

Waikato Regional Rural Transport Forum MINUTES



Date: 11 August 2014
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Venue: Celebrating Age Centre, Victoria Street, Hamilton

Present: Dallas Honey, Greg Morton, Ngaire Pattison, Gerri Pomeroy, Kim Linklater, Fiona Green, Jo Carling, Carol Foothead, Sarah Gibb, Val Sparks, Paul Keesing, Laurie Franks, Desiree McKenzie, Norm Barker, Bridget Burdett

Apologies: Kay Kristensen,

Chair: Paul Keesing
Minutes: Jo Carling

The Chair opened the meeting with a moments silence for all those impacted by the recent spate of air transport tragedies.

The Chair outlined the agenda and noted a couple of additions with Bridget Burdett from TDG and Norm Barker from South Waikato also providing updates on work that they are currently involved in.

Waikato Regional Council Public Transport Update

Carol Foothead from the Waikato Regional Council Public Transport team provided an update on current work that is happening. This work includes:

- Updated timetables for the east and west sides of river which are now available
- Work in Taupo to promote the 'bike on bus' trial at backpackers and around town
- Visits to rest homes to promote bus use and see if any there are particular issues that need addressing
- A survey that is underway in Cambridge to identify public transport needs in the Cambridge community
- The latest bus user customer satisfaction survey
- The latest Total Mobility bulletin which has just gone out
- Ongoing work on the Regional Public Transport Plan

Actions: Norm Barker asked for patronage data on the Taupo service and further information on the Mangakino/Tokoroa service. Carol to follow up with Norm on this.

Growing Liveable Rural Communities

Bridget Burdett from TDG spoke with the forum about an upcoming presentation she is doing with Natalie Jackson (University of Waikato) at the Traffic Institute's (Trafinz) Annual Conference in September. The team have been looking at the implications of demographic change on the needs of communities, and in particular at the transport needs of ageing

populations in rural areas - which clearly has implications for the local authorities who manage services and infrastructure. In particular this work looks at:

- How to create more accessible walking environments in local centres (good work is already happening in this space with the CCS led accessibility audit work)
- How to get more data on how people are moving around currently (or not moving around as the case may be) and using this to inform investment decisions
- Fostering community led transport initiatives

General discussion followed this item. Topics raised were the issue of roaming dogs impacting on how safe people feel about walking in their communities, along with discussion about ensuring community led transport schemes don't inadvertently conflict with other local businesses (eg taxi companies etc).

This led nicely into a discussion on:

South Waikato Transport Initiative

Norm Barker (Tirau Farmer, Trust Waikato board member, ex Regional Councillor & now project manager for Sth Waikato Transport Initiative!) addressed the group on a new fund that has been created in the South Waikato to advance a transport initiative. \$200,000 has been allocated for a project to assess community needs and develop a suitable transport initiative. This work will sit under the governance of a community steering group which is newly formed and has held its first meeting. The group is considering transport needs for the local community within the district and between South Waikato and Hamilton.

Norm was interested in talking to other members of the forum about the transport initiatives that communities around the Waikato have developed and the various different funding schemes and community led initiatives that successfully meet a variety of social needs in communities. Forum members from other parts of the region were able to offer a range of information and helpful advice based on their experiences within their own communities and Norm would welcome any further dialogue.

This led nicely into a discussion on:

A web based tool for sharing resources, information and best practice

Jo Carling and Ngaire Pattison led a discussion about the potential development of a web based tool to assist rural transport providers connect with each other and their communities of interest. Various options were discussed and it was determined that in the first instance, all rural transport forum members would be surveyed to find out what their needs are and what they would find useful. A survey will be developed and distributed with a view to bringing back the results at the next meeting so that next steps can be planned.

Action: Jo/Ngaire to develop web survey and distribute to full forum (after initial questions have been tested on a smaller group) and to bring back results for discussion at next meeting

Waikato Region Rural Transport Forum – Work Programme

The Chair updated the meeting about the forum work programme and encouraged members to let the working group know what they would like to see on the programme for future meetings. Next meeting (10 Nov) there will be a toolbox session on accessibility audits with Gerri Pomeroy and team which will be of great interest to many. We would welcome requests for other topics for toolbox sessions and encourage forum members to also come and share their own valuable knowledge and skills to help others.

Introductions and Soapbox

Following a rather unconventional approach to meeting protocols, the Chair closed the meeting with a round of introductions and an opportunity for members to say what transport issues were on their minds. This led to some very informative and interesting discussions about regional transport planning and funding, local community schemes (eg driver licensing in Te Kuiti) and the spin-off benefits to the wider community, ongoing issues for specific community groups (eg visually impaired and those trying to access education), the value of collecting good evidence to support proposals and submissions and acknowledgement of the real value that the forum brings in networking and information sharing.

The next forum date is 10 November – toolbox session ‘accessibility audits’. Definitely one to put in the diary!

The Chair closed the meeting at 3 pm.