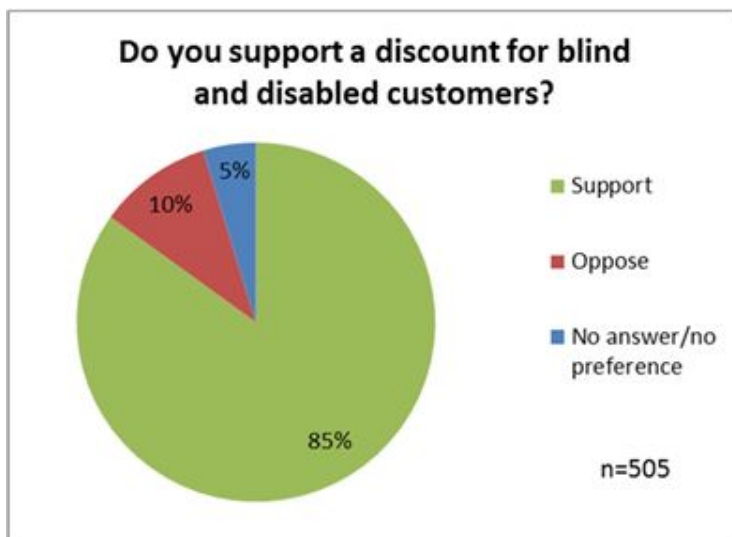
Including part-time students would also impact on revenue – estimated at approximately \$400k per annum.

The main consideration for the proposed concession scheme for tertiary students was that the scheme should be manageable and auditable to ensure that the right people will benefit from the concessions in an equitable manner using the current resources and within the available funding envelope. GWRC will be working with the tertiary institutions; operators and Snapper on details of the scheme, to ensure that the eligibility criteria are clearly defined and appropriate processes are in place to avoid misuse of the system based on verifiable data.

**Officer recommendation**

Support the 25% concession for full-time tertiary students

### 3.5 25% discount for blind or disabled customers



#### Summary of issues

Groups advocating for people with disabilities supported the principle of providing concession for people with disabilities. Some simply supported the proposed 25% discount level and extension of the discount across the region, while others advocated for a higher discount.

#### Officer comments

Currently, only some people with disabilities (those who are blind and members of IHC with disabilities) are eligible for concessions on NZ Bus services in Wellington City and the Hutt Valley, and on rail services. Those who are currently eligible receive a 50% concession, but many other customers with disabilities in the region receive no concession. The proposed concession will provide discounted travel for many blind and disabled customers who currently don't receive one.

The cost of this concession has been estimated as less than \$100,000 per annum; once the disability concession is loaded on Snapper cards, we will have a better idea of patronage levels and cost on buses. Disability concession ten-trip ticket sales on rail will help us understand rail patronage levels and costs.

Some submitters requested the eligibility criteria to be extended beyond the current eligible groups (members of the Blind Foundation and IHC). There were also concerns expressed that those currently receiving the discount would have this reduced from 50% to 25%. In addition, there were requests for concessions for carers of people with disabilities – the current rules are inconsistent.

To take advantage of the disability concession from 2018, customers will have to register for and use either a Snapper card loaded with the concession on buses, or a rail ten-trip concession card on trains. The registration process is administered by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) via the Total Mobility scheme.

Further improvements to the consistency of disability concessions are likely under the integrated fares and ticketing system, scheduled for 2020.

Officers feel that bona fide carers travelling with people with disabilities eligible for

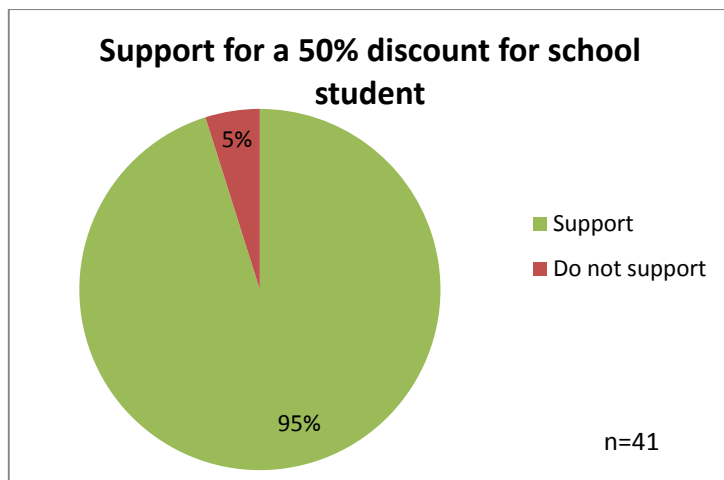
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concessions should travel free. This will simplify administrative procedures on buses and trains and improve affordability for those with disabilities. This was not part of the original consultation proposal but should be supported by the disability sector.

