will be considered to be released with redactions

MIN-4053 Further information regarding the NWBI

20 January 2023

The Minister's office has requested further information in relation to the new timeframe for the go-live date of the Northwest Bus Improvements programme (NWBI).

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's response:

- *What are short-term options for dealing with these issues and enabling at least some services to get underway?*

Auckland Transport plans to respond to the feedback received from the 2022 consultation in early 2023, with details of the proposed network revealed. The announcement in early 2023 will show our combined approach to delivering reliable and realistic public transport options for a better-connected West Auckland. AT expect patronage to increase by between 1.5m and 2.2m passengers per annum as a result.

AT considered a partial introduction of the new bus services with incomplete infrastructure at Lincoln Rd and missing bus stops on many local feeder routes. However, they believe that this would create customer dissatisfaction and have a significant negative impact on willingness to accept and use the new bus network at a time when community appetite is low. This is because a partial introduction would compromise network efficiency. The success of the WX1 service for example, relies on feeder bus services to get passengers to their destination, not just the WX1 itself.

Noting that bus services in the new network are designed to work together, AT is looking at options to make earlier use of the infrastructure in advance of November 2023. For example, AT could route some existing services (125X, 110, 131, 133) via the new bus stops at Te Atatu. This would offer some small benefits to the community and would allow for the bus stops to be used before the full new network changes are introduced.

Launching the new bus network once fully complete would create the greatest chance of trust and uptake and success.

- *How local government, in this instance AT, gets to decide to delay the projects that is funded by CIP and NLTF?*

There are two aspects to the NWBI projects, infrastructure and bus operations. In terms of infrastructure, the main works associated with the CIP/NLTF works are on track to be delivered in accordance with the original timelines.

A late AT operational decision to include two previously deferred stops at Lincoln Road, along with additional enabling infrastructure on local roads not directly associated with the NWBI project (bus stops and bus priority lanes), has meant that the overall infrastructure delivery has been delayed to October 2023. In order for the new public transport network to deliver safe, efficient and reliable services, AT needs to align the implementation of bus service changes in West Auckland to match this revised date to ensure customer benefits can be delivered.

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