

# Appendix A

## SEStran Bus Passenger Information Strategy

10<sup>th</sup> April 2008

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# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 In December 2007 Atkins was commissioned by South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) to undertake the development of a Bus Passenger Information Strategy (BPIS). The BPIS would be capable of adoption, in whole or in part, by the constituent authorities in order to raise both the minimum and prevailing standards of bus information in the region. It would, when adopted, ensure the provision of a high standard of information for all users in line with National and Regional Transport strategies and policies.
- 1.2 SEStran is the statutory transport partnership of the eight local authorities Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, City of Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, and West Lothian.

## Why a Strategy is Needed

- 1.3 Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, local authorities have a duty to determine what local bus information should be provided to the public and the way in which this information is provided. Only two authorities in the region (Falkirk and Fife) currently have fully-adopted Bus Passenger Information Strategies; the City of Edinburgh has one in draft which has not been fully subject to consultation and adoption, while Scottish Borders has a partially developed strategy.
- 1.4 The existing publicity which is available for the SEStran area is very varied over the 8 local authority areas. This is in part due to the rural nature of some of the authority areas or towns, but the differences are more than can be accounted for by this alone. There is the need to have a strategy which covers the whole of the region and would allow for public transport users to have access to the same or similar levels of information.
- 1.5 There is also a need for a strategy which not only helps existing public transport users but also targets non-users in order to help grow the market and increase bus patronage levels.
- 1.6 There is no single 'one size fits all' formula which can be applied consistently across the region. The rural to urban nature of the region means that the strategy needs to allow the local authorities to take on-board elements which are suitable for their environment. The strategy therefore distinguishes between "Core" standards, which should apply throughout the region, and those which are of a more aspirational character.

## Aims and Objectives of the BPIS

- 1.7 The main aims and objectives of the SEStran Bus Passenger Information strategy as defined through the council and SEStran input are to:
  - Increase the general public's awareness of public transport information and to increase the availability of high quality information, in a form which meets the requirements of as many users and non-users as possible;

- Ensure that the information available to current and potential users is accurate and up-to-date;
- To define a 'required' level of information provision;
- To identify who will be responsible, local authority or operator, for each element of information provision;
- To identify who should meet the cost and how the costs should be apportioned;
- To set out a staged programme for the delivery of the information; and
- To define a monitoring plan, this will monitor the strategy at various stages through the delivery process.

1.8 As already mentioned, the Strategy is intended to be adopted and implemented by the partner authorities within SEStran, as and when they see fit. It is of course open to partner authorities to go beyond the minimum standards set out here; it is to be hoped that none will choose to adopt lower standards.

1.9 The needs of rural bus users for information are at least as great – quite possibly greater – than those of urban users. While there will inevitably be differences in the style and content of information in rural areas, it is essential that the quality of provision in rural areas should match that elsewhere.

## Life of Strategy

1.10 This strategy will be subject to a full review after five years.

## This document

1.11 This Final Strategy forms an Appendix to the report titled "Production of bus passenger Information Strategy". That report includes full details of how the strategy was arrived at, including reviews of existing information and Best Practice, and results of Market Research and Stakeholder Consultation. Further appendices deal with Implementation and Monitoring.

## 2. The Information Strategy

### Scope of Strategy

- 2.1 This strategy applies to all registered local services in the SEStran area, including Demand Responsive services (DRT) where they are registered as Local Services. It is accepted that the requirements of the strategy may not easily be applied in all aspects to DRT.
- 2.2 Wherever possible, the provisions of the strategy should also be applied to other (non-local) services.

### Structure of Strategy

- 2.3 The information strategy for SEStran has been developed from a review of acknowledged Best Practice, a review of existing information provision, research among the public and bus operators, consultation with stakeholders and the body of expertise existing within the consultant and client teams.
- 2.4 The information strategy is set out under a number of headings generally corresponding with various types of information media, or methods of delivery, as follows;

#### Core Priorities

- Timetable Leaflets and Travel Guides
- Information at Bus Stops
- Telephone Information
- Maps of Bus Services
- Websites – Traveline and Transport Direct
- Websites – Provided by SESTRAN and/or Councils
- Information via Mobile Devices
- Real Time Information (RTI)
- Information on Buses
- Notifying Changes in Service
- Distribution Points

#### Other Elements of the Strategy

- Interchange Information
- Fares and Ticketing Information
- Marketing Strategy

#### General Considerations

- Accessible Information, and Information on Accessibility
- Demand Responsive and Community Transport

- 2.5 . The proposed implementation of these has been set out into two levels of priority.
- Core Priorities: items which are essential and whose implementation will commence in the short term (up to one year from adoption of the strategy); however, the time taken for completion of implementation of these items will vary

- Other Elements: items which are deemed to be useful and desirable, whose implementation will commence in the medium term (between one and three years from adoption of the strategy)

## Core Priorities

### Timetable Leaflets and Travel Guides

- 2.6 Timetable Leaflets are a Core Priority, being the most popular means (overall) for bus passengers to find information. The cost of these should be borne by the bus operator (except in the case of a "minimum cost" supported service, where responsibility should be stipulated in the contract). Provision of leaflets (or booklets) is currently generally fairly satisfactory in respect of the larger operators, but not necessarily so for smaller operators.
- 2.7 Travel Guides, showing "how to get there" information for major destinations such as hospitals, colleges, universities etc. are valued by the public and help in achieving both social and modal shift objectives. They have in the past been jointly funded by the institution concerned, the Transport Authority and bus operators; these arrangements should continue.

#### Standards

- 2.8 The following standards should apply:
- It is up to the operator whether to publish leaflets with only one or a few services, or booklets with many services. General guidance is that leaflets are more appropriate for towns, but booklets may be more appropriate in rural areas. Operators should avoid publishing leaflets containing only a few bus journeys, or booklets which are not comprehensive over a particular area;
  - Printed timetable information will be published and distributed by operators at least 14 days before the implementation of any change (except in exceptional circumstances);
  - Timetable information will adhere to the standards set out in the ATCO Code of Practice;
  - Timetables will use the 24-hour clock. If space is available, an explanation should be included;
  - The timetables will carry an "effective from" or "start" date;
  - The timetable will carry a useful route map and will include (at a minimum) all timing points;
  - Timetables should, where appropriate, carry a cautionary note to the effect that passengers should (in the case of important journeys) check with the operator that the timetable is still valid;
  - A 'new' timetable will be printed when required by changes to services, but should in any case be re-printed once every 12 months as a minimum. Where a timetable is reprinted without alteration (except for publication date), a note should be carried to that effect;
  - Timetables will be in conventional matrix format, and will include the operators' name, service number, all registered journeys on that service with their days and periods of operation. Reference will be made to any variations on public holidays, school term / holiday variations or special events;
  - Timetable leaflets and booklets will carry details of all other complementary services on the route concerned, regardless of operator, and timetable booklets will similarly carry details of complementary services in the area concerned, again regardless of operator<sup>1</sup>. The council(s) concerned will ensure that the cost of such provision is equitably shared, and this provision may be waived or eased by agreement between the concerned council(s) and operators;

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<sup>1</sup> This requirement does not mean that operators need to show *competing* (as opposed to complementary) services. It is for the council to distinguish between the two.

- For urban routes or urban elements of longer routes, the information will include a route description covering the urban area(s);
- Where a service is supported in whole or part by a Council, a note to that effect will be included in accordance with the contract;
- Reference (which may be brief) will be made to any relevant travelcards, other ticketing arrangements (operator sponsored or otherwise), commercial network cards and the national concessionary fares scheme;
- Where an Exact Fare Only policy operates on a particular route, this should be clearly stated on the leaflet or booklet.
- The Traveline telephone number and the web address of the SEStran information gateway will be included;
- The txt2traveline number and details of the system (including cost of use) should be included.
- The timetables will where possible identify those journeys normally operated with fully accessible vehicles;
- The timetables will show clearly any sections of route which are non-stop or limited stop;
- Contact details (at minimum a phone number) will be included for all operators included in the leaflet;
- Timetables may carry advertisements, but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the publication or detract from the layout; and
- There will be no charge for individual timetables, but a charge may be made for books of timetables or sets of leaflets where individual timetables are also available (free of charge).
- Travel Guides will be designed individually, but should conform to the above standards where appropriate, including such items as the Traveline number, information on txt2travline, etc.

### Delivery

- The bus operators will provide the Council with information on all their service changes at least 70 days (of which 14 days are a consultation period, as per the Transport Act) in advance of them occurring, except in exceptional circumstances;
- The arrangements outlined apply to all bus services, whether commercial or supported (although in the case of Minimum Cost contracts alternative arrangements may be made). Should an operator fail to provide appropriate timetable leaflets or booklets, the Council will produce and distribute timetables in quantities sufficient to ensure their availability to all potential users; the operator will be charged for these according to the provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001; and
- Timetables from operators and the Council will be available for on-bus distribution.
- Delivery of Travel Guides geared towards third party 'institutions' (e.g. Hospitals and Universities) is expected to be resourced primarily by the third party but with involvement of Council(s) and Operator(s) as relevant

## Information at Bus Stops

- 2.9 Information at bus stops is the most popular means of obtaining information in places where its provision is of a high standard. The lack of such information is a source of complaint in places where it is not. Accordingly, this strategy seeks to extend best practice across the region, and sets minimum standards for the level of provision of bus stop displays.
- 2.10 As well as bus stops, information as specified below may be displayed at other points, such as in hail-and-ride areas, or in central locations in communities which lack public transport services.

