

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Otago and Southland Regional Transport Committees Meeting held at the Clutha District Council Chambers, 1 Rosebank Terrace, Balclutha on Monday 24 June 2024 at 10:30am

Southland:

Cr Jeremy McPhail (ES, RTC Co-Chairperson) – Meeting Chair

Cr Phil Morrison (ES)

Cr Christine Menzies (SDC)

Cr Ria Bond (ICC)

Cr Joe Stringer (GDC) (online)

James Caygill (Waka Kotahi) (online)

Otago:

Cr Kate Wilson (ORC, RTC Co-Chairperson)

Cr Alexa Forbes (ORC)

Cr Jim Thomson (WDC)

Cr Bruce Graham (CDC)

Cr Stuart Duncan (CODC)

James Caygill (Waka Kotahi) (online)

Cr Kevin Gilbert (DCC) (online)

In attendance:

Russell Hawkes (ES)

Lorraine Cheyne (ORC)

Kushla Tapper (WDC)

Doug Rogers (ICC)

Gavin Bartlett (QLDC) (online)

Murray Hasler (GDC)

Tony Pickard (QLDC) (online)

Chris Baker (Waka Kotahi) (online)

Angus Hodgson (KiwiRail)

Gary Ikin (KiwiRail)

Paul Fleet (CODC)

Alison Tomlinson (QLDC)

Nick Sargeant (ORC) (online)

Trudi McLaren (ORC – Governance Support) (online)

1 Welcome | Haere mai

Chairperson Jeremy McPhail welcomed everyone to the meeting, including those attending via Teams and opened with a karakia.

2 Apologies | Nga Pa Pouri

No apologies were received.

3 Public Forum, Petitions and Deputations | He Huinga Tuku Korero

There were no requests to speak at public forum.

4 Confirmation of Minutes | Whakau Korero – 2 February 2024

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Wilson, seconded by Cr Menzies that with an amendment to note that in the welcome everyone was on Zoom, the minutes of the Regional Transport Committees meeting held on 2 February 2024, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

MOTION CARRIED

5 Actions from Minutes of 2 February 2024

1. RLTP was confirmed at that meeting, but subsequent to that, the closing date for submissions was extended to allow an amended state highway plan to be included as a submission and to go to the hearing panel. A submission was subsequently received from NZTA on their revised programme and this is included in the new document. A copy of the submission that Cr Wilson signed on the Canterbury draft RLTP is included in the agenda.
2. No update on a senior minister attending a meeting. Also having difficulty getting the Minister of Transport to the South Island RTC Chairs Meeting also.

There was a question on the resolution to review the West Coast Regional Land Transport plan and prepare a submission from this Committee if required. It was confirmed by James Caygill that this has not been released yet, but this will be reviewed once it has been and a submission considered.

6 Notification of Extraordinary and Urgent Business | He Panui Autaia hei Totoia Pakihi

6.1 Supplementary Reports

There were no supplementary reports tabled for inclusion in the agenda.

6.2 Other

Information Item: The government recently released a revised speed management proposal. It was too late to be included in the agenda and there has been a regional sector meeting arranged to discuss the proposal and this will also be discussed in upcoming TAG Group meetings. James Caygill

advised that it was important to note that closing period was 11 July, so this committee may wish to enable chairs to make a submission out of cycle. This is to be further covered in his report.

7 Questions | Patai

No questions were asked at this time.

8 Chairman's and Councillors' Reports | Nga Purongo-a-Tumuaki me nga Kaunihera

There was nothing to note under this item (all points covered in main agenda reports).

9 Staff Report

9.1 – RLTP 2021/31 – Mid-term Review – Approval to submit the Draft RLTP to Council

This report updated the combined Committees on the outcomes of the Public Consultation process and changes recommended by the Hearing Panel to the draft Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan 2024/27.

Hearings have been completed the recommendations from the hearing panel have been incorporated into the RLTP which was attached with this item for further consideration. It was noted that the submissions for this time were different to those received for recent RLTPs and were focused around the high-level highlighted items in the report – around walking and cycling, potential for alternative transport options both within the Otago and Southland region and the whole of the South Island.

While it was not included in the report, Russell Hawkes noted the timing of the release and the timing of mid-term reviews in preparation for RLTPs. The review commenced with the GPS that was released in 2021 (which was what the document was based on). A document was then produced that considered the first draft of the GPS which was created under the previous Labour Government. When the document was brought to the committee for approval in February, the committee were aware there was another GPS, but this has still not been released. The legislation says that the document must be consistent with the GPS and despite the fact that this is substantially prepared as a review of the 2021 GPS it has been reassessed it against the draft by the current government.

It was considered that this was still consistent with what is likely to be released as the final GPS as indications are that there won't be major changes to the issued draft GPS. Therefore, this document is focused on maintenance and renewals of the existing network, resilience, and on economic prosperity.

It was noted that the level and type of submissions received was pleasing.

There was a question on responsibility for feedback and how this would be done. It was confirmed that an individualised response in relation to their submission would be sent to all of the submitters once the document has been approved.

Following questions, Dean Lowry and Russell Hawkes were thanked for their work, and it was agreed that the plan was still heading in the direction agreed.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Wilson, seconded by Cr Morrison that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Note the report.**
- (2) Approve the updates with the changes noted to the Draft Regional Land Transport Plans 2021-31**
- (3) Request the Otago and Southland Regional Councils approve submission of the Regional Land Transport Plans 2021-31 to the New Zealand Transport Agency.**

MOTION CARRIED

9.2 – New Zealand Transport Agency Update

The purpose of this report was to allow the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) the opportunity to provide the Committees with a verbal update on its activities.

James Caygill, NZTA was present online to speak to the report. Mr Caygill advised that the most important point to note was that the Ministry of Transport was consulting on a new setting of speed limits rule 2024 which sets out the new government's intentions clearly by a rule under the Land Transport Acts. The aim of the rule is to enable a more consistent approach for NZTA to be able to set 110km speed limits on expressways, to reverse the setting of permanent 30km limits on urban streets where they had been flagged as being around or near schools and replacing them with the variable speed limits between 8am and 9.30am and 2.30pm and 4pm and set in place a process for the reversal of speed limits which were lowered after 1 January 2020 under old bylaw processes and the setting of speed limit rule 2022. It was recommended that all RCA officers take a look at the rule if they had been engaged in any speed limit setting and to read the rule themselves and go through it very carefully and submit if they are able to.

Mr Caygill advised that his understanding was that regional speed management plans would be made voluntary and that there was nuance as to which speeds on State Highways would automatically be reversed and depended on how speed reductions were justified in the last three years. The proposed rule makes specific reference to reductions that were justified where they were outside or near schools (and the switch from permanent reductions to variable reductions).

A draft letter would be circulated following the TAG meetings to ensure that views were included.

Mr Caygill advised that the slides that he would circulate cover roads of national significance and while there are not any based in Otago and Southland, the committee should be aware that these would be the absolute priority which may take funding from other things.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Duncan, seconded Cr Graham that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Note the report.**

- (2) Provide any feedback to the New Zealand Transport Agency on the topics included in the presentation.

MOTION CARRIED

9.3 – National Land Transport Plan – Indicative Funding Allocations

The purpose of this report was to provide Otago Southland Regional Transport Committees (RTCs) with an update on the indicative funding allocations approved by the New Zealand Transport Agency Board to carry Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) through the period between the release of the final Government Policy Statement and the National Land Transport Plan for the 2024/27 period.

It was noted that the comparisons with the previous funding that were advised were comparing the initially requested funding at the start of the three-year period 2021/24, whereas the actual funds at the end of this period were due to cost cutting. There had been an uplift compared to previous RLTP period (which was more if inflation only was considered). Clarified that there was not more work being undertaken although more was being spent, due to sector wide inflation.

Discussion occurred on the replacement and repair of bridges and concerns were raised regarding funding for required work in the future. There was a question as to whether a working group should be formed now to put together some collective knowledge, which all Councils could use rather than working individually. There was comment that a stocktake was needed at NZTA and District Council level to ascertain what the size of the problem would look like. Russell Hawkes noted that this could be taken to the TAG Groups and a report could be produced on Otago and Southland bridges for this committee, with the programmes that are currently listed in the Transport Authorities activity management plans and their status, without prioritising one district over another, to be brought back to the next meeting in September.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Thomson, seconded Cr Duncan that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Note the report.

MOTION CARRIED

9.4 – KiwiRail Update (Note: this item was taken after item 9.5)

The purpose of this report was to provide representatives from KiwiRail an opportunity to address the Committees on their current plans for the South Island rail network.

KiwiRail representatives Angus Hodgson (Group Manager Government Engagement) and Gary Ikin (Infrastructure Lead) were present online to discuss the report and respond to questions.

The Rail Network Investment Programme (RNIP) is part of the Land Transport Programme, but unlike the State Highway Investment Programme which is approved by the NZTA Board, it is produced by KiwiRail and prepared by their board and approved by the Minister of Transport, and is primarily around maintenance and renewals of the network itself.

Mr Hodgson advised that the priority needed to be in the area of the network that has the highest volumes. Parts of the network have relatively low volumes, which do not receive as much attention as those with high volumes. However, he noted that this didn't mean that there would be no funding for the rest of the country, and he confirmed that safety and compliance was still a priority.

Funding bands and investment priorities by the government were discussed and it was advised that the results should be advised in November or December. Mr Ikin noted areas of work in Southland and Otago, including structural work on bridges supporting production and maintenance crews. It was also advised that initial discussions have begun on a new freight hub for Otago.

There was discussion on what plans were in place for rail transport if a bridge was unable to be used due to a natural disaster, and it was advised that with the rail network, the only option would be to use trucks until the bridge was able to be replaced (expected duration of two to three weeks). An update on ferry maintenance was also given.

It was requested that any questions from the Committee be collated and forwarded to Mr Hodgson and Mr Ikin and they would respond to them. The Committee noted that with the next RLTP discussions commencing soon in 2025, they would welcome the input of KiwiRail on a more regular basis in the future and the representatives were thanked for their time and input.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Menzies, seconded by Cr Wilson that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Note the report.**
- (2) Provide any feedback to the KiwiRail on the topics included in the presentation.**

MOTION CARRIED

9.5 – South Island RTC Chairs Activities Update (Note: this item was taken before item 4)

The purpose of this report Russell Hawkes, Lead Transport Planner ES and Lorraine Cheyne, Manager Transport ORC was to update the Committees on the recent activities of the South Island RTC Chairs Group. The South Island RTC Chairs group are scheduled to meet on the 8 July 2024. The recent activities of the Group were provided for the RTCs information and comment.

There was a question on whether a South Island Regional Transport Plan would be beneficial to raise the profile of issues with government. It was noted that there has been no progress in obtaining agreement from the Minister for Transport to attend a meeting of the South Island RTC Chairs, and whether there was a better way to arrange this. James Caygill recommended that initially engaging with local MPs may be a first step. It was noted that the Minister will be present at the Southland Mayoral Forum on 25 September, and as the next committee meeting is set for 23 September it may be possible to link in with this visit.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Morrison, seconded Cr Wilson that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Note the report.
- (2) Provide any feedback RTCs representatives on the South Island RTC Chairs Group for consideration at their next meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

9.6 – Next Meeting

It was noted that a report on the current RLTP would be included at the next meeting, and a programme for the development of the RLTP 2027

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Thomson, seconded Cr Graham that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

Hold the next meeting of the Committee on 23 September 2024, with the intention that it be held in Dunedin, pending confirmation of a venue.

MOTION CARRIED

10 Extraordinary and Urgent Business | Panui Autaia hei Totoia Pakihi

RTC noted the Ministry of Transport had released a new rule for setting of speed limits with a short consultation timeframe. Consultation closes on the 11 July 2024 and the Committees were not due to meet again to consider a submission. The Otago Southland Technical Advisory Group (TAG) were scheduled to meet to discuss a possible response on the 26 June and that the Transport Special Interest Group (TSIG) were scheduled to meet to discuss a combined Regional submission on the 25 June.

Resolved:

Moved by Cr Menzies, seconded Cr Wilson that the Combined Regional Transport Committees resolve to:

- (1) Request Staff prepare a submission from the RTC following the TAG Group meeting and circulate to the Combined Regional Transport Committee members.
- (2) Sign authority to be delegated to the Combined Regional Transport Committee Chairs

MOTION CARRIED

11 Public Excluded Business | He hui Pakihi e hara mo te iwi

There were no public excluded business items raised.

12 Closure

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a karakia at 1.48pm.