



# Mainstreaming Equality 2015 - 2017

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## Foreword / Corporate Commitment

SEStran recognise our ethical and statutory obligations to proactively promote equality, equity and diversity outcomes. Unfair treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic or societal position cannot be justified, must be shown not to be justified and in doing so demonstrated clearly that it is taken seriously.

SEStran in our projects, priorities and policies will treat all employees and stakeholders with dignity, fairness and respect. Equality and diversity are essential preconditions to all our strategic objectives for the organisation, not just to the continuous improvement in our achievement of our Public-Sector Equality Duties. Equality mainstreaming is a corporate aim for our decision-making, we need to consider and co-design the outcomes of actions for all groups, to seek to intervene at the earliest opportunity to prevent negative outcomes and sustainably resource actions and positive outcomes.

Through our Equalities Forums and other actions, SEStran is committed to bring all groups and particularly those currently marginalised into the core of the policy and project political decision making process. Protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (2010) are; age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy & maternity.

SEStran values diversity, recognising the positive impact that people with different backgrounds, skills and attributes can bring to the delivery of actions. We seek to enable positive change to established methods, leading to innovation and greater equality, equity and diversity. I recognise that colleagues, communities and co-design partners will have different needs, strengths and goals but we commit through the publication of our Equality Outcomes 2017-21 to welcome and embrace the continuing challenge to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and equity of opportunity where possible and foster good relations with all users of transport networks across the South-East of Scotland.

Since taking up post in June 2016 I have sought and will continue to provide personal leadership on the mainstreaming of equality, equity and diversity. The equality

outcomes 2017 - 2021 are key tenants of the strategic priorities foreseen for SEStran in 2017-18 and beyond. Within the Business Plan 2017/18 we have outlined our aims to deliver several priorities, which will also promote equality and further embed equality as a core decision-making component of our work, in place from the start of any project influencing the structures we adopt for work, the behaviours we transmit to partners and the culture promoted within the organisation.

We will act to continuously mainstream positive equality, diversity and cohesion outcomes for the transport network of the South-East of Scotland.



George Eckton | Partnership Director

## About SEStran – Role & Function

SEStran is one of seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTP's) in Scotland. Our partnership area covers 8 local authorities, including City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Scottish Borders. This covers an area of 3180sq miles and is home to 28% of Scotland's population. SEStran aims to develop a sustainable transportation system for the South East of Scotland that will enable business to function effectively, and provide everyone living in the region with improved access to healthcare, education, public services and employment opportunities. SEStran is a Model 1 RTP, as defined under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, with a main function to deliver a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the area. SEStran's RTS is the cornerstone of our work, it lays out our vision for the strategic development of transport in South East Scotland up to 2028 and includes a focus on links to and from Edinburgh, as the economic hub of the region. SEStran is currently a small organisation with a total of eight staff.

## Legal Context

The Public-Sector Equality Duty came in to force in April 2011. The Equality Duty was created under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Duty replaced the race, disability and gender equality duties. The Equality Duty was developed to harmonise the equality duties and to extend it across the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. Those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;

- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The equality duty covers the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

This report demonstrates our progress and continuous improvement action regarding the exercising of our functions and delivery of our Equality Duties.

## Equality Outcomes

SEStran published a set of Equality Outcomes in 2013 to cover the period 2013 – 2017.<sup>1</sup> These outcomes were reviewed as part of the development of the new set of Equality Outcomes and officers found that the outcomes were disproportionate to the size of the organisation and many of them were actions/outputs rather than deliverable outcomes. Following this review, officers developed two outcomes to cover the main functions of the organisation both in our duties as an employer and in our remit to produce an RTS. The Equality Outcomes 2017 – 2021 can be seen in full in the separate SEStran Equality outcomes 2017 – 2021 report.

## How we seek to mainstream equality

Over the period 2015 – 2017, SEStran have sought to mainstream Equality in to our core functions in several ways, as outlined below.

### 1. How we assess impact on equality

In the spirit of the Equality Duties, we seek to involve and inform equality groups right from the start of discussions of proposals, policies or projects, progressing on to a more structured assessment in any subsequent stages. For example, in our current

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Draft\\_Equalities\\_outcome\\_report\\_update.pdf](http://www.sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Draft_Equalities_outcome_report_update.pdf)

discussions on a move to a Model 3 authority, we asked Professor Rye as part of the remit of his report, to assess the impact on equality groups and intersectionality impact<sup>2</sup> on groups or individuals who possess a number of protected characteristics. We aim to operate a proportional approach to the specific duties, dependent on the scale of the project, and if a policy/proposal/project progressed, we would undertake a more formal equality impact assessment (EQIA) as an appropriate mechanism to assess continuing impact of proposals. We have the relevant impacts front and centre, in any policy development and decision making.

SEStran is very clear on the need to ensure that the requirements of people are taken into account during the development and implementation of a new policy or service, or when a change is made to a current policy or service. Whilst there isn't one format of EQIA, we are seeking to develop and inform our projects in a spirit of co-design and will develop a protocol to this effect.

## **2. How our relevant policies e.g. public procurement, HR address equality**

SEStran endeavour to mainstream the equalities duty in to all relevant policies and procedures. The corporate procurement policy was updated in September 2016<sup>3</sup> and takes account of the Scottish Government's Public Services Reform Agenda and the subsequent Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and the associated Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. There are several principles that govern this policy, including "Consider how procurement can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the SEStran area with particular reference to reducing inequality in the SEStran area, facilitate the involvement of small and medium enterprises, third sector bodies and supported business, and promote innovation." & "Demonstrate through the procurement process that SEStran has given due regard to whether the award criteria and conditions relating to the performance of a relevant contract should include consideration to enable it to better perform its equality duty."

Equality and diversity is a fundamental principle in all HR policies and procedures which are actively promoted in SEStran. All policies are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and seek to promote an inclusive and accessible workplace. In September

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-faqs/intersectionality/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.sestran.gov.uk/uploads/SEStran\\_CorporateProcurementPolicy\\_FINAL\\_Sep\\_16.pdf](http://www.sestran.gov.uk/uploads/SEStran_CorporateProcurementPolicy_FINAL_Sep_16.pdf)

2016, SEStran rolled out a flexitime scheme to staff within a revised Flexible Working Policy to assist staff in balancing their work and home life.

SEStran have consulted with outside organisations, such as Changing the Chemistry and Equate Scotland, on how to make our recruitment process as accessible as possible in attracting a diverse range of candidates, both in the application process and in the advertising of posts to reach a wide audience. The selection process emphasises individual skills, abilities and experience necessary for any role. We also carry out equality monitoring on the recruitment and selection process through the use of questionnaires.

### **3. Thistle Assistance Card & App**

SEStran has operated the Thistle Assistance Card since 2011. This has been an extremely successful scheme that aims to give disabled and elderly transport users more confidence in using public transport. Since its launch SEStran has distributed around 45,000 cards and we will seek to continue to promote the card. SEStran also made the decision to make the Thistle Card design freely available, in order that it could be easily used in other areas of Scotland. Other RTP's have launched the Card in their regions, allowing more people to utilise the Card and increasing accessibility to public transport across Scotland.

In 2016, SEStran developed the Thistle Card app, which replicates the original card. The app is not a replacement for the Card but seeks to increase use and awareness of the Thistle Card scheme. The app is free to download and SEStran are in discussions with developers to further the potential of this technology. By promoting the use of the Thistle Card & app, SEStran look to reduce barriers to accessing public transport for all and promote social inclusion for those who have no other means of transport. In 2015, SEStran's work with the Thistle Card was recognised by the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) with an achievement award in recognition of outstanding achievement in facilitating transport services for disabled people and more recently the SEStran Thistle Card has been nominated for the Scottish Transport Awards Accessibility Project of the Year and the CIHT Inclusive Transportation Award.

#### **4. Equate Scotland Placement**

SEStran will seek to address the gender imbalance currently in STEM subjects in Scotland by working with Equate Scotland to take positive action in employing a female student for a summer placement.<sup>4</sup> An appointment has been made following interviews, from which all applicants were given positive feedback.

#### **5. Equalities Forum**

SEStran holds an Equalities Forum which meets 3-4 times a year, involving local equalities groups, to discuss the work that SEStran is doing, how it operates and to get feedback and suggestions on how we can usefully improve on equalities issues. This Forum is an important way for SEStran to co-design on all projects and policies and gain input from individuals with protected characteristics or from groups representing the interests of those with protected characteristics. In this way we seek to mainstream Equalities in to the work of the Partnership. Furthermore, we are looking to reinvigorate the membership of the Forum in order to engage with as wide a range of people and groups as possible.

#### **6. Disability Confident Scheme**

SEStran are signed up to the Disability Confident scheme in a clear commitment to ensure that disabled people and those with long term health conditions have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations through the below actions:

- Ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
- Communicate and promote vacancies
- Offer an interview to disabled people
- Anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required
- Support any existing employee who acquires a disability or long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work
- At least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.equateScotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/021\\_Sestrans\\_UG-Technical-Officer.pdf](http://www.equateScotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/021_Sestrans_UG-Technical-Officer.pdf)

## **7. Job Evaluation**

Job evaluation is a systematic and transparent mechanism of determining an equitable and fair value of a job in relation to other jobs within the same or similar organisation. It tries to undertake an equitable and impartial approach to establishing an evidence and competency based pay structure. This was seen as fundamental to addressing the issues of SEStran as an employer.

The job evaluation exercise is progressing, with grading being carried out by colleagues at Falkirk Council. The process has sought to address some issues of historical responsibilities allocation and also provide a grading structure that seeks to enable progression which have accumulated since the original structure was put in place in 2007. SEStran is seeking to report by the end of April 2017.

## **8. Board Diversity**

SEStran is committed to making progress on improving the diversity of our Board to encourage new and innovative thinking and maximise use of talent, leading to better decision making and governance. The gender balance of the Board was 85% male and 15% female over the period of 2015 – 2017, a figure collated from a voluntary and anonymous survey of Board members which received a 41% response rate. Figures on the national gender split on Public Boards has been published for appointed for Scotland<sup>5</sup>. Whilst the majority of the SEStran Partnership Board is made up of elected members, we will seek to influence the gender balance of our non-elected members through signing the voluntary One Scotland 50/50 pledge, as endorsed by the Equalities Forum and the Partnership Board, and by undertaking an inclusive application process when the next term for Non-Councillor Members begins in 2018. In order to fully develop Board Diversity, we have produced a Board Diversity Succession Plan, published in conjunction with this report, that lays out in full the process we will take in order to deliver a more diverse Board.

## **9. CIHT Charter**

SEStran have further demonstrated a commitment to the diversity and inclusion agenda by signing the Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) diversity and inclusion charter. Through this Charter we will:

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.appointed-for-scotland.org/about-public-bodies/diversity/>

- Strive to achieve best practice in our recruitment, retention and career progression practices as employers;
- Support the development of good diversity and inclusion practice by collecting and sharing examples of practical activities that contribute to progress with CIHT and other signatories;
- Assign responsibility for meeting our Charter Commitments to a named, senior level individual;
- Work together to develop and adopt future protocols and practice that support the implementation of the aims of this Charter;
- Recognise, respect, capitalise and celebrate contributions from different people to strengthen team performance;
- Display the CIHT diversity and inclusion logo to publicly demonstrate our commitment to this agenda.

## 10. X Route

SEStran have worked with 4 groups of young people over 2015 – 2017 to explore their attitudes to active travel and to interest and engage them in the statutory transport planning process. We are proud of the partnership working with Young Scot to deliver this exciting and innovative study. Young people are often overlooked when considering transport issues and this report gives young people a platform and a voice to express the barriers they face when considering active travel options. Active travel plays a vital role in creating a sustainable transport network across the region and we must continue to strive to engage and encourage those who are often underrepresented if we wish to make active travel an easy and natural choice. Going forward, SEStran is committed to support its partnership with Young Scot, using their fantastic co-design method, to continue to engage and empower the future users of our transport network in the planning process and has submitted a funding bid as part of a consortium to the Horizon 2020 fund to continue this type of work and also have approval from the Scottish Roads Research Board to implement some of the original X-Route suggestions from young people.

## 11. Stonewall Scotland

SEStran has actively engaged with Stonewall Scotland over the course of 2017 in terms of membership of their Diversity Champions programme. We have committed to join as part of our Equality Duties and will aim to utilise the Workplace Equality Index as a tool to strategically embed LGBT good practice across all policies and procedures. The programme comes with a dedicated client account manager based in Edinburgh, who will work with SEStran to develop LGBT inclusive policies and also offer wider support at any time on progressing equality & diversity outcomes in line with our PSED, both in terms of our duties as an employer and also in terms of the inclusivity of the regional transport network.

## Employee Data

SEStran have collected staff data but due to the small numbers of staff employed we are not required to publish the information for data protection purposes. SEStran will use the collected data to better understand the workforce profile, enabling us to identify areas of improvement and eliminate any adverse impact on equality. It will allow the targeting of support for areas of under-representation within the workforce, enable us to take positive action and produce a longitudinal term dataset to inform long-term workforce planning and assess our current policies and procedures. To be effective in assessing equality data we rely on data from staff to undertake the widest possible analysis and we will strive to increase response rates over the period of 2017-2021, although we recognise that this is a voluntary process for staff. SEStran is committed to effective monitoring of equality impact data for our workforce, as a clear sign to all that we are committed to equality and supporting a diverse workforce, in line with our Public Sector Equality duties.

## Statement on Equal Pay & Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap at SEStran over 15/16 – 16/17 was 58%. This gap is based on the percentage difference between men and women's mean hourly basic pay on a full time equivalent basis.<sup>6</sup> Overtime and other allowances have been excluded from this calculation. In 15/16 there were 14 members of staff, 57% female and 43% male and

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<sup>6</sup> [http://gender.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/bitc\\_toolkit\\_1\\_measuring\\_your\\_pay\\_gap\\_final.pdf](http://gender.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/bitc_toolkit_1_measuring_your_pay_gap_final.pdf)

the gender pay gap was 52%. In 16/17 there were 12 members of staff, 58% female and 42% male and the pay gap was 62%.

As a smaller organisation SEStran has no requirement to publish our Gender Pay Gap but wish to demonstrate a commitment to the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

At SEStran there is no discrimination in terms of equal pay for work of equal value. However, there remains a pay gap resulting from the fact that the two most senior positions are occupied by men. In terms of occupational segregation, it is noted that there are proportionately more female than male staff.

SEStran is committed to providing a flexible working culture. There are a range of policies which enable staff with other responsibilities to work flexibly.

## Performance Reporting

SEStran will publish a review in April 2019 on the progress of implementing the new set of Equality Outcomes.

We will also continue to monitor all Partnership Board reports for any implications arising from them that may affect any equalities issues.

One of the key strategic priorities of the SEStran Business Plan for 17/18 is to meet the public sector equality duties and become a more inclusive organisation. This will be monitored through KPI's laid out within the Plan.

## Identification of Responsible Officers

Emily Whitters	Business Support Officer
Angela Chambers	Business Support Manager
George Eckton	Partnership Director



WORKING FOR DIVERSITY IN THE BOARDROOM



**CIHT Diversity & Inclusion Charter**



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