

DRAFT

REGIONAL PUBLIC
TRANSPORT PLAN
2021 - 2027

Connecting Top of the South Te Taihū



FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN
THE MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT



Introduction

The Land Transport Management Act 2003, and Land Transport Management Act Amendment Act 2013 (LTMA) states that the purpose of a Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) is to provide:

- A means for encouraging Council and public transport operators to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure; and
- An instrument in engaging with the public in the region on the design and operation of the public transport network; and
- A statement of:
 - The public transport services that are integral to the public transport network; and
 - The policies and procedures that apply to those services; and
 - The information and infrastructure that support those services.

The Marlborough RPTP focuses primarily on services contracted or provided by the Marlborough District Council (Council). This plan is aligned with the government's priorities described in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS 2021), as noted below:

- Transport Outcomes Framework – A transport system that improves wellbeing and liveability
 - Strong alignment with 'Inclusive Access' - Enabling all people to participate in society through access to social and economic opportunities, such as work, educations, and healthcare.
 - Strong alignment with 'Economic Prosperity' – Supporting economic activity via local, regional, and international connections, with efficient movements of people and products.
 - General alignment with 'Environmental Sustainability' – Transitioning to net zero carbon emissions, and maintaining or improving biodiversity, water quality, and air quality, and
 - Indirect alignment with 'Healthy and Safe People' – Protecting people from transport-related injuries and harmful pollution, and making active travel an attractive option.
- Strategic Priorities
 - Strong alignment with 'Better Travel Options' – Providing people with better transport options to access social and economic opportunities,
 - General alignment with 'Climate Change' – Developing a low carbon transport system that supports emissions reductions, while improving safety and inclusive access, and
 - Indirect alignment with 'Safety' – Developing an transport system where no-one is killed or seriously injured.

This RPTP sets out Council's intentions and policies regarding public transport in Marlborough. The RPTP takes into account all relevant national and local policies, and the public transport funding from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency which is

likely to be available to Council. As a Unitary Authority the relationship with transport operators is a simple one-on-one partnership to ensure passengers' needs are met.

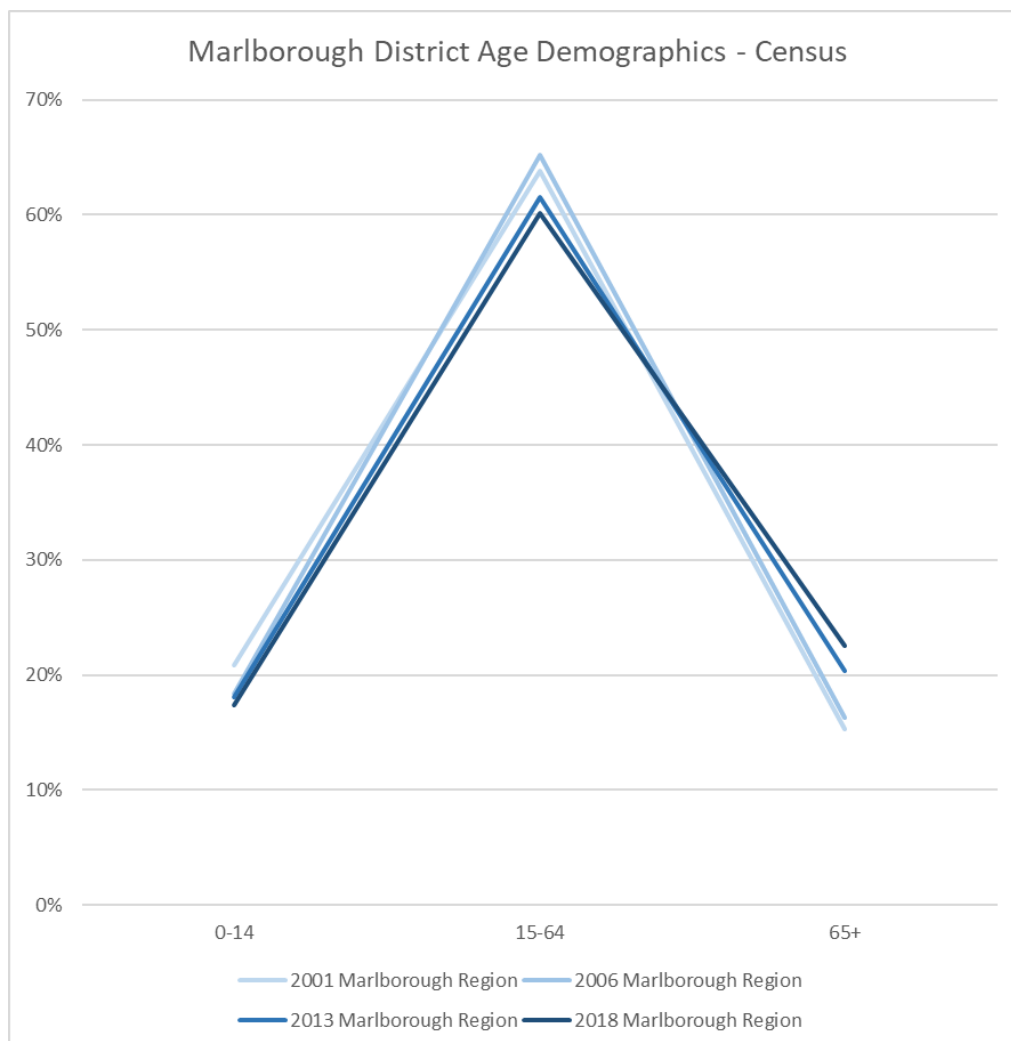
The bus service in Marlborough is integrated with a separate school bus contracted service and is able to deliver a reliable and sufficiently frequent service.

The Blenheim Bus has attracted some commercial support which reduces reliance on public subsidies. Council does have an intention to continue providing public transport services.

Background and Context

Currently, Council provides, by way of a subsidised contract, bus services in the vicinity of Blenheim. Council also subsidises the Total Mobility scheme for people with disabilities. Inter-regional services are provided by other providers.

The demand for public transport is led by the increasing elderly population in Marlborough. The following graph shows census age demographics, where it is evident the working age (15-64 years old) is generally decreasing over time, at a rate similar to the increase in people aged 65 and over. Apart from 2001, the percentage



of children (0-14 years old) has remained stable.

The bus service is designed to support public transport for the elderly by efficiently operating after school runs are complete in the mornings and generally before school runs commence in the afternoons. This timing is ideal for older people to go shopping, visit healthcare providers, or engage in social activities.

This Marlborough RPTP sets out Council's intentions with respect to the current and any future ratepayer funded public transport services in the District. The focus of this RPTP is to ensure the community have an appropriate transport choice, specifically to include Public Transport.

Council is preparing this plan as an update to the previous RPTP document, and note that this will replace the 2015 Marlborough RPTP.

The Blenheim Bus Service

The Blenheim Bus Service is the only publicly funded 'public transport service' (within the definition of the Public Transport Management Act) operating in the district. It is contracted by the Council and currently operated by Ritchies Transport Holdings Ltd. The contract was retendered in 2016, and will expire in February 2027.

The contract uses the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) which includes a sharing of financial risk and reward between the operator and Council. The Council's share, in turn, is sourced from rates on residential properties in the city, a Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency subsidy, and with partnership with a corporate sponsor, currently Bayleys Marlborough Ltd.

In addition to the two existing Blenheim Bus routes (North and South), the following 18 month trial services were initiated to provide additional bus routes, with an intent of making these permanent if trials are successful:

- Blenheim West Commuter (started 17 Feb 2020),
- Blenheim East Commuter (started 17 Feb 2020),
- Blenheim to Renwick return (started 17 Feb 2020), and
- Picton to Blenheim return (started 6 Aug 2019).

In the 2019/20 financial year, 17,312 public transport trips were made on the Council subsidised bus service. This is 22% less than the 22,220 average trips over the three previous financial years. However, it must be noted that March to June 2020 were adversely impacted by the COVID-19 lock-downs and subsequent impacts.

In December 2020, the Blenheim East Commuter trial service was cancelled due to low patronage. The Blenheim West Commuter trial service will continue until June 2021.

Low patronage has been evident on all routes during the COVID-19 global pandemic, most notably during the lock-downs imposed throughout New Zealand:

- Alert Level 2 or above (21 Mar – 8 June 2020, and 11 Aug – 21 Sept 2020)
- Alert Level 3 or above (23 March – 13 May 2020)

- Alert Level 4 (25 March – 27 April 2020)

As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues, the nature or extent of any future lock-downs within New Zealand is unknown. Any lock-down will have a negative impact on public transport patronage.

School Bus Service

Ministry of Education is the second largest provider of passenger services in New Zealand. This includes:

- managing approximately 7,000 vehicle journeys each school day
- carrying 40 million passenger journeys each year
- assisting over 100,000 students safely to and from school every day
- managing contracts for around 70 transport providers for bus services, specialised transport, and ferry services.

The current daily bus and technology bus contracts expire on 31 December 2021. These contracts service approximately 1,500 Daily Bus routes and 700 Technology routes. For the first time in 12 years, school bus services will be procured for the Ministry of Education's daily and technology bus services. The procurement will be conducted via two tenders between July 2020 and May 2021. The Ministry will award routes based on best public value, which means considering quality, price and broader outcomes, rather than solely on cost. Broader outcomes take into account economic, cultural, environmental and social benefits that can be achieved through this procurement.

Total Mobility

The Total Mobility Scheme assists eligible people with a permanent disability or impairment to access appropriate transport to enhance their community participation. This assistance is provided in the form of subsidised door-to-door transport services wherever scheme transport providers operate.

Eligible customers present their Total Mobility swipecard to access a 50% discount on eligible door-to-door transport, up to a maximum of \$15 per trip.

To qualify for the Total Mobility Scheme, applicants are referred to an appropriate Total Mobility agency to undergo an eligibility assessment based on nationally established criteria.

Voluntary participation in a nationally developed administration system known as 'Ridewise' is open to regions, and has been adopted in Marlborough. Ridewise utilises swipe card technology to electronically record trips and replaces the time consuming manual voucher system. It is expected that the swipe cards will be accepted through New Zealand under a nationally agreed reciprocal arrangement, and become the standard.

In the 2019/20 financial year, 18,962 trips were made on the subsidised Total Mobility scheme.

Council manages and operates the scheme, with subsidy funding from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. The annual cost of the Total Mobility scheme in Marlborough is about \$194,000 for the following:

- New taxi hoist grants,
- Regular Total Mobility trips,
- Hoist Total Mobility trips, and
- Administration costs

However, the Council expects to budget for increased mobility trips over time, reflecting an increasing aging population.

Health Mobility Services

The Marlborough Sounds Community Vehicle Trust provides health mobility services between Marlborough and Nelson hospital. This is an on-demand service, subject to availability.

St John Health Shuttle is a free community service that transports people to essential medical and health-related appointments, and then brings them home again. There's no charge for shuttle transport, however a donation is appreciated to cover costs. This is an on-demand service, subject to availability.

The Red Cross community transport service takes people from their homes to community appointments - for instance, to their doctor, hospital outpatient clinic, medical specialist or medical centre. Red Cross drivers are trained in first aid and provide assistance to and from the vehicle. This is an on-demand service, subject to availability, and requires booking at least 24 hours in advance.

Inter-regional and inter-community services

The Intercity Bus runs a network throughout New Zealand, including long-distance commercial public transport services within the Marlborough District. Blenheim and Picton are part of the network with connections to Nelson to the west and Kaikoura and Christchurch to the South.

Prior to COVID-19, Atomic Shuttles also had a South Island network which connected Blenheim to Picton, Nelson, Kaikoura and Christchurch. It is unknown if, or when, these services will resume. However, it is expected that service may return when demand increases, possibly in conjunction with the resumption of international tourism to New Zealand.

Other Blenheim based companies reportedly provide ferry transfers to/from Picton (and other locations), however these services are on-demand, and are not regularly scheduled services.

Policies

The LTMA states that a regional council must adopt a RPTP if it intends to enter into a contract to pay for the supply of public transport services, impose controls on commercial public transport services, or provide financial assistance to operators or users of taxi/shuttle services. As Council contracts for the supply of the Blenheim Bus Service and provides Total Mobility financial assistance, an RPTP is required.

All commercial public transport services operating in a region must be registered with the Council. They must also give notice to the Council of fares, routes etc. The Council can decline to register a service on certain grounds, for example, it is likely to increase the net cost to the council of any contracted public transport service.

The Act also provides regional councils with a range of other controls over commercial public transport services (units) and describes the process for developing and implementing those controls.

The national and regional statutes, strategies and policies establish a number of principles or objectives to guide the planning and funding of Public Transport, as well as transport more generally. The relevance of these principles and objectives and their implementation in the Marlborough RPTP is summarised in the table below.

1. Provide a Blenheim Bus Service	
Bus Service Policies	Implementation of policy
1.1 Continue to provide a quality bus service in Blenheim	Continue to tender contract for the provision of the bus service to provide a modern low floor bus.
1.2 Provide convenient bus stop locations.	Endeavour to minimise walk distance to bus stops with 90% of passengers walking less than 500m.
1.3 Improve the Blenheim bus service, within the constraints of current budgets and contracts	<p>Improve the bus network.</p> <p>Routes should allow for a 'clock face' timetable at each stop (i.e. bus arrives/departs at the same time each day), to the extent possible</p> <p>New stops should be located and designed with consideration of safety, and accessibility issues. Audits of existing bus stops should be undertaken to guide the design and location of new stops</p> <p>Provide two styles of timetables: one with stops specific to each bus stop and one for the entire network</p> <p>Investigate fare options to provide a more attractive fare structure while maintaining and/or improving revenue</p> <p>Seek to implement with the service operator;</p> <p>Expansion of concessions tickets for bulk ticket purchases, monthly passes, community service cards, students etc.</p>

	<p>(Concession tickets are currently only available for purchase by adults at council reception, 10 adult trips for \$20).</p> <p>Carry out an accessibility audit of the existing and proposed bus stops in 2021</p>
1.4 Consider further improvements to the Blenheim bus service and seek additional resources necessary to implement	<p>Consider programming the following further improvements to the service:</p> <p>Extension of weekend services</p> <p>Additional buses to improve frequency and/or increase the number of routes</p> <p>Further improvements to frequency or timing of the bus(s) to complete a 'clock face' timetable, additional shelters, bus timetable information facilities etc.</p> <p>Extension of the hours of service</p> <p>Development and implementation of an advertising plan in 2021, including launch of real time tracking services.</p>
1.5 Investigate alternative funding opportunities	<p>Investigate opportunities to fund bus timetable facilities and new shelters through provision of advertising space</p> <p>Recognise that the Financial Assistance Rate will be at base rate</p>
2. Provide a Total Mobility Scheme	
Total Mobility Policies	Implementation of policy
2.1 Continue to support the Total Mobility Scheme in the Marlborough District, subject to continued funding from the NZ Transport Agency	Maintain agreements with Total Mobility providers and continue to administer total mobility subsidies
2.2 Allow new operators to join the Total Mobility Scheme	Enter into total mobility agreements with new operators that meet the requirements of the scheme
3. Provide a Supergold Card Scheme	
Total Mobility Policies	Implementation of policy
3.1 Continue to support the Supergold Card initiative	Continue to administer Supergold Card subsidies for free travel during off peak hours
3.2 Provide convenient bus stop locations.	Endeavour to minimise walk distance to bus stops with 90% of passengers walking less than 500m.

Proposed Services

Units

The LTMA requires every public transport network in NZ to be divided into “units”. Each unit must then be the subject of a separate contract. The MRPTP is required to set out the units that the Council intends be provided, and the date that the units are expected to start operating. Current contracts are able to continue until they end, and the new model introduced by the LTMA is for future contracts.

Because of the nature and relatively small size of the Blenheim bus service it currently has only two Units / bus contracts for the network of services:

- Blenheim and Renwick Bus Services
- Picton Bus Service

This is a logical arrangement in a town the size of Blenheim and has worked well, and enables close cooperation between Council and the bus operator. This single unit approach has been adopted in most similar sized towns to Blenheim.

This RPTP, therefore, proposes that the single unit/single contract system will continue for the Blenheim bus service.

The Blenheim Bus Service

This RPTP supports maintaining a bus service in Blenheim.

Customers are charged a standard fare for each trip (\$2 for adults and \$1 for school children/students), while under 5’s and Supergold cardholders are able to travel for free (except on Commuter services that only run during peak hours).

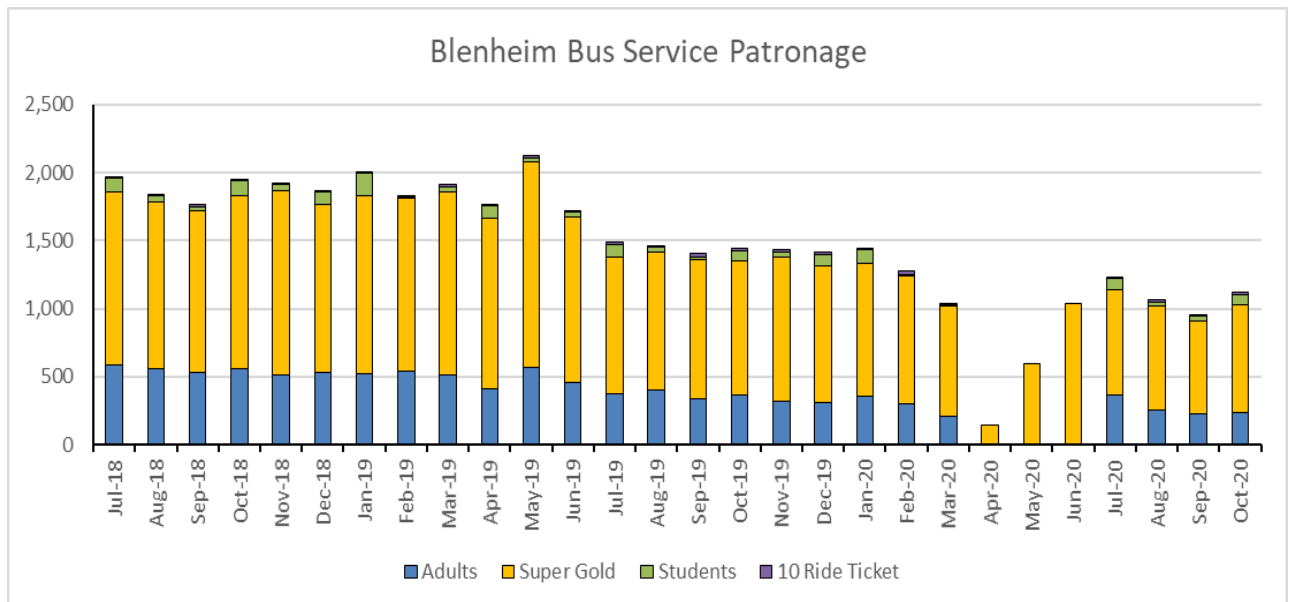
Patronage of the present service is modest. The service does not cater for commuters but rather promotes mobility for the growing number of older people and other community members with limited access to motor vehicles within Blenheim.

The timetable for the original Blenheim bus services were altered from 1 July 2019, largely to comply with the new rest and meal break requirements introduced through amendments to the Employment Relations Act, but also to improve service reliability. The effect of these changes was to reduce the number of daily circuits around the North and South routes from six(6) one hourly services to four(4) one and a half hourly services. As anticipated, this has adversely impacted on patronage



of these services, as can be seen in the graph below. Average monthly patronage has fallen from 1,890 passengers in 2018/19 to 1,440 passengers in 2019/20 financial year.

COVID-19 lockdowns have also made a notable impact on patronage, with decreased utilisation of public transport for every month since February 2020. While patronage has rebounded some, it has not reached pre-COVID-19 levels as of the date of this RPTP. Council is continuing to monitor passenger numbers.



Another unintended consequence of the Blenheim service changes has been the loss of connectivity between the two Blenheim routes and the Picton service. There is no south route connection for the bus which returns from Picton mid-afternoon. The south connection would require an additional Blenheim service after 3pm, which is not budgeted.

Further consideration of a range of options is required. Progressive changes may enhance the service:

- Provision of bus timetables at bus stops
- Reconfigured bus timetables
- Installation of more shelters at bus stops, particularly at busier stops
- Better advertising and branding of the services, including provision of real time tracking for general public use.
- Provision of concessions e.g. for bulk ticket purchases
- Longer hours of operation, especially in the evenings
- Possible extension of weekend service

However, funding levels are proposed to remain constant in the short to medium term, therefore the Council will seek to implement changes that are consistent with the current contract and that can be implemented with current budgets.

Review of the bus routes and stops can be undertaken at little cost. Other improvements that will be sought in the short term include redesigning the bus

timetable information; and working with the contractor to improve advertising of the service.

Introduction of concession tickets could be investigated. A review of ticket pricing and the implication of cost escalation will need to be considered as time progresses.

Further improvements will be considered in the longer term. Of greatest priority will be continuing to improve the timing of the bus so that the bus departs and leaves each stop at the same time each hour with no periods of lower frequency during the middle of the day, providing timetables at bus stops and installing more shelters. These changes may require some additional public funding, which will be subject to Council and government approval through the Ten Year Plan and National Land Transport Programme.

Fares have been left at a low level to encourage patronage and an increase in fares during the next two years are anticipated, with an expectation that the increase is reasonable and affordable, and will not affect patronage. The majority of users are supergold card holders so fare prices will have little influence on the viability of the service.

The North and South service offers a modern super low floor kneeling bus which accommodates 42 passengers and two wheelchairs. Accessibility will continue to be an important consideration for public transport alternatives in Marlborough, to better support the transport disadvantaged and an aging resident population.



Routes are designed for wide coverage and extend through much of Blenheim. The present North and South routes and timetables are shown below.

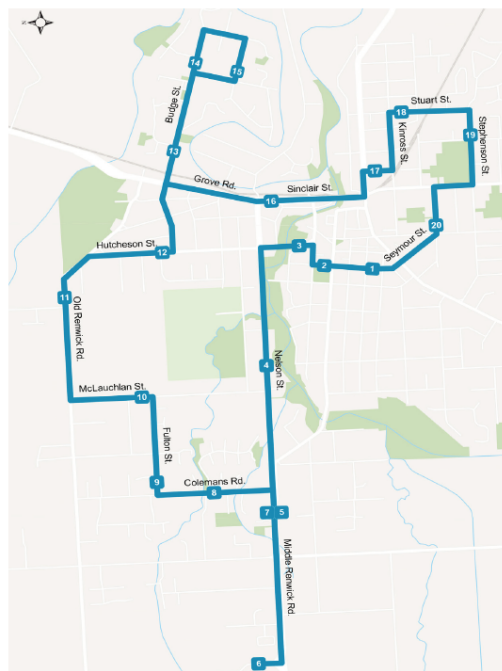
THE BLENHEIM BUS

Operates Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 3.00 pm and Saturday 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (excl Public Holidays)
 Marlborough District Council, with sponsorship from Bayleys Marlborough operates a subsidised bus service in Blenheim.

Key: M - F = Monday to Friday S = Saturday

North Route (Springlands - Riversdale)

Stop No.	Location	M - F am	M - F am	M - F pm	M - F pm	S am	S am	S pm
1	Countdown, Seymour St	9.45	11.15	12.45	2.15	9.40	11.05	12.25
2	Seymour Square	9.46	11.16	12.46	2.16	9.41	11.06	12.26
3	Clubs of Marlborough	9.47	11.17	12.47	2.17	9.42	11.07	12.27
4	39 Nelson St	9.50	11.20	12.50	2.20	9.45	11.10	12.30
5	Countdown, Springlands	9.51	11.21	12.51	2.21	9.46	11.11	12.31
6	PAK'nSAVE	9.54	11.24	12.54	2.24	9.49	11.14	12.34
7	Ashwood Park, Middle Renwick Rd	9.56	11.26	12.56	2.26	9.51	11.16	12.36
8	35 Colemans Rd	9.57	11.27	12.57	2.27	9.52	11.17	12.37
9	44 Fulton St/1 The Willows	9.58	11.28	12.58	2.28	9.53	11.18	12.38
10	59 McLauchlan St	9.59	11.29	12.59	2.29	9.54	11.19	12.39
11	12 Old Renwick Rd	10.01	11.31	1.01	2.31	9.56	11.21	12.41
12	44 Hutcheson St	10.03	11.33	1.03	2.33	9.58	11.23	12.43
13	43 Budge St	10.05	11.35	1.05	2.35	10.00	11.25	12.45
14	107 Budge St	10.06	11.36	1.06	2.36	10.01	11.26	12.46
15	31 Lucas St	10.07	11.37	1.07	2.37	10.02	11.27	12.47
16	Blenheim Railway Station	10.11	11.41	1.11	2.41	10.06	11.31	12.51
17	New World, Freswick St	10.14	11.44	1.14	2.44	10.09	11.34	12.54
18	15 Stuart St	10.15	11.45	1.15	2.45	10.10	11.35	12.55
19	68 Stephenson St	10.16	11.46	1.16	2.46	10.11	11.36	12.56
20	Lister Court, 16 Francis St	10.18	11.48	1.18	2.48	10.13	11.38	12.58
1	Countdown, Seymour St	10.20	11.50	1.20	2.50	10.15	11.40	1.00



Adults \$2.00 - School Children/Students \$1.00 - SuperGold cardholders and children under 5 free

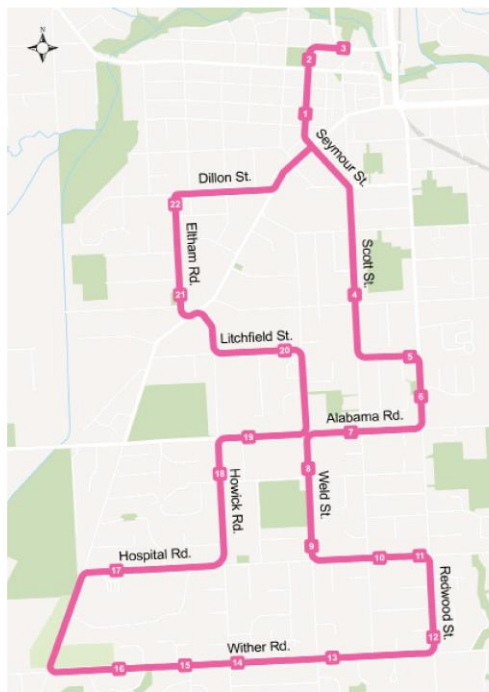
THE BLENHEIM BUS

Operates Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 3.00 pm and Saturday 9.00 am to 1.00 pm (excl Public Holidays)

Key: M - F = Monday to Friday S = Saturday

South Route (Redwoodtown - Witherlea)

Stop No.	Location	M - F am	M - F am	M - F pm	M - F pm	S am	S am	S pm
1	Countdown, Seymour St	9.00	10.30	12.00	1.30	9.00	10.20	11.45
2	Seymour Square	9.01	10.31	12.01	1.31	9.01	10.21	11.46
3	Clubs of Marlborough	9.02	10.32	12.02	1.32	9.02	10.22	11.47
4	117 Scott St	9.05	10.35	12.05	1.35	9.05	10.25	11.50
5	21 Ida St	9.06	10.36	12.06	1.36	9.06	10.26	11.51
6	105 Redwood St	9.09	10.39	12.09	1.39	9.09	10.29	11.54
7	118 Alabama Rd	9.11	10.41	12.11	1.41	9.11	10.31	11.56
8	Countdown, Redwoodtown	9.12	10.42	12.12	1.42	9.12	10.32	11.57
9	149 Weld St	9.13	10.43	12.13	1.43	9.13	10.33	11.58
10	133 Hospital Rd	9.14	10.44	12.14	1.44	9.14	10.34	11.59
11	165 Hospital Rd	9.15	10.45	12.15	1.45	9.15	10.35	12.00
12	195 Redwood St	9.16	10.46	12.16	1.46	9.16	10.36	12.01
13	98 Wither Rd	9.17	10.47	12.17	1.47	9.17	10.37	12.02
14	54 Wither Rd	9.18	10.48	12.18	1.48	9.18	10.38	12.03
15	36 Wither Rd	9.19	10.49	12.19	1.49	9.19	10.39	12.04
16	18 Wither Rd	9.20	10.50	12.20	1.50	9.20	10.40	12.05
17	11 Hospital Rd	9.22	10.52	12.22	1.52	9.22	10.42	12.07
18	90 Howick Rd	9.24	10.54	12.24	1.54	9.24	10.44	12.09
19	65 Alabama Rd	9.26	10.56	12.26	1.56	9.26	10.46	12.11
20	Bethsaida, Litchfield St	9.28	10.58	12.28	1.58	9.28	10.48	12.13
21	Guides' Hall, Eitham Rd	9.30	11.00	12.30	2.00	9.30	10.50	12.15
22	4 Eitham Rd	9.31	11.01	12.31	2.01	9.31	10.51	12.16
1	Countdown, Seymour St	9.34	11.04	12.34	2.04	9.34	10.54	12.19



In addition, there are trial bus routes which are in operation to determine if the demand is sufficient to warrant permanent routes. The trial routes are shown below, and generally are scheduled to run during peak hours:

Picton to Blenheim Return:

Picton to Blenheim (Tuesday & Thursday only)

Route: Waikawa Bay Jetty carpark, Waikawa Rd, Wellington St, London Quay, Auckland St, Wairau Rd, Nelson Square, Wairau Rd, State Highway 1 (SH 1), Goulard Rd, Cresswell St, Ferry Rd, SH 1, Grove Rd, Redwood St, Kinross St, Scott St, Countdown Seymour St.

