

Confirmed Public minutes of the Council meeting on Thursday 16 June 2022

Taumata Kōrero – Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington, at 1.02pm.

Members Present

Councillor Ponter (Chair)
Councillor Staples (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Blakeley
Councillor Brash (from 1.05pm)
Councillor Gaylor
Councillor Hughes
Councillor Kirk-Burnnand
Councillor Laban
Councillor Lamason
Councillor Lee
Councillor Nash
Councillor van Lier (remotely, via Microsoft Teams)

Members participating at this meeting remotely counted for the purposes of quorum in accordance with clause 25B of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act 2002.

Karakia timatanga

The Council Chair opened the meeting with a karakia timatanga.

Public Business

1 Apologies

Moved: Cr Nash / Cr Blakeley

That Council accepts the apology for absence from Councillor Connelly.

The motion was **carried**.

2 Declarations of conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

3 Public participation

There was no public participation.

4 Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Council meeting on 26 May 2022 – Report 22.228

Moved: Cr Blakeley / Cr Staples

That Council confirms the Public minutes of the Council meeting on 26 May 2022 - Report 22.228.

The motion was **carried**.

5 Confirmation of the Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting on 26 May 2022 – Report PE22.229

Moved: Cr Gaylor / Cr Kirk-Burnnand

That Council confirms the Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting on 26 May 2022 - Report PE22.229.

The motion was **carried**.

6 Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Funding and Financial Policies Hearing Committee meeting on Tuesday 17 May 2022 – Report 22.204

Moved: Cr Gaylor / Cr Staples

That Council confirms the Public minutes of the Funding and Financial Policies Hearing Committee meeting on Tuesday 17 May 2022 – Report 22.204.

The motion was **carried**.

Noted: Cr Brash joined the meeting at 1.05pm, when it was considering the above item.

Strategy, policy or major issues

7 Report of the Hearing Committee on the Proposed 2022 Revenue and Financing Policy and the Rates Remission on Māori Land Policy – Report 22.247

Moved: Cr Staples / Cr Nash

That the Council:

- 1 Agrees to the following proposed changes to the 2022 Revenue and Financing Policy as agreed by the Committee:
 - a Change the Regional Economic Development rate funding method to: Capital value for all business and a Fixed rate for residential and rural - \$15

- b Change the Regional Predator Control Programme funding method to: 100 percent general rate
 - c Change from the riverside landowner targeted rate to the Te Kāuru Catchment targeted rate: Up to 50 percent general rates, the balance remaining as targeted rates to the properties within the proposed Te Kāuru catchment, based on capital value.
 - d Include the Waiōhine River stopbank rate with a funding method: Up to 50 percent general rates, the balance remaining as targeted rates for the urban Greytown area and a select number of rural properties who benefit from the Waiohine stopbank implementation, using capital value.
 - e Include the Wellington Regional Stadium rate (Sky Stadium) with a funding method using a targeted differential based on capital value:
 - Wellington CBD - 2
 - All other Wellington properties - 1.2
 - Porirua City, Hutt City and Upper Hutt City - 1
 - Kāpiti Coast District and Wairarapa - 0.5
 - f Remove the Public Transport differentials from the Policy and change the Policy to say:
 - User charges: The level of user contribution via fare revenue is primarily determined by patronage and fare levels; and may vary by the changes to operating costs and other sources of funding. To maintain the fares share of funding, fares will be adjusted annually with inflation within 1 to 3 percent, subject to Council decisions through annual fares and budget review.
 - Grants and subsidies: Level of contribution from Crown agencies, primarily Waka Kotahi is determined by Waka Kotahi's Funding Assistance Rates (51 percent to 100 percent depending on activity) and co-investment policy.
 - Targeted rate: Balance, calculated on ECV, with differentials based on land use, location and provision of service, up to the levels set by the rates (increase) affordability benchmark. Targeted differentials will be reviewed annually through Annual Planning process.
- 2 Notes that the Committee recommended that the Land Management funding method be amended to a 100 percent general rate, to be managed with Catchment specific Memorandums of Understanding, and that further analysis of this approach is outlined in Report 22.252 – Land Management Funding Options
- 3 Notes that the Committee requested that officers undertake an analysis regarding Uniform Annual General Charges, as part of the next full review of the Revenue and Financing Policy, planned as part of the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan.

- 4 Agrees to all the proposed changes for the Rates Remission on Māori Land Policy, as agreed by the Committee:
- a Treat land which was compulsorily acquired as Māori freehold land by the Crown/councils and then returned to descendants of the original owners in general title as if it were Māori freehold land for the purposes of the policy.
 - b Treat land in general title, collectively owned by Māori, as eligible land for the purposes of this policy.
 - c Include Treaty settlement land as eligible land under the policy.
 - d Allow applications for remissions on general land collectively owned by Māori that is under development, aligned to the provisions, criteria and conditions set out for Māori freehold land under development in section 114A of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.
 - e Extend the term of remission from one to three years, to lessen administrative burden both on Māori landowners as well as for Greater Wellington.
 - f Remove the option of applying for a rates postponement under the policy. Rates postponements will remain available under the conditions for all land in the region but are generally not utilised or advisable for Māori land.

The motion was **carried**.

8 Land Management Rate – Report 22.252

Alison Trustrum-Rainey, Chief Financial Officer, and Deborah Kessell-Haak, Manager, Legal and Procurement, spoke to the report.

The meeting adjourned at 1.35pm, during questions, and reconvened at 1.43pm

Moved: Cr Staples / Cr Hughes

That the Council agrees to option A, being the status quo, for the Land Management rate.

The motion was **carried**.

9 Airport Express Bus Service – Report 22.244

Tim Shackleton, Manager, Commercial, Strategy and Investments, spoke to the report.

Moved: Cr Blakeley / Cr Nash

That the Council:

- 1 Notes that setting public transport fares is a decision that rests with Council.
- 2 Notes that the Airport Service is a targeted express service that provides direct access between Wellington Railway Station and Wellington Airport; it will be

operated by electric vehicles with special features, and additional costs required to provide this service.

- 3 Notes that the proposed fares set out in recommendation 4 below are informed by market research undertaken by Metlink and consider comparable services and alternative modes.
- 4 Agrees to set fares for the Airport Service as follows:
 - a Adult fare: \$7.51 with Snapper; \$9.50 with cash or bank card
 - b The following concessions will apply to this fare:
 - Accessible, Tertiary and Child concessions will apply from 1 July 2022, and
 - the Community Service Card concession will apply when implemented (from 1 September 2022).
 - Free off peak fares for SuperGold card concessions.
- 5 Notes that Government half price fare initiative will apply to the Airport Service fares while available (currently until the end of August 2022).

The motion was **carried**.

10 Public Transport Annual Fares Review – Report 22.263

Tim Shackleton, Manager, Commercial, Strategy and Investments, spoke to the report.

Moved: Cr Ponter / Cr Blakeley

That the Council:

1. Notes the assumption in the current Te Mahere Pae Tawhiti Long Term Plan 2021-31 (LTP) that fares will increase by LTP inflation forecasts (2021-31) which is 2.9% for 2022/23 and 2.5% 2023/24.
2. Notes the policy in Te Mahere Waka Whenua Tūmatanui o te Rohe o Pōneke Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-31 provides that Council amend fare levels annually with inflation within 1% to 3%, subject to reviews and Council decisions, through annual fares review and the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process.
3. Notes that due to the continued impacts of COVID-19, fare revenue is expected to be below the levels budgeted for 2022/23.
4. Notes that this year Council postponed consideration of the Annual Fares Review (AFR) report until after the Government's Budget 2022 and Emissions Reductions Plan (ERP) were delivered in May 2022.
5. Notes that the Government's Budget 2022 contains measures to improve the affordability of public transport for Community Services Card holders from 1 September 2022.
6. Notes that Greater Wellington is currently implementing a number of major ticketing and fare initiatives, including:

- a. Extension of Snapper ticketing to the remaining rail lines from November 2022
 - b. Phase-out of paper tickets from rail network, starting with Johnsonville Line from July, followed by a complete replacement of paper tickets with Snapper ticketing across the rail network by December 2022
 - c. Implementation of the national Community Connect scheme in stages starting with a transitional period from 1 September 2022 to 1 December 2022 until Snapper ticketing is rolled out across the entire rail network; and
 - d. Public consultation on the draft Future Fares Direction between 17 June and 15 July 2022, which is expected to inform the decision on fare levels
7. Notes that the ticketing initiatives will require at least a few months after they will be in place to enable their benefits to be realised and ensure all customers are smoothly transitioned to the new fares and ticketing arrangements.
 8. Agrees to increase fares by a minimum of 3 percent from 1 March 2023, with the option to increase above 3 percent to also cover financial year 2023/24.
 9. Notes that officers will bring a report to Council in February 2023 for the Council to determine any additional level of fare increase.
 10. Notes that the upcoming annual fares review cycle will start in the third quarter of the current financial year as part of the annual plan cycle for 2023/24, and the results will be reported to Council by February/March 2023.

The motion was **carried**.

Noted: The Council requested that officers prepare a workshop item on longer term cost saving opportunities, including strategic asset control.

11 Public Transport Fares – Recently Announced Government Initiatives – Report 22.255

Nicki Lau-Young, Manager, National Ticketing Solution, and Tim Shackleton, Manager, Commercial, Strategy and Investments, spoke to the report.

Moved: Cr Blakeley / Cr Brash

That the Council:

- 1 Notes that on 19 May 2022, the Government announced that it would:
 - a extend funding of the universal half-price fares initiative for a further two months, from 30 June 2022 to 31 August 2022
 - b introduce and fully fund a Community Connect scheme to improve affordability of Public Transport for Community Services Card holders from 1 September 2022.
- 2 Notes that amending Public Transport fares is a decision that rests with Public Transport Authorities, in this case Council.

- 3 Notes that Te Mahere Waka Whenua Tūmatanui o te Rohe o Pōneke Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-2031 policies and Council strategies support the introduction of a Community Services Card concession.
- 4 Agrees to extend the reduced Metlink Public Transport fares by a minimum of 50 percent for an additional two-month period concluding on 31 August 2022.
- 5 Agrees to implement (subject to the receipt of Waka Kotahi formal funding approval) the Community Connect scheme on Metlink Public Transport services commencing on 1 September 2022.
- 6 Notes that making the Community Connect scheme available from 1 September 2022 will require transitional arrangements on rail (with the exception of the Johnsonville line) and ferry until after the Snapper ticketing is available. In particular:
 - a the Community Services Card will be sighted on board by Metlink staff to verify concession eligibility
 - b the concession will only be available on the existing concession 10-trip tickets and cash tickets.
- 7 Notes that on bus and Johnsonville Line services, the Community Connect Concession will be available only through the use of a Snapper cards, and that this approach aligns with Council policy and Future Fares Direction.
- 8 Agrees with the transitional arrangements as set out in recommendation 6 (above) for the period between 1 September and 1 December 2022.
- 9 Notes that the transitional arrangements will require a temporary departure (until December 2022) from current Council policy and strategy on the application of concessions and incentivising contactless payments.
- 10 Notes that an operational plan for the next phase of the implementation will be reported to Council prior to the end of the transition period on 1 December 2022.

The motion was **carried**.

Karakia whakamutunga

The Council Chair closed the meeting with a karakia whakamutunga.

The public meeting closed at 2.13pm.

Councillor ~~D. Ponter~~ A. Staples

Chair 

Date: 30/6/22