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National Ticketing Update (GRETTS)

Recommendation

That the Board:

- i. Note the report.

Executive summary

1. The NZ Transport Agency wants AT to re-engage with a national ticketing programme. AT is fully supportive of this. This will not invalidate the current strategy to further develop HOP and would likely see AT join a national solution in 2024.

Background




2. Some Board members will recall that the HOP system was originally intended as the Auckland instance of a national ticketing system. The Transport Agency funded not only the normal 51% share of development but also fully owned \$30 million of central hub. An entity known as NZ Transport Ticketing Limited (NZTTL) was expected to own and operate the central system.
3. For a number of reasons, this model was discontinued and NZTTL was disestablished.
4. At that point Greater Wellington Council began a project known as GRETTS to develop a separate system for Wellington. Canterbury has its own system and the other regions have recently run a joint project (known as RITS) to develop an interim system pending an intention to join the GRETTS system in due course. The various systems currently run by the regions are at the end of their lives and are unstable and an interim system was, therefore, required. It is anticipated that GRETTS will be up and running in 2022.
5. AT has worked cooperatively with the Transport Agency and the other ticket providers. For example, we currently have shared development of banking industry payment guidelines for open loop (credit and similar EMV card types). AT has shared expertise with other regions.
6. It is fair to say that Greater Wellington Regional Council has been strongly independent. We have not seen the business case or RFP for the GRETTS system.
7. AT's development strategy, which was approved by the Board last year, was also shared with the Transport Agency and the other regions.
8. Recently, the Transport Agency Board has queried why the GRETTS system is not being treated as the forerunner for a national system. A teleconference was held on 15 November between the Transport Agency (Fergus Gammie, their head of IT and their national ticketing lead), AT

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(Mark Lambert, Roger Jones, Richard Morris and Denise Verrall) and GRETS with a view to Auckland re-engaging over the development of the GRETS solution. The intent is to ensure a single system is developed which will meet all needs.

9. AT is strongly supportive of this initiative. GRETS has some concern that this will delay their current project. In reality there should not be delays but AT will need to reengage with the GRETS procurement project to ensure, for example, that MRT is included in user requirements.
10. It will be necessary for any new system to be operationally stable before Auckland is integrated. Aside from Auckland representing around half of all public transport journeys in New Zealand, simpler fares means a big-bang integration will be required. This means it is likely to be 2024 before Auckland joins the new system.
11. The Thales contract will need to be extended from 2021.
12. The upgrade path laid out in the Board “Future of HOP” strategy will still see Open Loop rolled out next year.
13. Perhaps the most significant issue is the Transport Agency’s need for a national account for customers to enable the roll-out of Mobility as a Service. This will be required well ahead of the current timeline for GRETS. The various ticketing engines could be seen as applications or clients hanging off the national account base in the same way as a taxi provider, parking application or road-toll charging solution. There are likely to be a number of options for managing account information (including concessions such as students or SuperGold) but this debate is likely to evolve quite quickly.
14. AT is fully engaged in these discussions.

Document ownership

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