

29 November 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-32338

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### **Request for information 2024-284**

I refer to your request for information dated 1 November 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 1 November 2024. You have requested the following:

“Is there anyway i can get a copy of the financial breakdown of costs for the Tawa on demand bus service. i would like to see what makes up the 1.9 mil quoted cost of the service, Included in that is the breakdown of the \$19 per ride subsidy.

Can i also please confirm the number of rateable houses for Tawa (I note that Grenada north is often separated from Tawa in this figure) that is covered by the "on demand bus" so i can ascertain a cost per rateable house per year. I realise that WCC has these figures but as of yet i am unable to determine if their figures include commercial rates as well.”

### **Greater Wellington’s response follows:**

Funded by Greater Wellington, Metlink On Demand is a unique corner-to-corner bus service available to the residents of Tawa and the Porirua CBD. It has been trialled since 16 May 2022.

The 1.9 million figure you refer to in your request relates to the \$1.5-1.9 million committed by the Greater Wellington Transport Committee on 22 June 2023 to continue the trial for a further 12 months. This was an expected cost range for the 2023/24 financial year. The actual operational costs incurred for that year was lower at \$1.23 million.

The total costs for Metlink On Demand incurred from 16 May 2022 to 30 September 2024 is \$3.01 million. This is made up of \$2.47 million in operational expenditure and \$545,000 of capital expenditure. These figures do not include GST.

Operational costs include the cost of fare collection, app related fees, wages, maintenance, fuel, insurance, driver facilities near Tawa Station, road user charges, driver uniforms, and the charge back cost of vehicles rented to operator Mana Coach Services (this is the cost Mana charge for the vehicles – Greater Wellington owns and leases the vehicles to Mana and it includes that cost in the service fee back to Greater Wellington).

Capital costs include app development, vehicles, and vehicle refurbishment.

Total trips recorded from 16 May 2022 to 23 October 2024, which includes Gold Card users and children under 5 who ride free, is 120,572. Gross fare revenue for all trips is \$210,370.

The following table breaks down completed trips, revenue, costs by financial year, and subsidy per trip by financial year.

| <b>Financial year</b>      | <b>21/22</b> | <b>22/23</b> | <b>23/24</b> | <b>24/25</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Trips                      | 1,701        | 40,869       | 55,990       | 22,012       | 120,572       |
| Gross Fare Revenue \$      | 14,904       | 69,596       | 94,370       | 31,500       | 210,370       |
| Operational expenditure \$ | 54,984       | 857,350      | 1,231,800    | 329,892      | 2,474,026     |
| Capital expenditure \$     | 545,000      |              |              |              | 545,000       |
| Subsidy per trip \$        | 23.56        | 19.28        | 20.31        | 13.56        | 18.77         |

The trial is fully funded by Greater Wellington, with no external funding subsidising it. The subsidy amounts listed above represent the amount per trip not covered by the collected fare revenue.

As it relates to rateable houses that are part of the Tawa On Demand catchment, the numbers are the following:

- Tawa On Demand catchment occupied households (2018 census): 4992
- Tawa On Demand catchment total all dwellings (2018 census): 5214.

Please note these numbers are the totals of each category for all of the Statistical Area 1 (SA1) areas in the On Demand Catchment (SA1 areas are a way of grouping small areas and assigning information to them - each SA1 has information available about it (number of households, percentage of people who own cars etc) and generally there are approximately 100-200 residents living in each SA1, up to a maximum of about 500).

The below shows what the SA1 areas look like:



Further detail about the On Demand trial was provided to the Greater Wellington Transport Committee on 24 October 2024. The report presented to the committee can be found (starting at page 17) at: <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2024/10/Transport-Committee-24-October-2024-Order-Paper.pdf>.

The Transport Committee discussed the findings for the On Demand trial, including the higher costs associated with running the service when compared to established bus routes. It also noted the trial demonstrated there is demand for public transport beyond the coverage of current bus and train services.

As Greater Wellington was unable to secure funding from the NZ Transport Agency for Metlink On Demand, the Committee agreed a more affordable new hail and ride bus service with a fixed route and timetable, which provides at a minimum a weekday day hourly service, should be established for Tawa in 2025. It will be funded within the existing budget and Greater Wellington will work with the Tawa community to design the route.

The On Demand trial will conclude at the end of 2024.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Samantha Gain**

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink