



HAWKES BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

TE KAUNIHERA Ā-ROHE O TE MATAU-A-MĀUI

Unconfirmed

Minutes of a meeting of the Regional Transport Committee

Date:	Friday 6 September 2024
Time:	10.06am
Venue:	Council Chamber Hawke's Bay Regional Council 159 Dalton Street NAPIER
Present:	Cr M Williams, Chair Cr J van Beek, Deputy Chair Cr Tania Kerr (HDC) Cr Marcus Buddo (HDC). Mayor C Little (WDC) (<i>Joined online from 10.25am onwards</i>) Cr K Price (NCC) L Stewart (NZTA) Cr Kate Taylor (CHBDC)
Advisory members in Attendance:	I Emmerson (Road Transport Association) N Ganivet (Napier Port) A Hallett (NZ Police) D Headifen (KiwiRail) A Robin (HBRC Māori Committee) R Stratford (HB Airport) A Hedley – Te Whatu Ora HB (as an alternate)
In Attendance:	K Brunton – Group Manager Policy & Regulation B Cullen – HBRC Transport Strategy & Policy Analyst R Turnbull – HBRC Transport Manager L Schlierike – Roadsafe Coordinator M Clews – HDC M Hardie – WDC R Malley – NCC S McKinley – CHBDC A Ward – HBRC Governance Advisor J Pannu – HDC

1. Welcome/Karakia /Apologies

The Chair, Martin Williams, welcomed everyone and Api Robin offered a karakia to open the meeting.

Resolution

RTC28/24 That the apologies for absence from David Murray (AA), Bridget Wilson (Te Whatu Ora) and Councillor Jerf van Beek be accepted.

Kerr/Taylor
CARRIED

2. Conflict of interest declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of the Regional Transport Committee meeting held on 12 July 2024

RTC29/24 Resolution

Minutes of the Regional Transport Committee meeting held on Friday, 12 July 2024, a copy having been circulated prior to the meeting, were taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record as amended.

Kerr/Taylor
CARRIED

4. Public Forum

Julia McLean (online) representing horse riders' campaign to be classified as Vulnerable Road Users covered:

- Drivers on rural roads, where vehicles often travel at high speeds and there is limited visibility, pose a significant danger to horse riders.
- Legislation that officially designates horse riders as vulnerable road users would ensure that drivers are legally obligated to slow down and give sufficient space when passing horse riders, currently unprotected by many road safety laws.
- A petition, with cross-party support, is going to NZ Parliament on 14 October asking for horse riders to be added to the list of vulnerable road users, and the group is asking for a letter of support.
- It was agreed that Martin William will write a letter of support for the petition.

Mayor Craig Little joined the meeting online at 10.25am

Hastings District Councillor Tania Kerr introduced Norm Brown, Chairman of the Te Pōhue Community Trust, who spoke about the significant negative impacts of the cancellation of school bus services on rural communities. Key points included:

- Many families having to face decisions on whether to leave the area, stop working to homeschool, or have their kids walk long distances on dangerous roads.
- The Ministry of Education is not engaging with affected communities and seeking the RTC's support to reverse the Ministry's decisions.
- It was agreed that the RTC will raise the concerns with Ministry of Education representatives.

RTC30/24 Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee:

1. Receives and notes the *Public Forum speakers' verbal presentations*
2. Delegates the Chair, Martin Williams, on behalf of the Regional Transport Committee, to prepare a letter of support for the petition for horse riders to be classified as Vulnerable

Road Users.

3. Agrees that the issues related to rural school bus service cancellations raised by Mr Brown will be raised at the ministerial level.

**Kerr/Williams
CARRIED**

5. Regional Transport Programme September 2024 update

Bryce Cullen spoke to the item, which was taken as read. Discussions included:

- The Regional Land Transport Plan process has concluded for now. The TAG work programme will be updated to reflect the NLTP funding allocations and reported to the 6 December RTC meeting.
- TAG lodged a submission with the Ministry of Transport's consultation on Draft Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 on behalf of the HB's local road controlling authorities and a copy was distributed to members.
- The Chair advised a letter to NZTA concerning the HB expressway project's future form and function consultation was submitted on behalf of the RTC and any response will be shared once received.

RTC31/24

Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee receives and notes the *Regional Transport Programme September 2024 update* staff report.

