

## NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY (NTS2)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The National Transport Strategy (NTS2) a Draft Strategy for Consultation<sup>1</sup> was issued by Scottish Government on 31 July 2019. Scottish Government have asked for views on the proposed draft NTS2 by 23 October 2019.

1.2. The purpose of this report is to advise the board of the content of the draft strategy and discuss the proposed SEStran response.

### 2. STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT NTS2

2.1. The draft NTS2 has five sections as outlined below.

A vision for transport in Scotland;  
Current and emerging challenges;  
Meeting the challenges;  
Transport governance; and  
What we will do.

2.2. Chapter 2, The vision for transport in Scotland is given below.

*“We will have a sustainable, inclusive and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors.”*

The vision is underpinned by four Priorities, each with three associated Outcomes. The vision will be the basis upon which Scottish Government take major strategic decisions and evaluate the success of transport policies going forward. All four Priorities are interlinked to deliver the vision.

The four priorities and their associated outcomes from the Strategy are listed below.

1. Promotes equality:
  - Will provide fair access to services we need;
  - Will be easy to use for all; and
  - Will be affordable for all.
2. Takes climate action:
  - Will adapt to the effects of climate change;
  - Will help deliver our net-zero target; and
  - Will promote greener, cleaner choices.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/45149/national-transport-strategy-draft-for-consultation-july-2019.pdf>

3. Helps our economy prosper:  
Will get us where we need to get to;  
Will be reliable; and  
Will use beneficial innovation.
4. Improves our health and wellbeing:  
Will be safe and secure for all;  
Will enable us to make healthy travel choices; and  
Will help make our communities great places to live.

**2.3.** Chapter 3, Current and emerging challenges identifies and discusses a number of positive trends in Transport in recent years. Notwithstanding these positive developments, the draft NTS2 acknowledges that Scotland's transport system continues to face a number of challenges: many people encounter problems when trying to access the services they need; businesses still face congestion and delays when reaching their customers; and vehicles continue to emit greenhouse gases and pollute the places we live and work.

NTS2 identifies a number of challenges that the strategy needs to address and these are listed below.

- Poverty and child poverty
- Social isolation
- Gender inequalities
- The changing transport needs of young people
- Ageing population
- Disabled people
- Scotland's regional differences
- Global climate emergency
- Technological advances
- Air quality
- Decline in bus use
- Productivity
- Labour markets
- Fair work and skilled workforce
- Trade and connectivity
- Freight
- Tourism
- Digital and energy
- Spatial planning
- Reliability and demand management
- Safety and security
- Health and active travel
- Information & integration
- Resilience

There is significant discussion and links to evidence within the draft NTS2, to support these main issues associated with the challenges and their inclusion as factors to influence the strategy.

**2.4.** Chapter 4, Meeting the challenges, proceeds to identify 14 high-level policy statements of intent aimed at achieving the vision and outcomes. Further detail is provided through a series of enablers which represent mechanisms for delivering the high-level policies.

38 enablers are identified and the full list of policies and enablers is included as appendix 1.

The Policies and Enablers were tested, using a Scenario Planning Tool, to understand how they perform under different plausible futures. These futures include a range of different scenarios, such as where the economy is weak or strong, where society is less or more equal, where the environment has or has not addressed the effects of climate change, or where we have a healthy or unhealthy population that takes high or low levels of active travel. The aim is to understand how effective policies are under different futures and how flexible the policies can be changed as the future changes.

**2.5.** Chapter 5, Transport Governance – democracy, decision-making and delivery, discusses at a very strategic level how transport is delivered in Scotland. This work was undertaken by a Roles and Responsibilities Working Group as part of NTS2.

The following key challenges were identified and need to be addressed:

- financial constraints limiting investment at a regional and/or local level;
- lack of support for all transport modes;
- limited resource capability and skills;
- difficulties working across boundaries and responsiveness to local needs;
- disconnect between long-term goals and short-term action;
- mixed local accountability, overall leadership and influence;
- complex governance arrangements;
- lack of ongoing maintenance of assets;
- inconsistent and/or unclear accountability;
- disconnect with Planning, Economic and Health agendas;
- lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities, particularly for the public; and
- responsiveness to the conflicting pressures of business/public sector.

The Roles and Responsibilities Working Group made three broad recommendations to the Scottish Ministers:

1. The case for change has been made and that the current arrangements are no longer sustainable;
2. Our future transport governance arrangements should be on the basis of some form of regional model allowing for variations in approach between different geographic regions; and
3. Governance is a complex issue, and further work needs to be done to develop a model for future transport governance in Scotland that is capable of being implemented.

Scottish Ministers agreed with the recommendations made by the Group and propose that further collaborative work to look at implementable models will follow on from this consultation to ensure we successfully achieve better outcomes for our citizens, communities, and businesses.

From a transport perspective, a regional approach to governance provides an effective means of addressing cross-boundary issues and reflecting travel to work catchments. Moreover, a strong regional approach to transport together with alignment with economic, planning, marine planning, and housing objectives supports approaches to place-shaping.

- 2.6.** Chapter 6, What we will do, outlines that all stakeholders involved in Transport have a role to play in delivering the Strategy and making it a success. However, in particular NTS2 identifies what action Scottish Government will take. In order to deliver the Strategy, the Scottish Government will take immediate action in three key areas: Increasing Accountability; Strengthening Evidence; and Managing Demand.

It is proposed to establish a Transport Strategy Delivery Board and Transport Citizens' Panels to increase accountability.

In terms of managing demand it is proposed to embed the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy in decision making, promoting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use. In doing so Transport Scotland will review and update the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and investment decision-making processes.

- 2.7.** NTS2 is a crucial piece of national policy and the above summary seeks to provide board members with the key information within the Strategy to enable them to make informed comment on the Strategy. Some discussion on some key aspects of the draft NTS2 now follow.

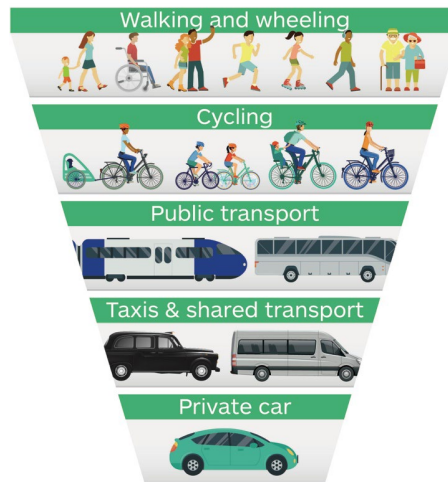
### **3. CONSIDERATION OF KEY ELEMENTS OF NTS2**

- 3.1.** A number of key areas within the strategy will now be discussed in turn.

### **4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL HIERARCHY AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT HIERARCHY**

- 4.1.** An important element in the draft strategy that will impact on future investment decisions is that the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy will be embedded into the decision making process, promoting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use. The sustainable travel hierarchy is represented below.

## Prioritising Sustainable Transport



- 4.2.** The primary purpose of this hierarchy is to seek to influence and manage transport demand.
- 4.3.** Overarching this demand management approach is the adoption of the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy which will be used to inform budgetary decisions at a national level. The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy is shown below.



- 4.4.** The combination of these two hierarchies should result in national investments that favour active travel modes and sharing above single occupancy private car use.
- 4.5.** Whilst individual local authorities can develop and deliver policies or interventions in support of the delivery of the national strategy and hierarchies at a local level, the success of the NTS will to a large extent depend upon the successful delivery of wider transport demand management strategies and measures at a regional level. The wider travel to work areas of our major towns and cities broadly match our established, statutory RTP areas. The increase in regional travel to work demand has significant cross boundary impacts that are best considered, and co-ordinated, at a regional level through the RTP bodies.

## **5. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1.** Section 2.5 of this report covers the discussions within the NTS of the issue of Transport Governance. SEStran welcomes the acknowledgement with the NTS that a case for change has been made and that the current transport governance arrangements are no longer sustainable.
- 5.2.** SEStran agree that future transport governance arrangements should be on the basis of a regional model allowing for variations in approach between different geographic regions. The statutory Regional Transport Partnerships already provide such an arrangement on a well established geographical basis. The RTPs already have Regional Transport Strategies in place and are very familiar with all transport issues associated with their area.
- 5.3.** Regional transport governance exists in a complex landscape, and although further work needs to be done to develop a model for future transport governance in Scotland that is capable of being implemented the current baseline, of the RTP set up is a strong starting point for strengthened regional governance. SEStran welcomes the opportunity to further input into discussions on how regional transport governance can be developed to better address cross boundary issues.
- 5.4.** The strategy also noted the theme that there was the *“potential for a more coherent and joined up approach to national, regional and local transport together with closer integration between spatial planning, economic development and transport.”* SEStran welcomes the recognition within NTS of the need for this integrated approach. SEStran identifies that there is a unique, current opportunity to pursue a place-based agenda, through stronger regional alignment of transport planning and transport delivery. This is needed to drive shared action on cross-boundary outcomes.
- 5.5.** Many if not all of the key challenges identified in section 2.5 of this report can be tackled by providing the right regional body with appropriate delivery powers, dedicated staff resources and funding to deliver a step change in pursuing a more place based agenda, aligning regional spatial planning and economic development with transport priorities.

## **6. DISCUSSION POINTS FOR SESTRAN RESPONSE**

- 6.1.** The vision, priorities and outcomes identified in Chapter 2 of the draft NTS2 are welcomed and are indeed set at an appropriate strategic and national level. The vision by its nature is aspirational and sets out what all transport users would want from an ideal transport system.
- 6.2.** The 12 outcomes identified reflect areas of the transport system that Scottish Government consider can be monitored and evaluated to measure the success of the proposed strategy. A number of Headline indicators are being developed by Scottish Government and they are contained in Annex A of the draft strategy document. The measurement of these indicators is crucial to the successful monitoring of how well the application of the 14 policies and 38 enablers has delivered the aims of the strategy.
- 6.3.** The list of challenges identified in section 2.3 above is extensive and highlights the complex interaction of all these matters in delivering the vision identified in draft NTS2.

Many, if not all, of the factors are interdependent and require a coordinated regional approach. The following areas are considered by SEStran to be critical to the successful delivery of the strategy.

- Global climate emergency
- Reliability and demand management
- Health and active travel
- Spatial planning
- Information & integration
- Decline in bus use
- Safety and security
- Resilience
- Trade and connectivity

- 6.4.** The inclusion of a section on Transport Governance – democracy, decision making and delivery within the draft NTS2 is a fundamental recognition that to be able to deliver the aims of the national strategy there must be a change to how regional transport functions are managed and delivered.
- 6.5.** Therefore, it is vital that the proposed review of transport governance is given the highest priority and changes are recommended and implemented as a matter of urgency.
- 6.6.** SEStran considers that the statutory Regional Transport Partnerships are a key starting point in developing any future model of regional spatial planning, economic development and transport. Transport availability and its relationship with spatial planning is fundamental to deliver development that is sustainable and meets the priorities identified in the draft NTS 2. SEStran considers that governance is required at appropriate levels, with the current RTP providing a strong basis for strengthened regional governance around the delivery of transport related outcomes. Most of these outcomes rely on interventions that cross local boundaries; they therefore require an appropriate level of accountability balanced with shared responsibility that crosses those boundaries.
- 6.7.** RTPs are able to take objective decisions that address regional gaps in provision and therefore address regional outcomes. Rather than relying on voluntary local authority partnerships using already stretched resources, it is essential that regional governance is provided by dedicated staff, independent of local authorities.
- 6.8.** Whilst it is acknowledged that the role of the national strategy is not to allocate funding it is considered that some acknowledgement of the challenges associated with delivering the strategy within a challenging economic climate should have been stated. The expectations from the draft strategy are high but it is how investment decisions are made that will determine the success in the delivery of the strategy.
- 6.9.** Transport investment decisions should account for the true cost of car use to society. Transport should be a key enabling factor for society: Any transport strategy should focus on delivering a truly integrated transport network which allows people to move through it seamlessly, boundaries both physical and virtual (provider/ticket/mode) whilst necessary should not be a hindrance to members of our society moving from one place to another.

**6.10.** The formal consultation is by an online survey and the responses to the key questions are contained in appendix 2.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION**

**7.1.** It is recommended that the Board discusses and notes the content of this report; and

**7.2.** Subject to the outcome of the discussion approves the consultation response to be sent to Scottish Government via the on line survey (appendix 2).

Jim Stewart  
**Strategy and Projects Officer**  
27 September 2019

**Appendix 1:** Draft NTS2 - List of Polices and Enablers.

**Appendix 2:** SEStran response to NTS2 survey questions.

Policy Implications	The new NTS2 will impact on future strategy development.
Financial Implications	No changes to existing arrangements but review of regional governance may change this in the future.
Equalities Implications	A full range of supporting assessments have been produced by Scottish Government in support of the Strategy. Equality Impact Assessment Record. Equality Impact Assessment Results. Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment. Fairer Scotland Duty Summary. Islands Communities Assessment.
Climate Change Implications	A SEA Environmental Report (including Non-Technical Summary) has been undertaken.