**Officer recommendation**

Support the 25% concession for blind and disabled customers and in addition, provide free travel for bona fide carers of customers travelling on a disability concession.

**3.6 50% discount for all school students**



**Summary of issues**

There is widespread support for this proposal, which although it is current policy, is applied inconsistently across zones 1 to 5. Opponents argued principally about the cost (estimated at \$700,000 per annum).

**Officer comments**

This is another opportunity for Metlink fares to be standardised and simplified in the lead-up to IFT, and should be supported.

**Officer recommendation**

Support the 50% concession for school students.

**3.7 25% premium for all cash fares**

32 submissions, 8 support, 24 oppose

**Summary of issues**

The majority of submitters opposed this proposal, arguing that those on low incomes would be penalised.

**Officer comments**

The current policy is for cash tickets to be priced at 25% more than Snapper bus fares (or ten-trip tickets on rail), rounded up to the nearest 50 cents. But the rule is inconsistently applied for Zone 1, where the current premium is only 21% (with a \$2.00 cash fare). If the current cash fare is retained for Zone 1, the premium after the proposed general 3% fare increase

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would be 17%, while all others would be at least 25% (depending on rounding).

Increasing the proportions of customers paying by electronic means improves bus service delivery (drivers can spend less time handling cash) and improves revenue protection. The current low premium for Zone 1 encourages people to pay cash for short trips, which affects service delivery especially on the Golden Mile in Wellington's CBD.

If customers (and submitters on their behalf) are concerned about the affordability of fares, the best means of reducing the cost to use PT is to use a Snapper card on bus (or ten-trip ticket on rail).

#### **Officer recommendation**

Support the 25% premium for cash fares.

### **3.8 Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass**

37 submissions – 24 support, 1 other, 13 opposed

#### **Summary of issue**

The concept was generally supported by submitters and at public meetings. In particular, submitters supported making monthly passes available on more than one line.

Submitters who commented on the proposal raised the concern that the free bus connection to rail would not provide the expected benefits in some areas especially in Wairarapa where there are poor connections between bus and rail. A number of the submissions requested reduced prices for monthly passes, or at least to retain the current prices. A few submissions also noted that some commuters cannot afford the cost of a monthly pass and would not benefit from the changes.

The other main area of concern was the high level of discount provided to rail passengers and not bus users through monthly passes. Several submitters from Wellington City requested greater parity to the rail monthly pass as discussed in section 2.5. A number of submitters also suggested that the free bus connections to rail using a monthly pass should be extended to cover all zones including Wellington City.

In relation to the proposed 3% fare increase, the majority of submitters who commented on the proposal expressed their strong disagreement with increasing the fares in general and the prices of rail monthly passes in particular to subsidise the reduced fares.

A few others suggested making concessions available on monthly passes to allow discounted off-peak travel or provide tertiary students with a discounted monthly rail pass, also allowing group travel for families during weekends.

Some submitters were unclear how this proposal would be used in Johnsonville, where competing bus services to Wellington City exist.

#### **Officer comments**

As discussed in section 2.5, the proposed change to monthly passes is an important transitional step towards integrated fares and ticketing across all modes and the end-goal of replacing monthly passes with capping. At this stage, the paper-based ticketing on the rail network is a major limitation that reduces the ability to fully address a number of issues raised in submissions until IFT is delivered.

Given the limitations of the current rail paper-based ticketing system, monthly passes are an

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important revenue protection mechanism. Expanding the rail monthly pass with free bus connections to apply to all zones is not recommended, due to revenue impacts, network implications, and ticketing constraints associated with separate bus/rail systems. This will be addressed with IFT across all modes in due course.

The reason for not including Wellington Station is due to the potential impact on capacity along the Golden Mile, particularly with the new Wellington bus network coming into effect at the same time. The high number of short distance bus trips in Wellington is also expected to result in significant reduction in revenue.

Extending the monthly pass free bus connections to Wellington City would require the prices of monthly passes to increase substantially, and would likely make equity issues between bus and rail worse in the interim. The significant paper-based transactions on bus will lead to greater potential misuse and will significantly reduce the quality of data that is needed to design the capping scheme.