**Taylor/Kerr
CARRIED**

6. Roadsafe Hawke's Bay update

Bryce Cullen, Russell Turnbull, and Liz Schlierike provided an overview of Roadsafe's activities over the past year, highlighting:

- To combat driver fatigue, identified as a major factor contributing to road accidents in the Hawke's Bay region, particularly during long weekends and holiday periods, fatigue stops, coordinated between the police, road safety teams and volunteers, are set up at key points along busy highways, particularly on SH5 and SH2.
- The Youth Road Safety Expo, focused on major risks for young drivers, was attended by over 2,000 students from local schools and featured presentations from local law enforcement, emergency services, and health professionals, providing real-life examples of how dangerous driving behaviours can lead to accidents, injuries, and fatalities.
- The significant reduction in road safety funding, cut from \$1.9 million to \$660,000 has the potential to seriously impact road safety programmes and will result in fewer workshops, fatigue stops, and potentially a reduced number of educational events like the youth expo.
- It was agreed that due to the importance of Roadsafe HB's work local authority members will strongly advocate to their councils for their retention of road safety funding to help plug any financial gaps caused by central government cuts.

RTC32/24

Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee:

1. Receives and notes the *RoadSafe Hawke's Bay update* staff report
2. Agrees that local authority members will advocate for the importance of this work with their authorities and look for ways to continue to support RoadSafe Hawke's Bay despite the central government funding cuts.

**Williams/Kerr
CARRIED**

8. Waka Kotahi/NZTA Central Region Regional Relationships Director's update

Linda Stewart provided an update on NZTA activities which covered:

- \$655 million forecast investment for Hawke's Bay in the 2024-27 NLTP, including expressway improvements, Wairakei Gorge realignment, and maintenance.
- The Minister of Transport announced a proposal to toll the Manawatū-Tararua Highway, with online only public consultation opens on Monday 9 September 2024. It would be worthwhile for the RTC to review that proposal for any potential opportunities or impacts for the HB region, and any future toll or road user charging proposals.
- Minister Browne indicated a move towards time of use charging (TOUC) which can be initiated by local authorities and operated in partnership with NZTA. Any net revenue from a TOUC scheme must be reinvested into the transport system in the same region where the scheme operates.
- NZTA is to lead the development of the technological platform to support management of any TOUC schemes and enabling legislation is expected to be progressed through the legislative processes by the end of 2024 to have the first schemes operating in 2027.
- Consultation on the new Setting of Speed Limits 2024 rule closed on 11 July 2024 and it is anticipated that the rule will be announced by the end of September.
- Following public consultation, immediate policy and process changes to the Funding Assistance Rates (FAR) have been adopted by the NZTA Board and published on the NZTA website. NZTA officials are currently working on providing meteorological advice and consulting with Treasury on various funding models for the policy. No decision has yet been made by the NZTA Board on what the criteria will be qualifying events or the FAR rate that will be applied in these events. Decisions on FAR will take effect on 1 July 2025.
- Planning of the maintenance and operations programme for the spring/summer construction season is currently under way and design is underway for the 24-25 Renewals Programme.
- Central government levels of service set for NZTA are: 95% of potholes on high classification roads will be repaired within 24hrs of identification and 85% of potholes on lower classification roads. In HB in July 2024, 87% of potholes on high classification roads were repaired within 24hrs after identification and 94% on lower classification roads.
- Construction of Stage 1 of the Expressway, one of the government's Roads of National Significance (RoNS), is expected to begin in the last quarter of 2025, with the resource consent application strategy and ecological surveys already completed.
- RTC and local authorities can help to support NZTA's work in the region by advocating for critical local projects and working closely with the various NZTA teams.
- NZTA is building and capitalising on the work that has already been done on the Waikare Gorge realignment project, which will now include the resilience work just approved for funding by central government.
- Concerns were raised about anti-social road use such as burnouts and damage to signs and road surfacing on HB roads; linked to at least one road fatality in the region. NZ Police will lodge a submission with the Minister of Transport and are also seeking legislative changes.
- Safety concerns raised by a CHB ratepayer have been checked by the NZTA System Manager and do meet national requirements.
- NZTA will be working with CHBDC to fix the white line fading, reinstate the yellow lines which have degraded over time and carry out signage cleaning and repairs on SH2 during the community cleanup day on 22 September 2024.

RTC33/24

Resolutions

That the Regional Transport Committee:

1. receives and notes the *Waka Kotahi/NZTA Central Region Regional Relationships Director's update*.

