

Comments

LTP 2021-31

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First name	Trevor
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Email address	

Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation? No, I'm submitting as an individual

Are you willing to tell us more about yourself? No

Which age category are you in? -

Do you think we've prioritised the right issues and opportunities? No

What do you feel are the significant challenges and opportunities we face?

Your options for public transport are a concern

Which of the proposed options would you like to see us progress with? Option 1: statutory work, prior commitments and accelerating key initiatives

It is important that we hear what you would like to keep in the plan, what you think should be removed, and anything that you think we have missed?

I am writing regarding improvements to our public transport system in Christchurch and its environs. ECAN as the planner and organizer of tender services to operators on behalf of rate payers has organized contracts for 25 new electric buses and 39 low emission Euro 6 buses in 2020/21 and an additional 28 new vehicles in 2021/22 with further vehicle replacements over the next five years. These vehicles cost between \$450000 and \$800000 for the operator. Most of these buses are large buses which despite expensive new livery (at a design cost of \$93887) will not necessarily increase patronage. Recent suggestions from two ECAN councillors John Sunkell and Megan Hands has been to make such Metro and Orbiter buses 'free' for the Christchurch public for two years at a cost of around \$220

p.a. from rate payers and additional central government subsidies as an attempt to increase patronage. At the same time as these contracts are being delivered on, ECAN has been conducting a trial in Timaru through the operator of an on demand flexible bus system called My Way. This trial uses smaller buses on a flexible route that responds real time to consumers needs in terms of pick up points and destination and expires in October 2021. The results of the trial to date have not been made public as far as I am aware.

Hopefully the above trial would have been conducted with the potential outcome of such a flexible system being incorporated into the Christchurch urban area and environs with increased patronage and beneficial environmental outcomes due to less private cars on the road.

It seems that such a step has been precluded by ECAN by the multi-million dollar investment in a continuation of large buses on fixed routes in the Christchurch area. Even if the ECAN trial in South Canterbury does give favourable results, Christchurch ratepayers and general taxpayers are going to be saddled with the likelihood of a highly subsidized (currently passenger fares pay around 37% of the cost), inflexible public transport system for at least the next 5 years at least due to the strategy decisions already taken.

Why did ECAN not wait for a the MyWay type alternative to the current system to be thoroughly examined before committing Christchurch rate payers to a proven low patronage, highly subsidized inflexible network for the foreseeable future?

I am driven into voting for Option One of the Long Term Plan so as to keep the MyWay trial continuing (at increased rate payer expense), but I am of the view that some of the earlier decision making around the nature of Public Transport provision by ECAN has been of a poor standard. Should ratepayers vote for option two, we may never know if a MyWay type network could be viable in Christchurch as option two entails a discontinued MyWay.

Do you generally support the activities proposed in the following portfolios:

Air Quality, Transport and Urban Development No

Do you have any further comments on the activities proposed in specific portfolio/s (please select all those you wish to comment on):

Is the proposed increase in rates affordable for your household? Neither option is affordable

Any further comments on affordability for your household?

ECAN needs to look at its own expenditure before asking ratepayers for so much more than than the rate of inflation, including wage inflation.

Is the proposed increase in rates affordable as a whole for the Canterbury community? Don't know

Do you support the changes we're proposing to how we apply Uniform Annual General Charges? Don't know

Would you support the use of borrowing for operating expenditure to offset some of the first year rates? Don't know

Any further comments on the use of borrowing for operating expenditure?

Low interest rate environment currently, but that may not be the case in future years. Look at current operating expenditure to see where cuts can be made.

Do you support the rationale and proposed changes in the draft Fees and Charges Policy?

Don't know

Where do you live in Canterbury? Select your district below:

Christchurch city including Banks Peninsula

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Kaikoura

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Hurunui

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waimakariri

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Christchurch

On-demand public transport services

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Selwyn

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Ashburton

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Mackenzie

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Timaru

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waimate

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waitaki

Do you wish to speak to your submission?

Yes

We may use your phone number to contact you to arrange attendance at a hearing. This information will be kept private.

Phone number

Would you like to be kept up-to-date with the outcome of this consultation?

Yes

How did you find out about giving feedback?

Postcard

Your information is held and administered by Environment Canterbury in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 and Environment Canterbury's Privacy Policy.

**There is personal information/contact details in
my submission I do not want disclosed:** No

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<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/438034/free-buses-may-spark-people-s-mode-shift-from-cars-councillor>