Stop	am	pm
1 Waikawa Bay	9.00	1.00
2 Queen Charlotte College	9.05	1.05
3 Wellington St	9.08	1.08
4 Picton i-SITE	9.13	1.13
5 Nelson Square	9.15	1.15
6 Spring Creek (10 Ferry Rd)	9.35	1.35
7 Blenheim Railway Station	9.40	1.40
8 Stadium 2000	9.43	1.43
9 Countdown, Seymour St	9.45	1.45

Blenheim to Picton (Tuesday & Thursday only)

Route: Countdown Seymour St, Arthur St, Henry St, Maxwell Rd, Seymour St, Scott St, Kinross St, Redwood St, Grove Rd, State Highway 1 (SH 1), Goulard Rd, Cresswell St, Ferry Rd, SH 1, Wairau Rd, Nelson Square, Wairau Rd, Auckland St, London Quay, Wellington St, Waikawa Rd, Waikawa Bay Jetty carpark.

Stop	am	pm
1 Countdown, Seymour St	10.10	2.00
2 Stadium 2000	10.12	2.02
3 Blenheim Railway Station	10.15	2.05
4 Spring Creek (10 Ferry Rd)	10.20	2.10
5 Nelson Square	10.40	2.30
6 Picton i-SITE	10.42	2.32
7 Wellington St	10.47	2.37
8 Queen Charlotte College	10.50	2.40
9 Waikawa Bay	10.55	2.45



The trial Picton Service commenced in August 2019, operating 2 return trips on Tuesdays and Thursdays only, during off peak hours, which enables free travel for SuperGold card holders. Over the 6 completed months of operation, to January 2020, the service has averaged 279 passengers per month (slightly above our estimated patronage). Around 70% of passengers are SuperGold card holders.

The adult fare is \$4 and school children \$2, with under 5's travelling for free. Some intermediary fees apply for partial journeys.

The following website provides additional information, and may include updated information from that which is shown above:

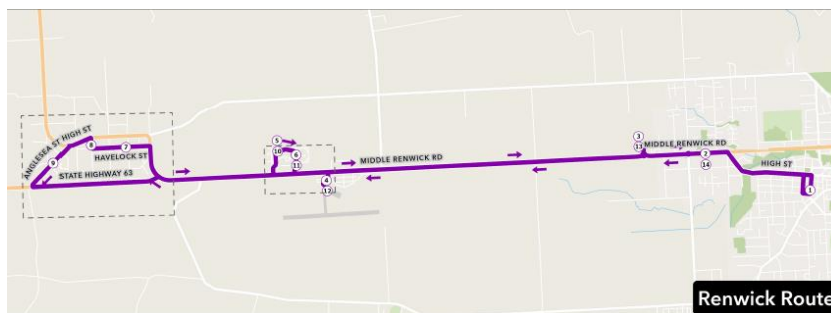
<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/blenheim-bus-services/bus-service-picton-to-blenheim>

Blenheim to Renwick Return:

Operates Monday to Saturday (excl Public Holidays)

Key: M - F = Monday - Friday S = Saturday

Stop No.	Location	M - F	M - F	M - F	M - F	S	S
1	Countdown, Seymour St	7.05	9.05	2.05	5.35	9.05	2.05
2	Countdown Springlands	7.08	9.08	2.08	5.38	9.08	2.08
3	PAK'nSAVE	7.09	9.09	2.09	5.39	9.09	2.09
4	Marlborough Airport	7.15	9.15	2.15	5.45	9.15	2.15
5	Opp. 35 Caldwell Rd	7.17	9.17	2.17	5.47	9.17	2.17
6	Opp. 1 Caldwell Rd	7.19	9.19	2.19	5.49	9.19	2.19
7	39 Havelock St	7.23	9.23	2.23	5.53	9.23	2.23
8 Arrive	21 - 23 Uxbridge St	7.24	9.24	2.24	5.54	9.24	2.24
8 Depart	21 - 23 Uxbridge St	7.30	9.30	2.30	6.00	9.30	2.30
9	27 Anglesea St	7.31	9.31	2.31	6.01	9.31	2.31
10	Opp. 35 Caldwell Rd	7.37	9.37	2.37	6.07	9.37	2.37
11	Opp. 1 Caldwell Rd	7.39	9.39	2.39	6.09	9.39	2.39
12	Marlborough Airport	7.41	9.41	2.41	6.11	9.41	2.41
13	PAK'nSAVE	7.47	9.47	2.47	6.17	9.47	2.47
14	Ashwood Park, Middle Renwick Rd	7.48	9.48	2.48	6.18	9.48	2.48
1	Countdown, Seymour St	7.51	9.51	2.51	6.21	9.51	2.51



The Renwick service operates from Monday to Saturday delivering four daily services on weekdays (1 early morning, 1 mid-morning, 1 mid-afternoon and 1 early evening circuit) and two services on Saturday (1 mid-morning and 1 mid-afternoon circuit)

The Renwick service also starts and finishes at the Countdown Seymour Street bus stop.

The route is Countdown Seymour St, High St, Boyce St, Middle Renwick Rd, SH6, Havelock St, Uxbridge St, High St, Anglesea St, SH63, Middle Renwick Road, Boyce St, High St, Henry St, George St, Countdown Seymour St.

There are stops in both directions at Springlands Countdown, Pak'N Save, Marlborough Airport and Woodbourne township.

The adult fare is \$3 and school children \$1.50, with under 5's travelling for free. Some intermediary fees apply for partial journeys.

Note: SuperGold card holders can only travel for free on the mid-morning and mid-afternoon (off peak) services.

The following website provides additional information, and may include updated information from that which is shown above:

<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/blenheim-bus-services/renwick-trial-bus-service>

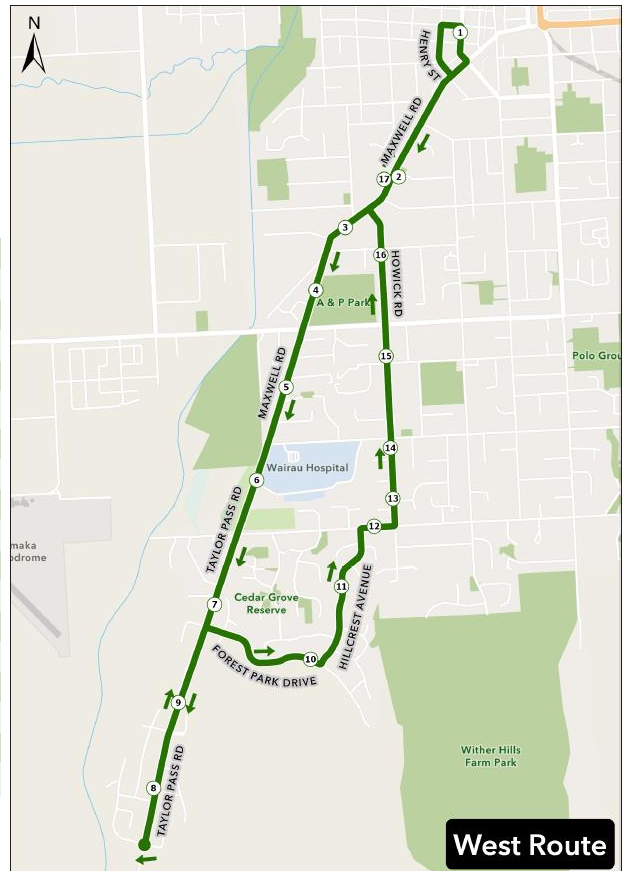
Blenheim West Commuter:

Blenheim West Commuter Bus Service (Maxwell/Taylor Pass/Howick)

Operates Monday to Friday (excl Public Holidays)

Key: M - F = Monday - Friday

Stop No.	Location	M - F am	M - F am	M - F pm	M - F pm
1	Countdown, Seymour St	7:30	8:00	5:15	5:45
2	93 Maxwell Rd	7:32	8:02	5:17	5:47
3	121 Maxwell Rd	7:33	8:03	5:18	5:48
4	A & P Park (south of Maxwell Rd entrance)	7:34	8:04	5:19	5:49
5	203A Maxwell Rd	7:35	8:05	5:20	5:50
6	15 Taylor Pass Rd (north of Wairau Hospital service entrance)	7:37	8:07	5:22	5:52
7	Taylor Pass Rd (Opp. Westmount School)	7:38	8:08	5:23	5:53
8	208 Taylor Pass Rd	7:40	8:10	5:25	5:55
9	164 Taylor Pass Rd	7:41	8:11	5:26	5:56
10	19 Forest Park Dr	7:44	8:14	5:29	5:59
11	32 Hillcrest Ave	7:45	8:15	5:30	6:00
12	47 Wither Rd (Bible Chapel)	7:46	8:16	5:31	6:01
13	178 Howick Rd	7:47	8:17	5:32	6:02
14	142C Howick Rd	7:48	8:18	5:33	6:03
15	90 Howick Rd	7:49	8:19	5:34	6:04
16	18 Howick Rd	7:51	8:21	5:36	6:05
17	96B Maxwell Rd	7:52	8:22	5:37	6:07
1	Countdown, Seymour St	7:53	8:23	5:38	6:08



The Blenheim commuter service operates from Monday to Friday, departing from and returning to the central Seymour Street bus stop (outside Countdown).

The West route travels along Maxwell Road, Taylor Pass Road, Forest Park Drive, Hillcrest Avenue, Wither Road, Howick Road, Maxwell Road and Seymour Street.

The discontinued East route travelled along Seymour Street, Scott Street, Stephenson Street, Houldsworth Street, Muller Road, Redwood Street, Wither Road, Weld St, Stephenson Street, Maxwell Road and Seymour Street.

There are two morning services departing 7:30 and 8:00am and two evening services departing 5:15 and 5:45pm. Both routes are around 22-23 minutes in duration.

The adult fare is \$2 and school children \$1, with under 5's travelling for free.

Note: there is no free travel for SuperGold card holders on these commuter services, which are operated during peak hours.

The following website provides additional information, and may include updated information from that which is shown above:

<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/blenheim-bus-services/blenheim-west-bus-trial-service>

Infrastructure

Road marking and signage is being installed at all stops and was largely in place at the service commencement date. Some sites still require road marking.

Council is also investigating the installation of timetable holders to be fixed at all bus shelters that will better inform the public on bus routes and times.

A bus stop and shelter have been recently installed in Uxbridge St, Renwick, outside Council's senior housing complex. This will serve as the central Renwick pause stop.



No Smoking in Bus Shelters

The Smokefree legislation is generally concerned with internal smoking, which prevents application to bus shelters, as they typically have at least one unenclosed area allowing free exit.

Council has issued a Smokefree Position Statement which contains policy dealing with smokefree venues. The Statement endorses certain smokefree areas including Council controlled venues and locations. Bus shelters are owned by the Council and thus are considered smokefree venues under this statement.

It is intended that signage displaying the smokefree logo be installed on all bus shelters.

There are no enforcement options available under the Statement.



Graffiti

Like many other streetscape features, bus shelters are prone to occasional graffiti and vandalism. The bus shelter in Budge Street has been badly graffiti'd over a sustained period of time through etching onto the glass window panels. This particular shelter was one of two donated by Jean Wilson, QSM.

Arrangements have been made to replace the 4 upper glass panels in this shelter and to trial a graffiti film overlay, which essentially provides a sacrificial barrier against vandals and the surfaces they deface. The cost of each pane replacement is



approximately \$600 while the film is around \$175 per pane.

Bike Racks

In mid-2020 Council installed bike racks on all buses to enable people to utilise both active transport and public transportation on their journey – providing additional transport choice. It is expected that under normal circumstances this would result in an increased patronage due to an increased catchment.



Website Content

Staff are currently scoping a project to review and improve the website presentation for the growing number of bus services that we provide, including timetables, route maps and fare schedules etc.

We are also exploring bus tracking apps for general public use.

School Bus Service

The Ministry of Education will continue to provide and administer this service independently of Council.

Total Mobility

Council will continue to provide and administer this service, utilising the Ridewise system, and subsidised by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency.

Funding will be adjusted to reflect the demand and utilisation of these services.

Health Mobility Services

Other organisations will continue to provide and administer these services independently of Council.

Inter-regional and inter-community services

The Intercity Bus will continue to provide this service independently of Council. Other companies may also provide these services when demand increases.

Alternatives

Council has determined that it is not acceptable to 'Do Nothing', and consequentially is committed to providing a base level of service.

The trial services described above, are demonstration of Council's initiative to consider the demand for an expanded public transport network of additional bus routes. While one route has been cancelled early, the remaining trial routes will be continued until the end of the planned trial period. Patronage on the trial routes will be an important consideration regarding a more permanent service expansion.

Services for Transport Disadvantaged

The LTMA requires this RPTP to describe how the public transport services and financial assistance Council intends to provide will assist the transport disadvantaged. 'Transport disadvantaged' is defined as meaning people whom the regional council has reasonable grounds to believe are the least able to get to basic

community activities and services (for example, work, education, health care, welfare and food shopping).

The first step is to determine who the council believes are transport disadvantaged. For this the Council is guided by three factors identified in the New Zealand Transport Strategy: lack of modal choice, affordability and disability.

In addition, the Council considers isolation from services an important factor in the Marlborough District. The table below describes groups the Council considers are transport disadvantaged and how the services Council intends to provide will assist their needs.

Transport Disadvantaged Services		
Transport Disadvantage Factor	Groups Affected	How public transport services will assist
Lake of modal choice	Households with limited access to motor vehicles. Households located more than 700m from a bus stop. Youth	This plan aims to improve the Blenheim bus service, providing a more attractive service that will better meet the needs of those with a lack of modal choice. Actions include reviewing the bus routes in Blenheim. The review will look to balance coverage with other issues such as frequency of service and travel times.
Affordability	Households with lower incomes. People in lower paying jobs. Youth and older people.	This plan aims to improve the Blenheim bus service, providing service that better meets the needs of people that use the bus. Actions include introducing concessions: - Family passes and discounts for monthly passes, community service cards etc. will be considered.
Disability	People with disabilities that affect their ability to drive and mobility. Older people	Total Mobility Services will continue to be provided, subject to continued financial support from Government. Council will investigate extending total mobility subsidies. Council will continue to specify that contractors use a low floor base for the Blenheim bus service. Council plans to develop a bus facility improvement plan which will take into account accessibility/mobility issues and will consider seeking additional funding to implement the plan.
Isolation	People and communities living away from most services.	Consideration of access issues outside Blenheim will occur.