2. Agrees that a submission on the tolling consultation will be made by the Chair, Martin Williams, as delegated on behalf the Regional Transport Committee.

**Taylor/Price
CARRIED**

9. **Transport Rebuild East Coast (TREC) update**

Scott Elwarth and Jacob Laird from Waka Kotahi (TREC) and Daniel Headifen from KiwiRail provided an update on recovery works on the state highway and rail networks which covered:

- SH2 has been a focus for the TREC team, repairing significant damage in small-scale, tight clusters of sites that needed complex ground anchoring, retaining walls, and temporary staging to fit in large-scale machinery and piling rigs.
- The Waikare Bailey bridge deck will be uplifted at the end of September and replaced with a stronger decking system. In case of a significant flood event, replacement Bailey Bridge equipment in Hastings has been allocated to Waikare Gorge if required.
- For rail, 23 sites remain in need of repair, mostly south of Hastings, and completion is expected mid-2025.
- KiwiRail has decided that the repairs to the Tūtaekurī River rail bridge are to be made permanent, effectively replacing the broken section.
- Significant concerns were expressed by committee members at this news given the potential flooding impacts on nearby communities and \$800m worth of infrastructure. The current vertical and horizontal alignments of the temporary bridges are of particular concern as they pose significant flood risks because they act as debris traps as happened in Cyclone Gabrielle. Before any further decisions or work on permanent structures is undertaken the updated flood modelling from Cyclone Gabrielle needs to be reviewed and factored in.
- The Wairoa-Gisborne rail line will remain mothballed with 'duty of care' maintenance only. Upgrades to the Palmerston North-Gisborne line are planned but details yet to be determined.

RTC34/24

Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee receives and notes the *Transport Rebuild East Coast (TREC) update*.

**Kerr/Price
CARRIED**

7. **Public Transport September 2024 update**

The item was taken as read.

RTC35/24

Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee receives and notes the *Public Transport September 2024 update* staff report.

**Williams/Taylor
CARRIED**

10. **Verbal Advisory representative reports**

- Nicolas Ganivet (Napier Port) recognised and expressed gratitude for the progress on the road network, noting that it will help move freight from Tairāwhiti and Taupo and hopefully improve regional productivity. The Hawke's Bay expressway will eventually form a stronger East-West corridor. Winston International Pulp and Paper Mill is expected to make an announcement concerning its continued financial viability which will significantly impact the transportation of goods from Hawke's Bay into the rest of New Zealand.

- Angela Hallett (NZ Police) outlined the Road Safety Partnership Programme which will see significantly increased enforcement actions targeting high-risk behaviours, particularly lack of restraints, mental impairment, or being distracted, and high speed. Deaths and serious injuries caused by unsafe driving are so far at similar levels to last year in the HB Region, but motorcyclist deaths and injuries have increased (10 fatalities and 9 nine serious injuries so far). NZ Police are currently advocating for policy changes to help combat anti-social road use.
- Api Robin (HBRC Māori Committee) noted that iwi reflect upon Matauranga Māori and that communities are all in the same waka when it comes to the environment, acknowledging the challenges and work happening across the transport sector and agencies.
- Ian Emmerson (Road Transport Association) acknowledged the central government's latest transport funding announcement; viewed as a highly positive development by the RTA. He also acknowledged that those wanting a greater emphasis on alternatives to vehicles, such as walking or cycling, may be disappointed.
- Daniel Headifen (KiwiRail) noted that repair of rail networks damaged by Cyclone Gabrielle have all been funded through insurance claims. However, there's other funding for maintenance, operations, and general upgrades as part of the Rail Network Improvement Plan. The June government budget contained a substantial level of ongoing investment in the rail network. There will be ongoing works to improve bridges and other infrastructure. KiwiRail doesn't always get into the granular details of specific line sections like Palmerston North to Napier, but improvements will continue. Regarding the future of Wairarapa Pineapple Express (WPI), he noted the importance of daily train trips as a revenue source but conceded that the viability of regional short-term transport is difficult.
- Alex Hedley (Te Whatu Ora) noted that a report on transport and health has been delayed due to the restructure of the health agencies but is still planned, and the importance of the road network and public transport for health service delivery.

RTC36/24

Resolution

That the Regional Transport Committee receives and notes the *Verbal Advisory Representative reports*.

**Kerr/Taylor
CARRIED**

Closure:

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.11pm on Friday, 6 September 2024.

Signed as a true and correct record.

Date:

Chair: