ACTIVE TRAVEL TASK FORCE

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In late 2016, the Minister for Transport and the Islands, Humza Yousaf, announced that he would be establishing an Active Travel Task Force to "identify and make recommendations (to the Minister for Transport and the Islands) on ways to tackle the barriers to the delivery of ambitious walking and cycling projects in Scotland, to create more attractive places and to encourage more active travel."

1.2 The new taskforce is chaired by Transport Scotland. Key organisations such as Regional Transport Partnerships, Sustrans, COSLA and the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) have been invited to take an active part in the group. The SEStran Partnership Director is a member representing RTPs.

2. **ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED**

2.1 The task force will identify the key barriers to the delivery of ambitious walking and cycling projects in Scotland and ways to overcome them. This is likely to include (but is not limited to) consideration of how to:
   - Simplify the TRO process;
   - Improve local consultation and communication to enhance local democracy;
   - Look at prioritising people and place over movement of vehicles in local areas through better implementation of designing streets and the place standard tool;
   - Link the Strategic Transport Projects Review and NPF3 (with the National Walking and Cycling Network) and the promotion of these. To help address issues with access to land (as very few compulsory purchase orders are used in rural areas for paths but are used for roads).
   - Links to the planning reform agenda, development proposals and area regeneration; and
   - Take in to account the findings from the Active Travel Implementation research which looked at policy implementation across SG policy areas including Designing Streets, the National Walking Strategy and the Town Centre Action Plan to see if any lessons can be learned to improve the outcomes for active travel.

3. **POTENTIAL RESPONSE AND EVIDENCE**

3.1 To begin the discussion amongst the SEStran Board members, one of the examples that SEStran is keen highlight in its response is the co-design project conducted with Yong Scot, the SEStran X-Route Study. The study actively involved young people from across Scotland and ensured that they were involved much earlier in the decision making process. This co-design approach should be used as an example to improve the local consultation

process. During the X-Route consultation, it became apparent that the challenges and barriers that would deter a young person from cycling are similar to those of the wider active travel community. This insight will allow young people's experiences and ideas to improve infrastructure and enable their ideal active travel experience to become a reality.

3.2 The second study that SEStran would like to reference as evidence is the SEStran Strategic Cross Boundary Cycle Development Study. The study produced a compiled list of recommendations for investment in cross boundary cycling structure in the SEStran Region. A combination of site audits, consultations and stakeholder workshops were used to identify the main barriers and missing links in the Region's Cycling Network. With a particular focus on routes suitable for commuters, funding for infrastructure will be maximised and will deliver a greater return on investment.

3.3 Appendix 1 outlines a draft of further issues for consideration of the Forum to be included in SEStran' submitted evidence:
- Integration of Planning, Duties and Powers to promote Active Travel
- Travel Planning and Access to Jobs and Services
- Co-Design with Communities
- Funding

3.4 The table in Appendix 1 illustrates access to bicycles, as reported in the Scottish House Survey 2015. It is clear that households with a low annual income have considerably less access to private use bicycles. Cycling still appears to be a pursuit for more affluent families, than a mode of transport for those at the lower end of SIMD. Within SEStran almost two thirds of respondents have no access to bicycles.

4. TIMELINE

4.1 The Task Force will draft a report with recommendations to the Minister by the end of the calendar year.

Key task	Date
First call for written evidence	March 2017
Evidence from key stakeholders involved in high-profile projects	April 2017
Possible second evidence day	Spring (April/May) or early autumn (September) 2017
Workshop in for elected councillors following the Local Elections in May. Invitations to include convenors of Transport, Health, Environment and others with interest in active travel benefits.	Mid-late June 2017

Discuss the emerging findings of the Taskforce at the Active Travel Summit	Oct/Nov 2017
Final report sent to Minister	December 2017

5. CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Moving forward, the Task Force are to review evidence collected from its stakeholders. SEStran would like to invite its Board members to consider some of the issues/barriers facing the delivery of active travel as mentioned above and to provide examples/evidence of what could be done to improve or enhance the delivery of active travel projects across Scotland. With the aim of maximising investment and improve community consultation. The deadline for comments to SEStran is 7th of March 2017.

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23rd February 2017

Appendix 1 - Integration of Planning, Duties and Powers to Promote Active Travel

Appendix 1

Integration of Planning, Duties and Powers to Promote Active Travel

The United Nations in the Secretary General's High Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport has suggested a single joint authority with oversight of all policy and planning aspects would be helpful across all types/stages of economies. Certainly, members of the partnership have viewed the need for a spatial strategy covering a number of policy areas including transport as fundamental to delivering cohesive, sustainable and inclusive growth for the South East of Scotland. This integration would ensure that transport and the impact of development was a key consideration during the initial stages of the planning process. It is often the case that Transport/Travel Planning is a reactive measure rather than a proactive part of the process, often leading to the retro-fitting of (and often compromised) sustainable transport infrastructure.

RTPs are community planning partners, is it proposed to the ATTF that they should support the proposal for a statutory link between land-use and community planning as outlined in the current Planning, Places and People consultation. It would also be a clear opportunity to discuss the infrastructure requirements of transport service delivery especially active and sustainable travel, within a context of an outcome-focussed approach to service delivery which could be significantly beneficial to those stakeholders suffering transport connectivity and accessibility inequalities at present, through the integration of land-use and other forms of service delivery.

The Royal Town Planning Institute in their 2016 "Poverty, Place and Inequality" report highlight the significant severance effect of area-based disadvantage for individuals. Those living in certain less affluent areas are from evidence less mobile, more reliant on public transport and less able to commute to job opportunities given expensive and/or fragmented transport networks. This may also be reflected in the new set of national outcomes being developed for the National Performance Framework and drive setting of local outcomes in Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs). These new national outcomes will implement the Scottish Government's previous commitment to incorporate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which include specific actions on climate change and inequalities amongst other actions. If a "barrier" is cross sector working, we ask for specific reference to Active Travel in the NPF to drive work on it in LOIPs? RTPs could be a key mechanism for addressing these gaps and delivering the outcomes required across several Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) to deliver a functional regional network.

Under the current Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, all RTPs are obligated to produce Regional Transport Strategies. In addition to this, SEStran propose the addition of statutory Regional Active Travel Strategies; these would be produced in conjunction with a Transport Audit as part of a wider assessment of Transport Infrastructure and the upcoming renewal of the Strategic Transport Projects Review. This would provide each Region with a list of strategic active travel priorities, and create a platform for joint working across local authority boundaries.

Could a lack of regional or locally responsive powers or duties be a barrier to delivery of innovative approaches to addressing barriers? Scottish Ministers have said they will invoke Part 1 of the Equality Act in Scotland in terms of the socio-economic duty. Could this to be used to readdress current transport decision-making, given how vital and inclusive and accessible transportation infrastructure is to community regeneration, as highlighted so clearly by the Scottish urban regeneration network in their manifesto last year. This duty could be utilised alongside the existing power to advance well-being from the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 which could be extended to other public bodies such as Regional Transport Partnerships to achieve innovative active travel strategies and schemes

in new LOIPS. There could also be clear links here to partipcation requests from communities under Community Empowerment Act In terms of overcoming or preventing barriers occurring.

Proposal 15 of the current Planning consultation also highlights that the Scottish Government wish to explore wider opportunities for innovative infrastructure planning. We would suggest a "de-coupling" active travel network planning and funding into a longer-term railway type "control period" approach to planning infrastructure [this might reduce some of the barriers around scheme delivery prior to elections] where maybe 5 or 10 year timespans are introduced to use to decide priorities for investment and the timescale for delivery, with a bottom-up approach/co-design to the delivery of these programmes through a statutory regional active travel strategy.

Travel Planning and Access to Jobs and Services

In relation to Travel Planning, the RTPs have worked collectively with Transport Scotland to develop the national Travel Planning online toolkit, wwwtravelknowhowscotland.co.uk, an online resource which supports public and private sector organisations to develop, implement, promote and monitor effective Travel Plans for employee/business and other travel demands. With limited promotional resource the site has already acquired 133 registrations (98 unique organisations). SEStran would recommend further investment to promote this resource. Further investment in this resource would be an effective and low cost way of addressing gaps in knowledge and enhance skills required to deliver travel planning measures.

The emerging findings of the recent RSA Inclusive Growth Commission report highlighted that there are numerous communities across the UK within a few miles of improvements to transport opportunities that do not always benefit, through either an ingrained mind-set or the cost of travel. Transport services and accessibility can be a preventative measure against low skilled or economically inactive areas becoming further excluded. Active travel could be a low cost intervention and an excellent opportunity to follow up on the suggestions of the report in enabling a focus on the elusive business of prevention and early intervention, focussing on genuinely geographically inclusive pace-based strategies tailored to the needs, ambitions and nuances of places' economic geography.

There is clear evidence that a lack of accessibility to transport options has a limiting effect on opportunities and that those who are least skilled, or remote from the labour market have the least location flexibility in seeking new job or training opportunities. Therefore SEStran views transport and accessibility/affordability of transport as integral to an inclusive economy. The links between transport, health and employability are complex but it is clear from academic evidence that mental and physical health are negatively affected if an individual is not able to participate fully in society, and lack of transport can be a factor in this outcomes but active travel could be part of the solution in breaking down such barriers. In terms of the Government's proposed free bus travel for the new Jobs Grant scheme, could there also be an option included utilising existing Bike refurbishment schemes to encouraging increased active travel upon entering or returning to employment/training?

The recent Blueprint 2020 childcare consultation asks what actions could be taken to support increased access to outdoor learning, exercise and play. One suggestion to encourage more outdoor activity would be to set up walking buses for children to travel to and from childcare in the more temperate months. This would provide a safe and healthy way to travel and may help to encourage children and parents to try a healthy active lifestyle and embed at an early age long term antecedents of behaviour change and sustainable model choice. Albeit we recognise that parents with children in ELC may face a number of barriers to physical activity as well, in trying to fit around their caring responsibilities.

Co-design

In order to address the issues laid out by the fact that some people within close distance of transport improvements do not always benefit, there is a need to co-design with communities. SEStran have recently engaged in a successful co-design project with Young Scot[2] to engage young people about the barriers they face in accessing active travel. The main goals of the project were; to support young people to shape and influence sustainable travel services and low carbon activity, improve the understanding of young people's cycle network needs and to develop young people's awareness and knowledge of active travel while improving their confidence working in teams and to celebrate and share the participating young people's achievements. Active travel is a key part of ensuring; inclusive and sustainable growth of regional economies, inclusive mobility in terms of sharing services and changing patterns of commuting with the result of less pollution.

In recent months SEStran for example has concluded a report entitled X-Route[3] with Young Scot investigating young people's attitudes to active travel and potential barriers to its update. Given the timescale of the recently published RPP3 many of the respondents to this report will be established commuters by the end of 2032 and many of the report recommendations highlight the need to engage and embed confidence to enable travel behaviour change for the long term. Certainly, an eye-catching result of the survey was that 75% of respondents had not heard of the term "active travel", which highlighted the need to manage our messages to young people better when seeking to initiative behaviour change. The survey received 902 responses from young people aged 11-25 and had responses from all 32 Scottish local authorities. 294 responses came from SEStran's eight authorities in the south east.

Of those surveyed, over 75% had never heard the term active travel before (72% in the South East). Of the 203 who had, the majority had heard of the term through school, university, or a youth engagement settings. 24% did not have access to a bike (23% in the South East). Across the project there was a range of prominent barriers raised through survey comments, live exploration, discussion, and ideas for improvement. The following issues/barriers were raised: 1) Promoting information for an understanding of cycling; 2) Cost of kit; 3) Safety; 4) Attitude; 5) Peer Influence; 6) Quality of Routes; 7) Local connections; and 8) Bike security and storage.

From the study it was evident that for a young person to develop an interest in cycling the biggest factor is having a positive social influence close to them, this could be an advocate in the family, friend, school or in the community. Cycling was frequently described as a niche interest and that there needs to be enjoyment and a social aspect for a young person to develop a sustained interest. Negative social influences were also raised with cycling being seen as 'clique' and bullying based on being part of a group or based on your skill or equipment. It was apparent that cycling was seen as a physical activity and became something that teenage girls were less likely to do. Young people's social perception of cycling has raised questions around how cycling can be made more accessible and desirable.

Funding

SEStran would encourage a greater discussion of workplace parking charges for all vehicles and the revenue recycling of charges into the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure. If LEZs are focussed on air quality and modal shift outcomes then it will be important to take a whole system approach to their implementation including active travel. This also highlights the need to develop a strategic model of co-production of such transport policies and proposals to enable benefits to be realised and enable commitment to policies. SEStran

would comment that RTPs could deliver greater efficiency and reach if they had greater access to funding such as Smarter Choices, Smarter Places alongside their constituent councils.

Similar to other RTPs, SEStran now employs an embedded Sustrans Officer. From this partnership, SEStran has been allocated £100k of Sustrans funding. This funding has resulted in a Strategic Cross Boundary Cycle Development programme which aims to remove barriers across the regional cycle network. With other limited sources of funding, SEStran has managed to successfully deliver projects identified within the study and have embraced the co-design process in projects such as the SEStran X-Route Study.

However, SEStran would like to raise concerns on the allocation of such sources of funding. There has been an increasing amount of 'challenge funds' e.g. Low Carbon Transport and Travel, Community Links etc, which can promote best practice but unfortunately do not provide continuity.   Whilst there has been pre application support for Active Travel Hubs or path networks the lack of match funding, the tight timescales for delivery and the difficulty of 5 years revenue funding to ensure longevity of the scheme are clear barriers to delivery.

With a view to partnership and cross-portfolio working, the issue of funding may also require a co-design and co-resourcing outcome to be agreed between transport and health sectors to ensure a sustainably resourced system is in place from policy and proposal initiation. On the issue of active travel, we would hope that there could be a commitment past 2021 from the health and transport budgets to take a preventative and sustained early intervention approach to all generations to embed habit, overcome barriers and sustain active travel behaviours.

Availability of Bikes in Sestran area

No bikes available for private use by households: 2015 (%)							
Household type:							
Single adult	Small adult	Single parent	Small family	Large family	Large adult	Older smaller	Single pensioner
72.6	56.9	70.4	43.6	38.7	43.9	74.7	91.2
by annual net household income:							
up to £10,000 p.a.	over £10,000 - £15,000	over £15,000 - £20,000	over £20,000 - £25,000	over £25,000 - £30,000	over £30,000 - £40,000	over £40,000 p.a.	
83.0	83.6	74.3	67.0	59.4	49.4	37.7	
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation:							
1 - Most Deprived	2	3	4	5 - Least Deprived			
78.6	73.4	63.3	55.1	53.0			
SEStran	64.3						
Clackmannanshire	East Lothian	Edinburgh, City of	Falkirk	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian
67.0	54.9	64.8	65.5	67.4	53.7	63.0	66.0

Scottish Household Survey 2015, Transport Scotland

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[2] http://www.sestran.gov.uk/uploads/XRoute_document_2016_Final_2.pdf
[3] http://www.youngscot.net/getting-active-with-xroute/