Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2017, SEStran presented a paper on the potential future monitoring of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). Following completion of a desk based study it was apparent that the monitoring framework for the RTS must be refreshed. It was acknowledged that SEStran's targets should be 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time Bound), based on the Economy, Accessibility, the Environment and Health and Safety, headlines.

1.2 It was proposed that the framework needed to be updated so that it could be safeguarded for the future, but it would require changing nearly all existing targets so that it could be more tailored towards how SEStran and its Partner Authorities operate today. The proposal of accessible, realistic and usable smart targets would allow SEStran and its Partners to monitor effectively and to determine the level of data handled.

1.3 It is obvious that the RTS monitoring requires supporting qualitative and quantitative data from our partner authorities. Previously, this included a regular update item on past agendas and it is proposed that this be reintroduced with significant items at each meeting, and a submission once a year of written information on progress for the SEStran Annual Report. Collective reporting will offer a qualitative approach to monitoring to support some of the key actions in the SEStran Region and demonstrate a partnership approach to delivery of the RTS.

2 DATA AVAILABILITY

2.1 Due to changing data availability and in response to government strategies and guidelines, some amendments to the indicators used and the approach to monitoring required. An example previously given was the Scottish low emissions strategy performance indicators, which may need to be reflected in the RTS. However, it is understood that maintaining the continuity of monitoring is also important, and any adjustments will seek to achieve this.

2.2 In the past, SEStran used data modelling as a way of monitoring objectives and therefore, most of the targets set are heavily reliant on this method. However, data modelling, through the use of external consultants, is costly and if done on a regular basis is extremely resource intensive. These targets depend on far too many variables and can therefore not reasonably be monitored and available data is often set at a national level, rather than a regional level. Other targets in the strategy were very unlikely to have numerical data available and therefore could only be monitored using a narrative and providing qualitative evidence.

3 WORK TO DATE

3.1 SEStran has undertaken a desk based study to analyse the Regional Transport Strategy framework to identify how monitoring can be carried out in relation to the objectives and targets. Through this review process, key themes were identified; financial costings, a lack of data available at a regional level and outdated targets. These themes – especially those that have multi-criteria – are factors which affect SEStran's ability to monitor targets accurately and successfully.

3.2 In previous reports, SEStran Chief Officers agreed that the current RTS Monitoring Framework was not best value use of resource nor fit for purpose and as outlined in the current RTS. Chief Officers also agreed that there should be a wholescale re-development of the RTS Monitoring Framework, and that there should be a standing verbal item should be included at each meeting and; written updates on key actions on the progress the four main objectives of the RTS for inclusion in future SEStran Annual Reports.

4.   NEXT STEPS

4.1 SEStran has drafted a proposed new monitoring framework for discussion. The new framework will require additional input from each Local Authority Partner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Chief Officers are invited to provide comment on the monitoring framework;

5.2 Agree to supply the appropriate data on agreed performance indicators.

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14th May 2018

Policy Implications	Proposed re-development of RTS Monitoring Framework and implications for RTS delivery.
Financial Implications	Proposed savings from significantly reduced data modelling by external consultants.
Equalities Implications	None.
Climate Change Implications	None.