Public Transport Plans and Priorities

The Public Transport plans for 2021-2024 include:

- Decision on Blenheim West Commuter trial service (June 2021),
- Decision on Blenheim to Renwick trial return service (June 2021),
- Decision on Picton to Blenheim trial return service (June 2021). and
- Implement Ridewise version 2 once development is complete (2021-2022).
- Fare review (2023)
- Exploration of real time tracking apps for general public use (2021-2023).
- Actions identified within the 'Transport Disadvantaged Services' table.

The Public Transport priorities for 2021-2024 include:

Public Transport Priorities		
Priorities	Explanation	Marlborough RTP
Economic Growth and Productivity	The government's main priority, as expressed in the GPS, is national economic development and productivity	Implementing this plan will contribute to better access to employment for Blenheim residents. Due to timetable constraints the bus service is used little for commuting to and from work. A range of actions are needed to better meet the needs of workers, such as changing arrival and departure times in the CBD
	The GPS recognises several priority areas to promote economic development and productivity. This includes initiatives that provide better access to markets, employment and areas that contribute to economic development	
Value for money	<p>The GPS stresses the need to generate better value for money from the government's investment in land transport and enhance the economic efficiency of individual projects. This is also important for Council's investment. Three concepts are related to value for money; effectiveness (contribution to the government's priorities), efficiency (maximizing value with the lowest resources possible) and economy (inputs purchased at lowest price over whole life of intervention)</p> <p>Council to take into account the need to obtain the best value for money, having regard to the desirability of encouraging fair competition and a competitive and efficient market for public transport services</p>	<p>Value for money is a key principle to this MRPTP. The plan recognises that local and central government funding is limited and there is a need to get more value from investment in public transport</p> <p>In particular, the plan identifies a need to review the Blenheim bus service so that it better meets the needs of Blenheim residents, while limiting expenditure on the service. While some of the changes may require a small increase in public funding, this is likely to be more efficient than continuing to invest in a less effective service. Actions have also been prioritised to ensure investment is directed at the most important actions.</p> <p>No issues relating to fair competition are identified</p>

Public Transport Priorities		
Priorities	Explanation	Marlborough RTP
Affordability	<p>The New Zealand Transport Strategy promotes maintaining an acceptable financial demand on central and local government, households, businesses and individuals; taking into account available funding sources; considering all costs including those on other sectors</p> <p>The Strategy encourages consideration of less traditional forms of shared transport outside of large urban areas such as community buses or demand-responsive transport</p>	<p>The MRPTP recognizes that the government and the communities of the Marlborough District have limited ability to fund public transport initiatives. The Blenheim bus service must be reviewed to achieve better value for money. No new services are planned at this stage</p>
Making best use of existing networks and infrastructure	<p>The GPS seeks better use of existing transport capacity, networks and infrastructure. According to the GPS, this means improving the efficiency of existing networks as well as investment in new infrastructure. It also means sequencing development so that small iterative investments in existing infrastructure do not take place when more significant investment in redevelopment the same infrastructure is shortly planned to commence</p>	<p>The MRPTP recognises the need to review and get more value out of existing services, especially the Blenheim bus service. It identifies a staged action plan of improvements, which can be progressed overtime to build on earlier improvements</p>
Environmental sustainability	<p>Environmental sustainability is a key concept throughout the legislation, strategies and policies</p>	<p>Consistent with the GPS, the primary focus for public transport in this MRPTP is improving transport options and accessibility, rather than shifting people out of cars and into public transport. Nonetheless, it is hoped that providing a more attractive Blenheim bus service will help to encourage a modal shift and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles</p>
Access and mobility	<p>Improving access and mobility is another key objective in the LTMA and increasing the availability and use of public transport is identified as important to this objective</p>	<p>Access and mobility is a key focus of this MRPTP. This plan supports retaining the total mobility service and Blenheim bus service and continuing to support the Supergold Card initiative. These services provide improved access choices for the community, especially the</p>

Public Transport Priorities		
Priorities	Explanation	Marlborough RPTP
		transport disadvantaged
	The GPS also seeks more transport choices, particularly for those with limited access to a car where appropriate. Better access to markets, employment and areas that contribute to economic development is another goal in which public transport could have a role	The MRPTP also seeks to improve the bus service so that it can better meet the needs of people in Blenheim
Integration and co-ordination	The GPS also encourages a coordinated approach to transport problems, whereby various agencies work together in a collaborative way	The MRPTP intends a collaborative approach to improving access and mobility
Safety, personal security and public health	National legislation, policies and strategies promote a safe transport system, which assists personal security and protects and promotes public health	Safety and personal security have not been the most critical issues for public transport in the Marlborough District. However these issues will be considered e.g. in the planning of new bus stops, design of facilities and agreements with service providers (bus and taxi companies)
	The LTMA requiring the Council to be satisfied that the RPTP contributes to assisting safety and personal security and to protecting and promoting public health	The benefits in terms of personal security should also be taken into account for future decisions about whether to extend the hours of operation of the bus service. Public health is promoted through this plan by retaining and improving services that improve accessibility, particularly for the transport disadvantaged
Consideration of the impact of higher fuel prices	The GPS encourages land transport planning to take into account the impact of volatile fuel prices. It notes that in times of high oil prices, the availability of transport choice, such as public transport, helps to mitigate the effects on households, and public transport use tends to increase	The MRPTP includes a policy to retain the Blenheim bus service, which could help to buffer the impact of higher fuel prices in Blenheim

Significance Policy

A significant policy is required, in accordance with section 120(4) of the Land Transport Management Act 2003, to set out how to determine the significance of proposed variations to this RPTP. The level of significance determines the consultation regarding the proposed variation that must be undertaken.

Application

This RPTP can be varied at any time. However in accordance with section 126(4) of the Land Transport Management Act 2003, the usual consultation will not be required if the proposed variation is considered not significant under this policy.

The approach to consultation will reflect the level of significance of any proposed variation. Consideration will be given to the costs and benefits of any consultative process or procedure and the extent to which consultation has already taken place.

The implication of not meeting the significance threshold is that the full consultation requirements of the LTMA will not need to be followed. However, Council may undertake targeted consultation on matters affecting specific communities and stakeholders, even if the significance threshold outlined in this policy is not invoked.

General determination of significance

The significance of variations to this RPTP will be determined by Council on a case by case basis. When determining the significance of a variation, consideration must be given to the extent to which the variation:

- Signals a material change to the planned level of investment in the public transport network
- Impacts on the purpose of the LTMA
- Affects residents (variations with a moderate impact on a large number of residents, or variations with a major impact on a small number of residents will have greater significance than those with a minor impact)
- Affects the integrity of this MRPTP, including its overall affordability
- Has already been the subject of consultation with affected parties.

Significant and non-significant matters

Matters that will ***always*** be considered '***significant***' are:

- Any variation that amends this policy on significance
- Major changes to existing services, or the introduction of new services, (other than changes to or the introduction of trial services), for which no consultation regarding the change or introduction has occurred.

Matters that will ***usually*** be considered '***significant***' are:

- Changes to units that significantly affect the financial viability of the contractor of that unit.