- 2.11 The aim, therefore, is to ensure that timetable information is displayed at 90% of stops in all council areas in the region; generally these will be the busier stops. Where current provision is less than 90%, provision should be increased at the rate of 10 percentage points each year.

### Standards

- A single bus stop flag complying with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2002 should be fitted to all marked bus stops (including a point at the centre of each community). The flag will carry:
  - (Optionally) the Traveline telephone number. If the number is not on the flag, it should be prominently displayed elsewhere, e.g. in the timetable display case (assuming there is one). It is most important that the *wrong* number is not displayed;
  - Common name and SMS number of the stop as included in the Traveline database;
  - (Optionally) the operator name and logo relating to any commercial services stopping at that point; and
  - At all places where bus departures are split between multiple bus stops (and optionally elsewhere); Service numbers of routes (and, if more than one operator, logos of operators) serving the stop.
- A watertight display case will be provided at 90% of all bus stops (see above). Subject to available space, the display case will include:
  - In chronological order, departure time (from that stop, in 24-hour clock), route number and final destination for all buses serving the stop. At busier stops (and dependent on route geography), this should normally be provided on a Service by Service basis rather than composite basis.
  - Intermediate places served by each departure should also be shown. This may be by one or more of three methods;
    - Places served along the route shown in text for each departure;
    - A "header" showing places served (including final destination) on each route from the stop, with the chronological list showing the departure time, plus (optionally) the final destination;
    - A diagrammatic ("tree") or strip map of services from the stop, showing all places served.
  - The txt2traveline number and brief details of the system, including cost of use;
  - The web address of the SEStran information gateway (these last two possibly on the backing sheet);
  - (Prominently) When the information was last updated;
  - Information as to whether an exact fare policy is in operation; and
  - The phone number(s) of bus operator(s) using the stop, to cater for enquiries regarding fares, non-running buses, etc.
- Such information will be posted (as further described under "Delivery" below) no later than the date of implementation of any change, and no earlier than five days before such a change.

### Delivery

- The bus operators will provide the Council with information on all their service changes at least 70 days (of which 14 days are a consultation period, as per the Transport Act) in advance of them occurring;



- The Council will provide, erect and maintain all bus stop poles, flags and display cases;
- The bus operator concerned is responsible for preparing and inserting information as specified above. In certain cases, and at its sole discretion, the council may prepare composite information for a number of operators serving a single stop. In such cases, the Council reserves the right to re-charge operators on a fair and equitable basis; and
- In any event, if an operator fails to provide information in the form specified the Council reserves the right to supply information itself and re-charge the operator.
- Operator(s) and Council may seek agreement for the Council to deliver all relevant bus stop information, most probably on a rechargeable basis

## Information at Bus Stations

2.12 Information provision at Bus Stations should follow the principles set out above under "Information at Bus Stops" (para. 2.9) and below under "Interchange Information" (para. 2.41). However, at large bus stations in particular information provision will be individually tailored to the location and circumstances.

### Standards

- At all bus stations, there should be a means by which passengers can readily locate the departure point for their bus (by route number and/or by destination). Such means may be static or electronic.
- At each stand, individual departure times of each bus will be shown in order with the route number, final destination and places served *en route*. Again, this may be static or electronic.
- In the case of long-distance services (and subject to feasibility), arrival times should also be displayed in a sensible location – statically or electronically.
- It is highly desirable to provide a map of the local area indicating important locations such as rail stations, public offices, hospitals etc.
- Appropriate pedestrian signing should also be provided to key locations nearby.
- Where real time information is available this should be displayed in an appropriate fashion, in respect of both arrivals and departures.
- Particular attention should be paid to the needs of disabled users, including blind and deaf people. At medium and large bus stations, an RNIB approved system should be installed.
- It is important that real time information displayed in respect of departures is accurate and credible. The bus station operator may need to work with bus operators to ensure this is the case, as "automatic" RTI may need to be over-ridden manually on the basis of "trouble-shooting" actions (e.g. insertion of an extra bus to substitute for one broken down or delayed).
- All bus stations should provide a manned enquiry service during the busier times for travel, as appropriate to the size of the station. At smaller bus stations and in off-peak periods this may be provided via a free telephone helpline (which may be the Traveline TES). Timetables and maps should be available during the above hours at all bus stations;

### Delivery

- Information at bus stations should be provided by the bus station operator and costs recovered through departure charges. Unless otherwise agreed, information should be in a uniform style with other bus stations as defined by the Transport Authority.