As discussed in section 2.5, under the current proposal, customers travelling into Wellington City from zone 3 could use a rail monthly pass for bus travel into and beyond the Wellington Railway Station without using rail at all. This was not intended, and as a result officers are recommending a change to this policy so free bus connections for rail monthly pass holders are only available in zones 4-14. The proposal to retain the 30-day bus pass for zones 1-3 will still provide flexibility for high frequency bus customers.

**Officer recommendation**

Amend the proposals for free bus connections with the rail monthly to be available in zones 4 to 14.

**3.9 Move Porirua zone boundary north**

12 submissions, 5 support, 7 oppose

**Summary of issues**

This proposed boundary change would affect relatively few customers and generated few comments. While some submitters supported the change (and most people affected would see fare reductions), a similar number opposed the change, mostly because of the exclusion of Whitby from the zone.

Porirua City Council supported the proposed zone boundary change but noted that “a few Whitby families who school in Aotea may be negatively affected as they will be crossing a new boundary and face a 15% fare increase”.

**Officer comments**

Moving the zone boundary north to include Whitby would increase the cost, on top of the anticipated \$400,000 annual cost of moving the Porirua zone boundary north as proposed. The bulk of people affected by the proposed boundary change are in low-decile areas where this change will be welcomed as a way of supporting affordability of public transport.

Due to the 50% child discount, the additional cost for school children required to travel an additional zone is only 21cents.

**Officer recommendation**

Support proposed boundary change



### **3.10 Align ferry fares with wider fare structure**

4 submissions; 1 support, 3 oppose

#### **Summary of issues**

Fewer than 20 submitters made comments specifically on the proposal to align ferry fares with the wider fare structure. A small number of these opposed the proposal, but the majority supported it for a more rational and simplified system.

#### **Officer comments**

There will be limited opportunities to modify ferry fares in the short term as they are set by the operator and these services are not operated under the Government's Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM). Nevertheless, officers will continue work with East by West Ferries to improve alignment between Metlink and ferry fares.

#### **Officer recommendation**

Support ongoing work to align ferry and Metlink fares.

### **3.11 Metlink Explorer day pass, replacing other day passes**

10 submissions; 6 support, 4 conditional support.

#### **Summary of issues**

Majority of submissions on this matter were supportive of the proposed changes, with some expressing concerns that there is no day pass option for people who wish to travel within the zones outside Wellington city e.g. between zones 4 and 6 in the Hutt Valley.

A few submissions expressed concerns that the change will result in higher fares for their short trips compared to the price of the current Wellington day pass, or suggested more communication on the new pass products.

#### **Officer comments**

The proposed change to day passes is another opportunity to simplify and standardise Metlink fares and products in the lead-up to IFT. The current Metlink Explorer is the only integrated ticket (across bus and rail) in Wellington with wider service and area coverage.

While being a transitional change, extending the product in the four forms and with a pricing that better reflects the distance travelled is seen as an effective step towards the envisaged day capping scheme once IFT is in place.

Making the Metlink Explorer for travel between zones outside the Wellington city would unnecessarily increase the number of tickets and fares that is at odds with the very intention of simplification, given that fare capping will replace all the current paper-based tickets in a few years' time.

#### **Officer recommendation**

Support the proposed four Metlink Explorer day passes, replacing other day passes.

### **3.12 Discontinue school term passes**

3 submitters; 2 support, 1 oppose.

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### Summary of issues

The few submitters who commented on this proposal were generally supportive of the proposal to discontinue the school term passes. One submission did not support the proposal commenting that insufficient data was provided in support of the change.

### Officer comments

The proposal to discontinue existing school term passes was another important step towards simplification of the ticketing in the lead up to the integrated fare and ticketing.

Based on the available data, the current school term passes have very low use of about less than 0.6 per cent of all trips made on each mode, and they are difficult to administer.

The extension of Snapper across the network and significant reduction in fares for child travel of up to 5 zones were the main enablers of the removal as they will provide more convenient and affordable alternatives, especially for bus travel with Snapper.

Due to the nature of ticketing on rail network, school children will need to use monthly passes and 10-trip tickets and this will be less convenient for some. However this is a transitional issue with insignificant effect on children, given that over 95% of child travel is 5 zones or less. As with other pass products, fare capping is the ultimate goal for school term passes.

### Officer recommendation

Support discontinuation of school term passes.

### 3.13 Discontinue 30-day passes

See discussion in section 2.5.

### 3.14 Discontinue return rail event tickets

4 submissions; 1 support, 3 oppose

#### Summary of issues

Although few submitters commented on this issue, general support exists for the status quo.