Matters that will **always** be considered '**not significant**' are:

- Minor editorial and typographical amendments to this MRPTP
- Minor changes to fare levels in accordance with current policy and funding levels

Matters that will **usually** be considered '**not significant**' are:

- A matter that has already been consulted on, including the addition, removal or amendment of any matter or service

Minor changes to the description of services following a review of that service e.g. changes to the frequency, route or hours of a service which result in the same, or better, level of service

- Changes to the description of services or grouping of services as a result of an areawide service review, provided that there is no significant increase in cost
- Minor changes of routes and/or timetables to existing services
- The introduction, alteration or deletion of trial services
- The introduction of a new unit provided the contractors of existing units are not affected.

Targeted consultation on non-significant variations

Where Council determines that a proposed variation is not significant, it may still undertake targeted consultation as follows:

a. Consultation for minor changes in the delivery of existing public transport services

For minor changes in service delivery which are required to improve the efficiency of existing services, such as the addition or deletion of trips and minor route changes, and which have only a local impact, consultation will generally be undertaken at a low level with the operator/s involved, the relevant territorial authority, and passengers who use the services. If consultation has already occurred as part of a service investigation or review, no additional consultation need occur.

b. Addition of new services

Where a new service is proposed and the new service has been the subject of community consultation, no additional consultation need occur.

c. Other non-significant variations

Any proposals for changes that affect only a sector of the community or the industry (e.g. a change in Total Mobility provision, or a change to specific vehicle quality standards) may be worked through with those most likely to be affected, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Fare-Box Recovery

In brief

In accordance with Transport Agency requirements, Council has adopted a fare-box recovery policy. Fare-box recovery measures the percentage of the gross costs of providing bus services that is covered by passenger fares (the balance of the costs is met in equal proportions by local ratepayers and The Transport Agency).

The national fare-box recovery rate is currently about 46%. The most recent target rate set by the Transport Agency is 50% or higher.

The fare-box recovery ratio for the Blenheim bus services (2019/20) is currently 36%, including supergold reimbursements and sponsorship. Council has set a target of achieving between 35 - 45%.

Background

The Transport Agency requirements

The Transport Agency requires that all regional Councils/unitary authorities prepare a “fare-box recovery policy”, and include that policy in the Regional Public Transport Plan.

The Transport Agency require the fare-box recovery policy to:

- Set a target fare-box recovery rate for the public transport system as a whole
- Set out how the target was chosen
- Set out a strategy as to how the target will be achieved
- Set out how the policy complies with various relevant national and regional planning documents, and with legislation
- Provide for an annual review of fare levels, and a review of fare structures at least every six years.

The Transport Agency prescribe the formula for establishing the fare-box recovery rate.

Services included

The public transport services to be included in the calculation of the fare recovery are any contracted bus services operating in the region.

Long-distance (e.g. inter-city services) services, privately funded school services, Ministry of Education funded school services, tourist and charter services are not included.

In accordance with The Transport Agency policy, Council has measured fare-box recovery of the service as a whole rather than measuring individual routes or trips. Individual services, routes or trips, particularly those that might be regarded as “social” services, are not necessarily expected to achieve the target set out in this policy.

How the targets were chosen

Council has chosen the 35–45% target fare-box recovery range based on the current recovery level and The Transport Agency targets.

Council recognises that its' bus service is very much a social service, with limited hours of operation and all during off peak hours, contributing towards a high proportion of supergold users.

A higher target was not considered appropriate given that the range 35-45% is close to the NZ average and centred around The Transport Agency target. It must be noted that other service improvements and fare/zone structure changes will, however, impact on the future fare recovery rate.

Sponsorship remains a critical component in maintaining the current level of fare-box recovery.

A lower target was also not considered appropriate – Council believes that it is appropriate that passengers pay a reasonable share of the costs, and Blenheim has traditionally had a low passenger contribution. Council considers that a 35-45% target is a suitable balance between the contributions of ratepayers/taxpayers and passengers.

Method of calculation

The formula used to calculate fare-box recovery is prescribed by The Transport Agency and is set out in detail on its website. In essence the formula is total fare revenue divided by the total cost (including subsidies) of providing the service.

Strategies to maintain the target

While the current fare-box recovery level meets the current target, in the event that it should fall below the target, some form of intervention will be needed to achieve a 35-45% share from users. Intervention strategies are set out below.

These strategies will require Council to work with transport providers to achieve the targets. The needs of the transport disadvantaged will be considered in any intervention.

Strategy 1: Increase patronage

Increasing patronage will increase revenues, and thus improve fare-box recovery.

Council will look to increase patronage by undertaking general and targeted publicity as well as improving service quality through improving infrastructure, maintaining high vehicle quality standards, and optimizing routes and service levels to increase accessibility.

Strategy 2: Improve operating efficiencies

Improvements to operating efficiencies will reduce costs and therefore improve fare-box recovery.

The Council, in association with the transport provider, is constantly monitoring the costs and revenues of services, and investigating how to improve efficiency such as bus sponsorship/advertising.

Strategy 3: Reduce poor performing services

Reducing poorly performing services will have the effect of reducing costs and thus increasing fare-box recovery.

Poor performing services (i.e. those services with high costs and/or low patronage) can be improved by reductions to frequencies and routes, and assessing vehicle size/suitability. The Council will also consider alternative ways of providing services, such as on-demand and dial-a-ride options.

Strategy 4: Review of fare products and fare levels

Increasing fares will lead to increases in revenue and thus improve fare-box recovery. However when considering possible fare increases, the impact on patronage needs to be considered.

Other options may include reviewing the availability and eligibility criteria for concession fares and reviewing the levels of discount available.

How the policy will be applied

The current contract payment system allows fare-box recovery to be calculated on a 6 monthly basis, and thus any changes in fare-box recovery can be quickly identified. If the recovery rate is changing, Council will then decide which of the intervention strategies will be applied.

Implementation date

This policy will apply immediately.

Fare level review

An annual fare level review will be undertaken, in conjunction with the contractor, at the conclusion of each financial year. This review will take into consideration the fare-box recovery levels but may also include any other factors considered to be relevant. The review will also address the level of discounts and concessions within the existing fare structure.

Fare structure review

Council will review fare structures at least every six years. The fare structure review will address all aspects of the fare system, including the appropriateness of zones as the base for the system, and the availability of (and discount to be applied to) concession fares.

A review of the fare structure was undertaken in 2017. The next review of the fare structure is therefore not planned before 2023.

Plan and Policy Review

This plan and associated policies (including the targets) will be reviewed at least every three years, or when the Regional Land Transport Plan is reviewed (which is likely to be every three years).

It may also be reviewed immediately if any Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency policy or practices change, which will affect fare-box recovery.

The review should consider the following statutory guidance documents

Policy Documents	
Policy	Comment
Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS)	This policy contributes to the GPS by maintaining the relatively high level of user contribution towards the funding of public transport. It recognises the need for efficiencies and “value for money” and the restrictions on the availability of national funding
Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP)	This policy contributes to the RLTP by at least maintaining the level of local contribution towards the funding of public transport, and thus helping to achieve patronage targets
Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) as amended.	This policy contributes to the LTMA by aiming to improve efficiencies and effectiveness, and by maintaining the level of local contribution towards the funding of public transport

Appendices

While the Marlborough Regional Public Transport Plan can be read in isolation, it has intentionally been included with the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP). For the purpose of the Marlborough RPTP, the RLTP should be considered an attachment to this document.