## Telephone Information

- 2.13 An impartial Telephone Enquiry Service (TES) should be offered to potential travellers. SEStran supports the use of Traveline as the main (though not unique) authoritative source for public transport enquiries by phone. (In Edinburgh, Lothian Buses provides their own telephone enquiry service, for their own services.) In terms of passenger preference and level of use, other information sources (leaflets, bus stop displays and the internet) all rank ahead of the telephone. However, the telephone service is of particular value to infrequent users of public transport, or regular users travelling to or in an unfamiliar location.
- 2.14 Note that media for promoting the Traveline number are mentioned elsewhere in this strategy (e.g. "Bus Stops", "Leaflets").

### Standards

- The telephone enquiry service should be available from 07.00 to 22.00 daily as a minimum (In Scotland, Traveline is now available 24/7);
- The information should consist of routes, times and the location of bus stops; and
- Traveline will provide the required information in the appropriate way.

### Delivery

- Existing arrangements for funding Traveline will continue. All bus operators (should be Traveline members in accordance to Traveline rules, subject to these rules and charges being deemed reasonable by the Authority.
- The Council will pass on all relevant information relating to changes in services notified to them within the 21 days preceding the service change, in the required format for Traveline; and
- The Council and operators will publicise the Traveline telephone number on bus stop flags and on all printed public transport information they are responsible for.

## Maps of Bus Services

- 2.15 Market research has shown significant demand for a greater availability of bus maps in the SEStran region. It is also an obvious requirement if the growing number of visitors to the region are to be encouraged to travel by sustainable means. Accordingly, the production and distribution of a region-wide bus map is a key element of this strategy. This map, to be available in hard copy form and via the internet, will show all interurban bus (and rail) routes, together with rural routes which operate on at least six days per week. It would not, however, show town or city service bus routes. (Some reference to these will be made as space and clarity allow.)
- 2.16 Constituent councils will provide their own area or town maps, to be compatible with the regional map and delivered in partnership with operators.

### Standards

- Maps will carry an "effective from" or "start" date;
- Maps will include road names or numbers in as much detail as practicable, together with names of settlements and (as far as practicable) timing points;
- It is to be determined whether the map will show routes as differently coloured lines, or as route numbers alongside each road, or in some other way;
- Fare zones for the SEStran One-ticket scheme will be shown. Fare zones for bus operators (or information about them) will be shown if clarity constraints allow;
- Significant trip attractors and/or tourist sites will be shown, again subject to clarity constraints;

- An indication of service frequencies, and peak or off-peak only services, will be provided, either on the map itself or in an accompanying table;
- Details will be given on how to access information on routes offering wheelchair-accessible vehicles or bicycle-carrying vehicles (this may be via the SEStran information gateway);
- Park and ride opportunities will be included with an indication of the number of parking spaces;
- The Traveline telephone number and the web address of the SEStran information gateway (or Traveline) will be included;
- A table on each map will detail each route, including its operator and number, the main places served, frequency (preferably peak, off-peak, evening and Sunday), and (possibly) times of first and last buses;
- Contact details for all operators appearing on the map will be included;
- Maps may carry advertisements, but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the publication or influence the layout; and
- A moderate charge may be made for maps.

### Delivery

- SEStran and/or its partner councils will fund the initial design and set-up of the regional map, and its initial print run. SEStran may seek contributions from operators to fund further print runs, in proportions based on the extent of their services shown on the map; and
- Similar arrangements will be made for maps covering council areas and/or towns, though no operator will be expected to contribute to the printing of a map if they produce their own comprehensive map of the area concerned which is deemed satisfactory by the Council.

## Websites – Traveline and Transport Direct

- 2.17 Impartial, immediately accessible website enquiry services should be available to potential travellers. Traveline offers a web-based enquiry service (which does in fact attract more daily enquiries than its phone service). The Government backed internet delivery service (Transport Direct) has also been designed to provide this service throughout the UK, although at present its user base, and public awareness, lag well behind that of Traveline.
- 2.18 The two services offer somewhat different functionality;
- Traveline, in general, offers more accurate bus information (it appears that the Transport Direct algorithm still needs some development),
  - Traveline offers information on fewer travel modes (for instance, it excludes private cars), but is thereby simpler to use;
  - Traveline provides timetables as well as a journey planner, and gives links to operator websites;
  - Transport Direct, as well as including private car route planning and traffic news, includes features such as "Check your CO2 emissions".
  - Transport Direct also purports to offer fares information – but not as yet for local buses in the region. (Traveline has plans to offer fares information.)
  - Transport Direct provides clear maps of bus stops, with their names and reference numbers
- 2.19 Both sites continue to be improved, and in future one may supplant the other for bus information. Traveline/Transport Direct are able to offer an adequate web-based system for the SEStran region

and will be able to provide a journey-planning capability for people accessing the site at home or in areas of public access such as libraries.

### Standards

- SEStran and its member councils will, where appropriate, provide links to the Traveline Scotland Journey Planner via a "Page Landing Wizard"<sup>2</sup>, and will encourage other organisations to do the same; and
- Links to both sites will be available from the SEStran information gateway (see below), which will in turn be widely publicised on bus information throughout the area.

### Delivery

- Traveline and Transport Direct already have established delivery methods. All bus operators (except those below the minimum charging band and, by agreement, those operating only minimum-cost contracts) should be members of Traveline; and
- Other standards in this area will be delivered by SEStran and its member Councils.

## Websites – Provided by SESTRAN and/or Councils

- 2.20 The internet is already a very popular means of finding out about bus services, and is set to become more popular still. It is the obvious place to look for information about other "high tech" delivery media, such as information via mobile phones or interactive TV. Traveline and Transport Direct, while performing a useful function, are a long way from meeting all user needs, while operators' sites are necessarily limited.
- 2.21 Currently, there is low public awareness of transport information on council websites. The extent, selection, and standard of content varies greatly between councils, as does the ease of finding particular information. There appears to be no consistency of approach. There is, however, much information about buses and bus information that is difficult to find online, leaving an obvious gap to fill.

### Content and Standards

- 2.22 It is therefore proposed to create a SEStran public transport Information Gateway, which would in the main constitute a route to information, although it could carry some information itself. It would be structured so that users can find the information required either based on a particular area or location or based on the type of information required.
- The site would include links to, or information about, inter alia;

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<sup>2</sup> The page landing wizard allows third parties to download a journey planner that sits on their web site and provides journey plans either from any origin to any destination or from any origin to a fixed destination such as council offices, leisure centres etc. It can be a feature of every location that has a web site and the potential to use public transport to get there.

- Traveline website (link)
  - Transport Direct (link)
  - Operator websites (including rail) (links)
  - One-ticket (link)
  - National rail sites (links)
  - Council websites (links)
  - RTPi sites, e.g. Mybustracker (links)
  - Traffic Commissioner (link)
  - User organisations (links)
  - Service diversions (links)
  - Service list (info and links)
  - Park and Ride (links and/or info)
  - Timetable leaflets (info)
  - Route maps (info and downloads)
  - Bus stops and displays (info)
  - Complaints procedure (info)
- The site would contain sufficient information about linked sites to enable users to select the one appropriate to their needs (but without "cluttering" the site), and would carry information about all public transport matters which apply across the SEStran area, e.g. the National Concessionary Travel Scheme.;
  - Matters which apply only to individual councils (including, for instance, school transport policy or community transport) would continue to appear on Councils' own websites – although mention should be made of this on the gateway;
  - The gateway would be widely publicised in printed publicity, at bus stops, on buses, and on appropriate websites;
  - It would not carry timetable downloads (which are generally available on operators' sites) – except possibly for services whose timetables are not available for download elsewhere;
  - It would probably include a full and up-to-date list of bus services (possibly excluding those operating school days only), possibly indicating frequency, and with links to where timetables (and/or service maps) may be downloaded;
  - The gateway would carry all bus route maps for the region (other than single-operator maps where multi-operator maps are already provided) in downloadable form; links would be provided to single-operator maps; and
  - The SEStran gateway, and public transport information on Council websites, should conform to the Best Practice Guide on Public Transport Information Web Sites – Institution of Logistics and Transport, 2001

2.23 Council sites would accordingly have reduced content; the SEStran site should be linked from the Council sites or even better appear as a "skin" within a window on the Council site; this would portray the SEStran site as "supplied by" the council.

2.24 At the same time, it would be appropriate for member Councils to review their websites, removing material which duplicates that more appropriately found elsewhere, and improving the structure and ease of finding for the material which remains. This provision will not, however, require councils to deviate from the stipulations of the Scottish Services List promulgated by COSLA.

2.25 In designing the concept, content and layout of the SEStran Gateway it will be necessary to ensure that it complements, rather than competes with, Traveline Scotland.

## Delivery

- The development and delivery of the SEStran Information Gateway will be the responsibility of SEStran, with funding from member councils as agreed.

## Information via Mobile Devices

2.26 Information via mobile devices (phones, PDAs etc.) is already widely available and used in many regions of the UK. The txt2traveline service offers a mobile information source for travel

information on the move. The txt2traveline scheme is popular in England with high usage figures. The scheme for Scotland is now being promoted actively and is hoped to be as popular as in England. It is also possible to access internet journey planners via mobile devices, and in future it may be possible to use the "locational awareness" of such devices to give information about nearby bus stops and services from them.

- 2.27 Promotion and development of such technologies is a national, rather than regional, responsibility. While it is therefore appropriate and desirable for SEStran and its member councils to support these initiatives, implementation is outside the scope of this strategy.

### Contents and Standards

- The txt2traveline service should be advertised on paper timetables and at bus stops (details of the cost of using the service must be given);
- All bus stops should display their unique stop reference code, and
- Guidance on how to use the services (and any costs involved) should be provided in appropriate material (both printed and electronic);

### Delivery

- Development and promotion of txt2traveline and other mechanisms whereby travel information is delivered by mobile devices should primarily be carried out by Traveline.

### Real Time Information (RTI)

- 2.28 Real time information is already available throughout much of Edinburgh, while SEStran is developing a programme to provide it in the rest of its region. Within the medium term most buses in the region should be enabled for RTI, along with control centres to disseminate the information. However, while many stops are likely to be provided with displays, many more will not – nor are they likely to be.
- 2.29 The provision of RTI through other means, such as the internet, mobile phones or digital TV, will therefore be a priority. The creation of the SEStran Information Gateway outlined above would help in publicising these media, which currently suffer from low awareness.
- 2.30 As far as displays at bus stops are concerned, however, there will need to be some form of prioritisation to select stops for equipment. There are a variety of approaches to this issue, and no generally accepted, quantitative method of prioritisation. The problem is that the greatest individual benefit is likely to be at lightly-used rural stops, while in urban areas many more individuals will benefit, but their individual benefit will be less.
- 2.31 There is no obvious way of resolving this conflict, although it could be said that having a quantitative assessment tool, even if it is not entirely immune from challenge, is better than having no tool at all. The following points need to be borne in mind;
- Certain types of place have an obvious claim to high priority, e.g. -
 

- International Airport	- Local hospital/health centre
- Railway Station	- University/college
- Bus station	- Primary school
- Bus based P&R facility	- Secondary school
- Interchange site	- Large retail centre
- Major tourist attraction	- Large employment centre
- Regional hospital	
  - More total benefit is likely to accrue at well-used stops;

- Users of low-frequency services will obtain more benefit than users of high-frequency services;
- Longer routes, particularly inter-urban and express services, are more likely to suffer delay and should therefore have a higher priority. Similarly, the further away a stop is from the start of a route, the higher the chances of delay;
- There is some evidence that passengers put a relatively lower value on RTI at the stop near their home (where other information sources are available) and relatively more at other locations (where as well as having no access to, for instance, the internet, it is likely to be more difficult to control their time of arrival at the stop);
- It should also be borne in mind that the "real time" aspect of the information is not necessarily always the most important – many people will value it as a simple, reliable method of obtaining information also provided by leaflets and bus stop displays.

2.32 The roll-out of RTI in the SEStran region is being carried out independently of this strategy; there is therefore no basis to set out modes or timescales of delivery and implementation, except in respect of inclusion of details of RTI services in other publicity.

### Contents and Standards

- Guidance on how to use RTI services (and any costs involved) should be provided in appropriate material (both printed and electronic);

### Delivery

- Responsibility for provision of RTI is outside the scope of this strategy.
- Organisations producing publicity material are responsible for the costs of inclusion of information about RTI in that material.

## Information on Buses

- 2.33 The provision of on-bus information (verbal and written) is an important part of encouraging new customers and advising existing customers of timetable information and service changes. It also encourages 'repeat' usage and should be available on the majority of buses.
- 2.34 Timetable leaflets, at least for the current route, should be carried on buses. In view of possible abuse of leaflet holders on open display, it may be preferable in some cases for the driver to carry a supply, to be available on request.
- 2.35 Many passengers particularly value verbal information, and such information is often available only on buses. However, it can quite often happen that drivers are unable to answer questions about buses at other times or on other routes, something passengers find unsatisfactory and hard to understand.
- 2.36 Exterior display of route information (at least on the front of the bus) is normally well displayed, often by an electronic headsign incorporating "via" information. In some countries, the headsign is also used as a "countdown" display of minutes to departure when the bus is standing at a bus station (alternating with the destination), a feature perhaps worth emulating at least on a trial basis.
- 2.37 Interior, real time display of information (e.g. final destination and next stop), together with audible announcements, have obvious value and are now commonplace on trains. Such visual information is particularly valuable to hearing-impaired people, and audible announcements are similarly valuable to those with limited vision. Both are valued particularly by people whose first language is not English, including tourists.

### Standards

- Buses should carry up to date printed timetable (and fare information if practical) for the services on which they are operating; and

- Printed information should be easily accessible to all passengers and drivers should be able to give full information to passengers in terms of timetables, fares, and promotions for the route being operated.
- All buses should carry a clear headsign (electronic or roller blind), illuminated at night, indicating correct route number and destination plus, if at all possible, important intermediate places served. In urban areas, operators should seek to display at least the route number on the rear and side of the bus;
- Especially on long-distance services, operators should ensure that the destination displayed is meaningful to intending and potential passengers – for instance, if a bus is heading from Edinburgh to Cellardyke, a display of Anstruther (or "Anstruther (Cellardyke)") may be more useful;
- Visible and audible real-time information inside buses, giving in particular next stop information, is not a requirement of this strategy but is to be strongly encouraged (audible information could be driver activated when a blind person boards the bus or when otherwise requested – in order to minimise the 'noise disturbance' to other passengers); and
- Bus operators shall offer and provide customer care training for on-bus staff – prior to commencement of full bus driver duties.

### Delivery

- Bus operators will ensure that all buses carry a stock of timetables leaflets or booklets for the service(s) on which they are operating. Charges may be made where an operator does not provide information; for instance on subsidised services where the operator cannot provide their own information at their cost, the Council will provide the information and will charge the operator for the provision of the information;
- Bus operators will be responsible for the cost of providing all information specified in this section; where the bus operator does not provide it, the council may do so and re-charge the operator.

### Notifying Changes in Service

- 2.38 Current practice in respect of publicising forthcoming alterations to service can involve the use of the local press and radio, e-mails to timetable outlets, the display of notices at bus stations (and bus stops where diversions are in operation) and the display of notices on board buses. Traveline is also informed of public holiday alterations and major interruptions to services.
- 2.39 Providing early morning advice to travellers regarding disruptions to bus services due to severe weather conditions can prove difficult.

### Standards

- All significant changes to scheduled services should be publicised in the local press one week before implementation. Where this cannot be secured by a press release, an advertisement should be placed;
- Local radio stations should be similarly advised (although paid advertisements are not required);
- Notification of forthcoming changes to scheduled services should be provided at bus stations at least 21 days in advance. (For information on buses, see above.);
- Bus operators will display posters on their buses indicating all scheduled service changes for at least 21 days prior to those changes;
- Temporary route diversions; advance notice of temporary route diversions must be displayed at the bus stops affected, and at bus stations on the routes concerned, prior to the change coming into effect; and



- Traveline must be advised of all temporary and non-scheduled service changes as soon as practicable – normally at least one week in advance.

### Delivery

- Bus operators will normally be responsible for this activity. Where an operator is unable to provide such information, the Council may provide it instead and re-charge the operator;
- In the case of bus stations, provision of information will be the responsibility of the bus station operator, or otherwise as agreed.

## Distribution Points

2.40 When public transport enquiry offices are provided they should be able to provide impartial public transport advice to potential travellers where applicable.

### Standards

- Comprehensive Public Transport information (leaflets and maps) should be available at all libraries in the Council area, at Council offices specifically provided to offer information and advice to the public (e.g. "One Stop Shops"), and at Tourist Information Centres. More limited information (covering local bus routes) should be available at hospital reception desks and at tourist attractions where an entry fee is charged;
- Other types of location may be added to the above list by agreement;
- All bus stations should provide a manned enquiry service during the busier times for travel, as appropriate to the size of the station. At smaller bus stations and in off-peak periods this may be provided via a free telephone helpline (which may be the Traveline TES). Timetables and maps should be available at all bus stations at times when staff are present;
- Where staff are available to answer queries on public transport services they should be trained in customer care and to offer impartial advice; and
- At all publicly-accessible sites offering public transport information, a full range of printed information shall be provided covering all available services.

### Delivery

- Bus operators and the Council will each be responsible for supplying the above distribution points with the leaflets and maps they produce for distribution.
- The cost of training staff in dispensing information correctly will be borne by the employer of the relevant staff.

## Other Elements of the Strategy

### Interchange Information

2.41 The provision of good quality publicity material at interchanges (including bus stations) and other key points of entry to the region is a key method of improving the awareness of the travel opportunities offered by the public transport network. It is particularly important for attracting less frequent or first time public transport users, and can also be particularly useful to passengers with disabilities. Such information needs to be provided not only at multi-modal interchanges (e.g. rail stations, park and ride) but also at places where bus routes connect and significant numbers of bus passengers change buses.

2.42 A co-ordinated approach across the SEStran area to information provision and signing at interchange points is recommended to ensure familiarity to the user and ensure that the information is easy to find and of a similar type.

- 2.43 In Edinburgh the City Council has nominated a number of interchange points which are marked by special signing and have maps and other information displayed. It is recommended that this concept be extended to the rest of the SEStran area, though the content and format of the displays may be capable of improvement.

### Standard

- A co-ordinated signage system should be provided indicating the relative placing of stops (and their services) and other interchanging modes (rail / bus / taxi).

### Delivery

- The Council (and/or SEStran) in partnership with the operators will explore methods of defining and equipping interchange points with suitable information, together with potential means of funding these modifications. Key points of entry to the region will be the first priority; these include Edinburgh Airport and major rail stations.

## Fares and Ticketing Information

- 2.44 Information on Fares has already been mentioned above under the various media by which it may be disseminated (bus stops, websites and on buses). It is unrealistic to require operators to provide complete fare tables to the public, although they should be encouraged to provide more information about standard fares on their websites.

- 2.45 What is required, however (and most operators would wish to do this anyway) is that all operators provide clear information, in leaflets and on their website, on all "non-standard" fares, including various types of season tickets, limited term promotions, return tickets, child discounts etc (information on the latter is not readily available at present). Operators who operate an Exact Fare only system on some or all of their services should state this clearly and explicitly on timetables and on their website – it is not sufficient to say "some of our services operate on a No Change basis". Similarly, if change *is* given, this information should be readily available.

### Standards

- All operators to provide clear information, in leaflets and on their website, on all "non-standard" fares, including various types of season tickets, limited term promotions, return tickets, child discounts etc., as well as specifying areas and/or services where an Exact Fare policy applies (or not). This may be provided as a separate leaflet or leaflets, or within other publicity, and should appear also on websites; and
- The bus operators will provide the Council with information on their fares, including both standard and special fares, 14 days in advance of any change occurring.
- Fare changes should be notified to the public, in advance, by notices in buses and at bus stations.

### Delivery

- Bus operators will be responsible for this activity. Where an operator is unable to provide such information, the Council may provide it instead and re-charge the operator.

## ***General Considerations***

### Inclusiveness, Accessible Information, and Information on Accessibility

- 2.46 This has two aspects – ensuring that information provided is accessible to all users, and providing information relevant to any particular needs of disabled passengers.

## Standards

- Printed publicity will be produced according to relevant best practice guidelines, particularly the DfT's "Inclusive Mobility".
- Real Time Information will be provided according to the RTIG standards "Meeting the needs of disabled travellers".
- All timetable leaflets should indicate whether buses on the route concerned are (normally) wheelchair-accessible.
- Operators should include disability awareness within customer care training programmes for their staff.
- All relevant websites should conform to W3 standards.
- Councils should provide audible information for visually impaired people at major bus stations and boarding points. RNIB React is currently the preferred system for this purpose.
- All bus telephone enquiry services should support the TypeTalk facility (using textphones, for those with hearing impairments). Publicity for these services should indicate this fact, and staff should be trained in operation of the service.
- SEStran will produce a guide to accessible travel throughout the area, including in particular information about accessibility of bus stations (including provision of toilet facilities), and information on where to get more information (e.g. from Network Rail, and specific bus services provided by Councils).
- Any information material published by Local Authorities and Operators must comply with relevant Equal Opportunities legislation – particularly in respect of people that do not have sufficient understanding of the English language.

## Delivery

- All producers of publicity material (including websites) will be responsible for any additional costs of providing material to the above standards;
- Councils will be responsible for providing audible information at relevant bus stops and stations for visually impaired people;
- Providers of telephone enquiry services will be responsible for any additional costs in providing the TypeTalk facility;
- Bus operators will be responsible for training costs in respect of their staff, and
- SEStran will be responsible for the cost of producing the guide to accessible travel.

## Demand Responsive and Community Transport

2.47 All the above standards of provision and responsibilities for delivery apply also, as far as practicable, to publicly available Demand Responsive bus services (DRT), whether registered as local services or not. Community Transport services are however very diverse in nature and necessarily fall outside the scope of this strategy.

### Standards

- Demand Responsive bus services available to the general public should conform to the standards set out above, particularly in relation to printed timetable leaflets and (as far as appropriate) information at bus stops;
- Telephone Enquiry services and internet Journey Planners (particularly Traveline) must provide information on publicly available Demand Responsive bus services. They should also

aim, at an early date, to provide information on DRT restricted to particular groups (by location of residence, disability etc.); and

- The SEStran Information Gateway will incorporate (or have links to) information on Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), and as far as possible Community Transport.

### **Delivery**

- Responsibility for delivery of the above will be in line with responsibilities for the relevant information media.