#### Officer comments

Subsequent consultation with Transdev has confirmed that there are operational advantages (including revenue protection) to keeping the existing rail event return ticket. This would be interim measure while a longer term solution is developed whereby public transport is included as part of the event ticket. Pricing may need to be adjusted to better reflect the costs of travel.

#### Officer recommendation

Retain return rail event tickets and work with Transdev on operational and pricing improvements (adjustment to fares proposal).

### 3.15 Allocate Ngauranga Station into zone 3

9 submissions; 1 support, 8 oppose

#### Summary of issues

A small number of customers who travel by bus from Wellington to Ngauranga are adversely affected (having to pay a 3-zone fare instead of a 1-zone fare).

**Att 1 to Report 17.382 submission summary report**

**Officer comments**

Subsequent consultation with Transdev has confirmed that there are operational advantages (including revenue protection) to keeping Ngauranga Station in Zone 1. In the longer term, the move to IFT should allow this change to be more easily implemented. Accordingly, to respond to public feedback and for operational reasons, officers recommend retention of the status quo.

**Officer recommendation**

Retain Ngauranga train station in Zone 1 (adjustment to fares proposal).

## 4 Other matters

### 4.1 SuperGold

#### Summary of issue

Several submitters made comments on SuperGold:

- Should extend SuperGold hours to apply to peak, as currently the case in Auckland
- Disabled and blind customers should receive the same discount as SuperGold card holders
- SuperGold should be on Snapper.

#### Officer comments

SuperGold hours and subsidy is currently set and funded separately by Central Government.

While the region could extend its application, the costs (which would be significant) would need to be captured by ratepayers and farepayers. The NZ Transport Agency are unlikely to support this. Extending to peak services would also likely exacerbate capacity issues with the current network during peak periods.

Requiring SuperGold card customers to use a Snapper Card for SuperGold is proposed as part of these changes. This will occur when IFT is introduced across all modes.

#### Officer recommendation

That no changes are proposed.

### 4.2 Snapper and electronic ticketing

#### Summary of issue

Several submitters commented on Snapper and electronic ticketing generally:

- Good to have a Snapper on all buses, why not extend to rail
- Shouldn't need to charge a top-up fee
- Why not bring in a new bespoke ticketing system from other countries where this has been successful
- We should have IFT now
- Need to ensure good retail coverage for Snapper top-up
- Including Snapper in addition to the fares changes is doing too much at once.

#### Officer comments

The extension of Snapper is required to enable the new network in Wellington City to operate without penalising those who will need to transfer. While only an interim solution, it provides a significant opportunity to simplify and rationalise the existing fare structure in the lead up to IFT.

The procurement process for IFT in the Wellington Region is being developed as part of the National Ticketing Programme, and is presently scheduled to begin in 2020. It is likely to be a 'next generation account-based' system with quite different functionality than the 'card-based' Snapper system. Capping functionality will be included as a basis for the new IFT system. Extending Snapper to all modes is not recommended given the timelines and pathway for IFT.

**Officer recommendation**

Comments noted – no recommendation required

**4.3 Victoria University students' submissions**

**Summary of issue**

The Victoria University of Wellington students' association has been campaigning for a student discount for some time. As part of this campaign, it set up a website to make submissions on GWRC's Annual Plan, which generated over 1,700 submissions. These were considered as part of that process and resulted in changes to the proposed fare package that would vary the PT Plan by introducing a tertiary student discount for full-time students.

A further 250 submissions were received via an online portal established by the association for the Metlink fares review. In submitting via this mechanism, submitters supported:

- a. "Extending the tertiary concession to all students, including part-time students;
- b. Setting the accessibility fare at the same rate as the child fare to reflect mobility barriers faced by people with disabilities; and
- c. Fast tracking/finding an interim solution to enable Snapper on trains."

The association has asked to be heard in support of its submission and will elaborate on its views at the hearing.

**Officer comments**

See comments in previous sections on targeted concessions and Snapper and electronic ticketing.

**Officer recommendation**

See recommendations in previous sections on targeted concessions and Snapper and electronic ticketing

**4.4 Out-of-scope feedback**

**Summary of issue**

The submissions raised a few issues not directly related to the proposed fare changes, but that should be addressed through other work programmes. The key out of scope topics raised through the submission process comprise:

- Infrastructure improvements (such as more rail tracks, bus shelters, toilets on trains, ticketing kiosks, wifi connections)
- Service punctuality and reliability
- Service coverage in the shoulder and off-peak periods
- Network coverage of bus services
- Rail capacity during peak
- Park and Ride capacity
- Bikes on trains during peaks
- Carriage of pets on services

**Att 1 to Report 17.382 submission summary report**

**Officer comments**

These issues are being considered as part of the wider public transport improvement programme. Much of this is programmed to occur in the near future, including the proposed bus network changes in Wellington City and proposed timetable adjustments for rail. A separate workstream has also been established to consider improving service levels in the shoulder periods.

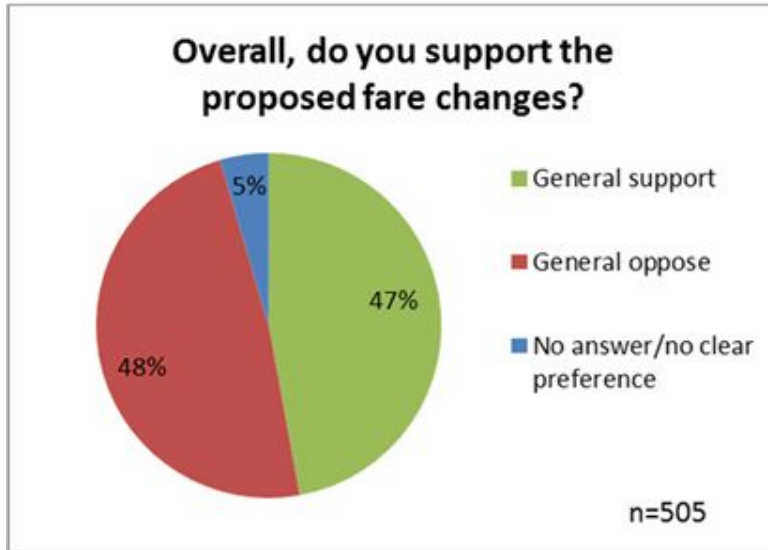
**Officer recommendation**

Note that submissions on these issues are considered out of scope for the purposes of this consultation, but that these issues are being considered as part of the wider public transport improvement programme.

## Attachment 1: Responses to questions

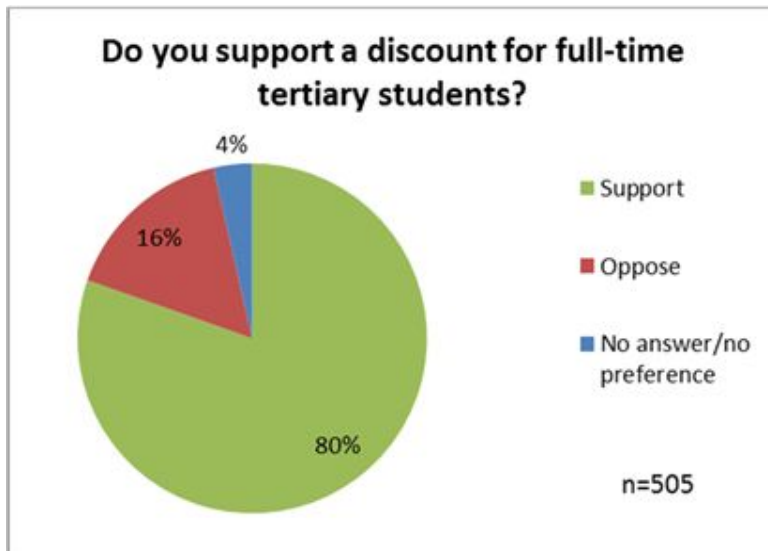
The following graphs summarise the responses to the six questions posed in the submission form.

### 1. Overall support for proposed fare changes



Submitters were equally divided as to whether they supported or opposed the proposed fare changes overall.

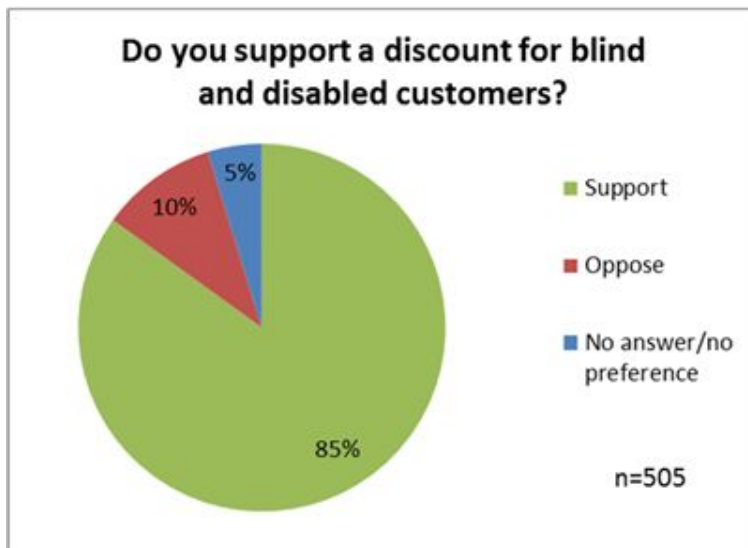
### 2. Support for tertiary student discount



Most submitters supported a discount for full-time tertiary students.

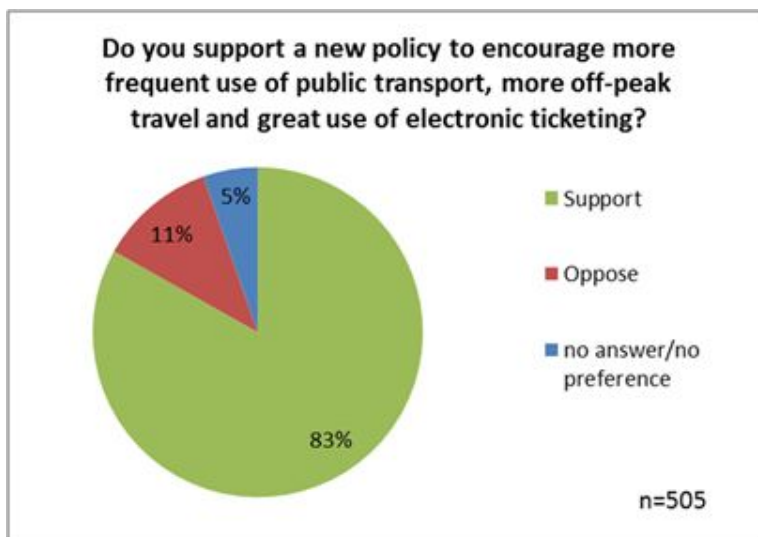
Additional views of tertiary students were canvassed by the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) and are discussed earlier in this report.

### 3. Support for discount for blind and disabled customers



The vast majority of submitters supported a discount for blind and disabled customers.

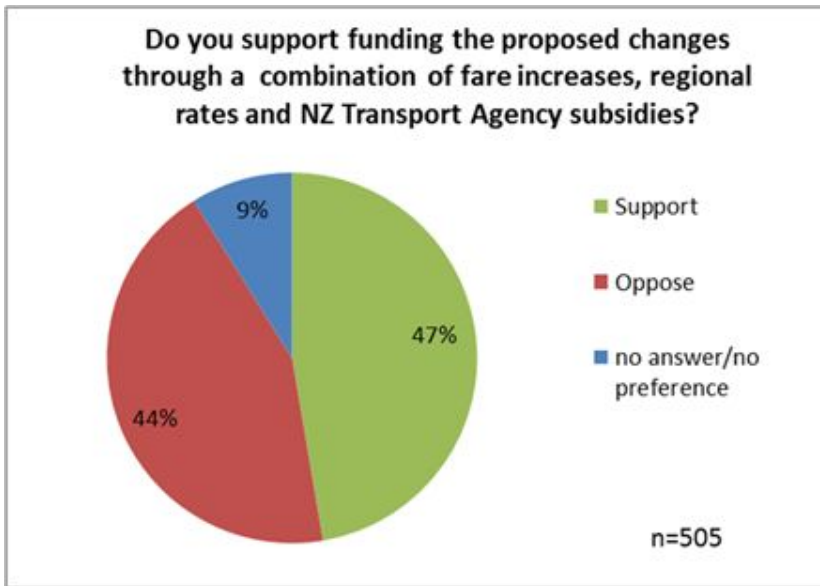
### 4. Support for policy to encourage more frequent use of PT, more off-peak travel and greater use of electronic ticketing



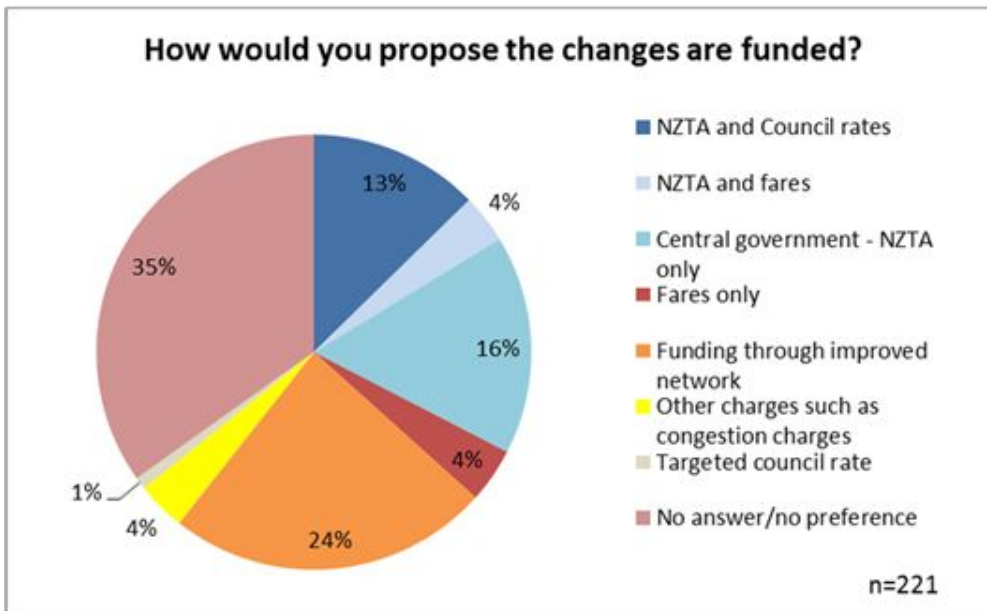
Most submitters supported a new policy to encourage frequent use of public transport, more off-peak travel and greater use of electronic ticketing. The majority of specific comments were in support for greater use of (or earlier implementation of) electronic ticketing.



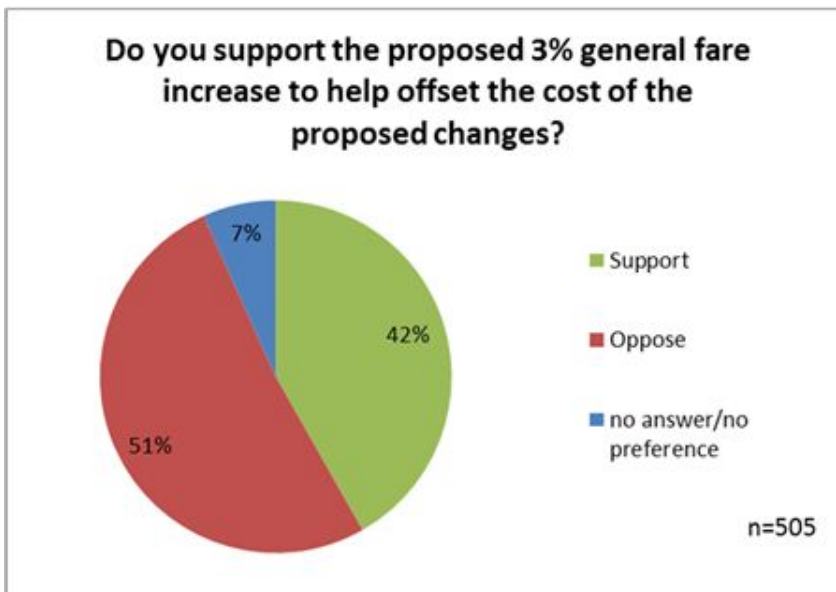
**5. Support for funding proposed changes via combination of fare increases, regional rates and NZTA subsidy**



There were mixed views as to who should pay for the proposed fare changes. Submitters who did not support the proposed funding sources suggested various alternative funding models (below)

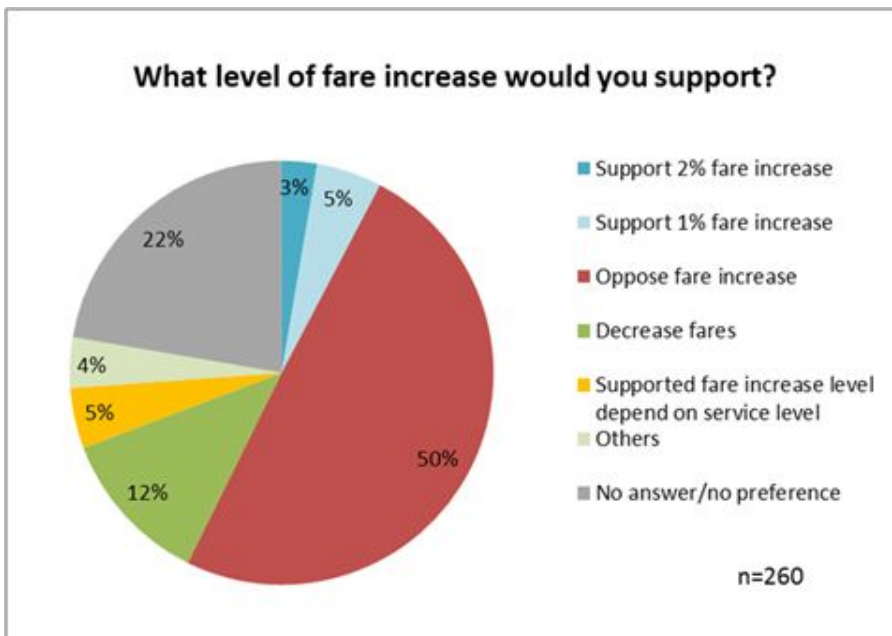


### 6. Support for proposed 3% fare increase



Submitters were asked whether they supported the proposed 3% general fare increase to help offset the cost of the proposed changes. If they disagreed with the 3% fare increase, they were asked what level of fare increase they would support. The above figure shows that 42% of submitters supported the proposal 3% fare increase while 51% opposed it.

Submitters who opposed the proposal supported levels of fare increase as shown below.



## Hearings Schedule for considering submissions and feedback on the proposed Metlink fare changes – as at 10am 04/10/17

### Session 1 : 10:10 to 11:00am

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Andrew Dinsdale	Andrew Dinsdale	93	99	5 mins	10:10	10:15
Community Network Wellington		499	672	10 mins	10:15	10:25
Don S McDonald	Don S McDonald	387	444	5 mins	10:25	10:30
				10 mins	10:30	10:40
Dr Hugh Barr	Dr Hugh Barr	423	493	5 mins	10:40	10:45
Living Streets Aotearoa		501		10 mins	10:45	10:55
Sandra L Murray	Sandra L Murray	495	677	5 mins	10:55	11:00

### Session 2 : 11:10 to 12:00am

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Kent Duston	Kent Duston	21	23	5 mins	11:10	11:15
Tony Randle	Tony Randle	503	682	5 mins	11:15	11:20
				10 mins	11:20	11:30
Kirsten Julian	Kirsten Julian	18	20	5 mins	11:30	11:35
Paul Clutterbuck	Paul Clutterbuck	327	369	5 mins	11:35	11:40
Wellington City Council	Cr Sarah Free	444	530	10 mins	11:40	11:50
				10 mins	11:50	12:00

### Session 3 : 12:10am to 12:50pm

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Andrew Kerr	Andrew Kerr	331	373	5 mins	12:10	12:15
Corwin Newall	Corwin Newall	383	439	5 mins	12:15	12:20
				10 mins	12:20	12:30
Helene Donaldson	Helene Donaldson	456	555	5 mins	12:30	12:35
Rachael Bruce	Rachael Bruce	120	128	5 mins	12:35	12:40
				10 mins	12:40	12:50

### Lunch Break

### Session 4 : 1:30 to 2:30pm

## Attachment 2 to Report 17.382

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Jane Wilson	Jane Wilson	492	655	5 mins	1:30	1:35
Trish Enright	Trish Enright	452	551	5 mins	1:35	1:40
Jim Sim	Jim Sim	401	469	5 mins	1:40	1:45
CCS Disability Action Wellington	Raewyn Hailes	308	341	10 mins	1:45	1:55
				10 mins	1:55	2:05
Judy Williams	Judy Williams	366	411	5 mins	2:05	2:10
				10 mins	2:05	2:15
Mary Fisher	Unknown	476	625	5 mins	2:15	2:20
				10 mins	2:20	2:30

**Session 5 : 2:40 to 3:30pm**

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Wellington Institute of Technology and Whitiria Community Polytechnic	Chris Gosling	451	548	10 mins	2:40	2:50
Yvonne Weeber	Yvonne Weeber	386	443	5 mins	2:50	2:55
				5 mins	2:55	3:00
Victoria University of Wellington	Nikki Vander	474	622	10 mins	3:00	3:10
				5 mins	3:10	3:15
Wellington City Youth Council	unknown	387	444	10 mins	3:15	3:25
				10 mins	3:25	3:30

**Session 6: 3:40 to 5:00pm**

Submitter	Presenter	Submission Number	Page Number	Allocated time	Time Start	Time End
Victoria University of Students' Association	Rory, Raven, Ali	470	610	10 mins	3:40	3:50
Chris Renwick	Chris Renwick	402	470	5 mins	3:50	3:55
				5 mins	4:00	4:05
Murray Jaspers	Murray Jasper	437	509	5 mins	4:05	4:10
Lance Pratley	Murray Jasper	427	497	5 mins	4:10	4:15