

SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10am, Friday 27 September 2019

European Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

Present

Name

Organisation Title

Cllr Gordon Edgar (Chair)	Scottish Borders Council
Laura Alexander	Non-Council Member
Cllr Colin Davidson	Fife Council
Cllr Jim Fullarton	Scottish Borders Council
Vivienne Gray	Non-Council Member
Callum Hay	Non-Council Member
Simon Hindshaw	Non-Council Member
Cllr Craig Hoy	East Lothian Council
Richard Llewellyn	Non-Council Member
Cllr Claire Miller	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Laura Murtagh	Falkirk Council
Cllr Peter Smaill	Midlothian Council
Doreen Steele	Non-Council Member
Catherine Thomson	Non-Council Member
Barry Turner	Non-Council Member
Paul White	Non-Council Member

In Attendance

Keith Fiskien	SEStran
Ken Gourlay	Fife Council
Jim Grieve	SEStran
Anna Herriman	SEStran
Karen Jones	Scott Moncrieff
Gavin King	City of Edinburgh Council (Secretary)
Hannah Markley	SEStran
Euan Tait	ScotRail

Martin Scott	City of Edinburgh Council (Clerk)
Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council (Treasury)
Jim Stewart	SEStran
Ewan Tait	ScotRail
Julie Vinders	SEStran

Apologies for Absence

Cllr Fiona Collie	Falkirk Council
Cllr Dave Dempsey	Fife Council
Cllr Karen Doran	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Ian Ferguson	Fife Council
Cllr Chris Horne	West Lothian Council
Cllr Russel Imrie	Midlothian Council
Cllr Lesley Macinnes	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Cathy Muldoon	West Lothian Council
Cllr Laura Murtagh	Falkirk Council
Angela Chambers	SEStran
Peter Jackson	SEStran
Beth Harley Jepson	SEStran
Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council

Rail Presentation – Timetable Changes

Euan Tait of ScotRail provided a PowerPoint presentation on how recent investments and changes to timetables had been performing and how forthcoming changes to timetables would affect rail services across the country. Mr Tait highlighted that ScotRail had been trying to manage and respond to feedback of overcrowding.

He highlighted that there were more seats between Edinburgh and Tweedbank at almost every timetable change since the Borders Railway had opened and more seats would be added once all the High-Speed Trains were in service.

In North Berwick and Dunbar, only two peak trains remained with just four carriages. ScotRail were looking for opportunities to improve services on the East Coast Main Line and were working with Network Rail and Transport Scotland to identify how best to serve East Linton and Reston.

In the December 2018 timetable, ScotRail had separated Dunblane, Bridge of Allan, Stirling and Larbert to Edinburgh from Polmont and Linlithgow to Edinburgh passengers with a new local service between Edinburgh, Falkirk Grahamston and Glasgow, and increased capacity on both routes. There are now four trains an hour to Falkirk Grahamston. In May 2019, ScotRail accelerated the timetable on this corridor, improving the average journey time between Dunblane and Edinburgh from 1h 06m pre-electrification to 55 minutes today, and between Stirling and Edinburgh from 57 minutes pre-electrification to 46 minutes today.

Capacity is gradually increasing between Fife and Edinburgh as diesel multiple units have been made available following the introduction of High Speed Trains on InterCity routes, with more improvements planned.

Following a wide-ranging discussion and a number of questions, the following key points emerged:

- Before services are introduced, it is important to ensure that the service could be delivered reliably. All future enhancements depended on knowing they could be delivered.
- ScotRail's recruitment drive was going well and the staff base had significantly increased.
- In 2020, ScotRail planned to have delivered 6,500 more seats on Fife local services compared to May 2018, more than previously promised.
- ScotRail was open to having discussions with local authorities about connectivity.
- ScotRail outlined some current initiatives for alleviating costs for those from socially deprived backgrounds, and noted that they would be happy to participate in any wider debate around fares strategy and strategic objectives, and they see this as an area which would be very much led by Scottish Ministers.

Decision

- 1) To thank Euan Tait for his attendance and note the presentation provided.
- 2) To extend an invitation to Euan Tait for in-depth conversation about vision to implement plans for the Levenmouth rail link.

A1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To agree the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 21 June 2019 as a correct record.
- 2) To agree the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 6 September 2019 as a correct record.

A2. Annual External Audit Report 2018/19

The Annual Audit Report summarised the findings arising from the Partnership's 2018/19 external audit.

Decision

- 1) To note the Annual Audit Report.
- 2) To note the Action Plan points and management responses at Appendix Two.
(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3. Audited Annual Accounts 2018/19

Approval was sought for the audited annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Decision

- 1) To note the audited annual accounts and the Auditor's opinion in the audit certificate to the accounts.
- 2) To authorise the annual accounts for signature.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 21 June 2019 (item A2); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3(b). Finance Officer's Report

The Board considered a report which provided a first update on financial performance of the Core and Projects budgets of the Partnership for 2019/20, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. An analysis of financial performance to the end of August 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the forecast underspend of £31,000 on the core employee budget
- 2) To approve, the 2018/19 underspend of £40,000 be utilised as funding for the Sustainable and Active Travel Grant Scheme, in line with the decision of the Partnership on 22nd March 2019.
- 3) To note that further updates would be presented to future meetings of the Partnership in 2019/20.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A4. Review of Governance Scheme: List of Committee Powers

The external audit into SEStran had identified a risk that the Performance and Audit Committee may be perceived as not operating independently or providing effective scrutiny and challenge to officers. The audit findings recommended a review of the

Governance Scheme to consider whether the Chair of the Partnership should be entitled to substitute for any member of the Performance and Audit Committee.

Approval was sought to amend the Partnership's List of Committee Powers removing the Chair of the Partnership's entitlement to substitute for any member of the Performance and Audit Committee.

Decision

- 1) To repeal and approve the governance documents appended to the report to take effect from 28 September 2019.
- 2) To delegate approval to the Secretary to make any such amendments necessary to the Governance documentation to implement the decision of the Board.
- 3) To agree that further consideration would be given to the quorum of the Performance and Audit Committee

(Reference – report by the Secretary, submitted)

A5. Draft Annual Report 2018/19

Details were provided of SEStran's draft Annual Report for the year 2018/19, and approval was sought for its publication.

Decision

To approve the draft Annual Report for 2018/19 and to approve that the Partnership Director be given authority to finalise the design work, with a suitable external agency, to complete the suggested amendments made at the meeting and to then publish the report.

(Reference – report by the Partnership Director, submitted)

A6. National Transport Strategy 2 (Nts2) Consultation Response

The National Transport Strategy (NTS2) a Draft Strategy for Consultation had been by released Scottish Government on 31 July 2019. The Scottish Government had asked for views on the proposed draft NTS2 by 23 October 2019.

An update was provided on the content of the draft strategy and the proposed SEStran response.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To approve the draft consultation response and that officers would email members for any additional suggested comments to be incorporated in advance of the response deadline of 23 October 2019.

Declaration of interests

Paul White declared a financial interest as an employee of The Confederation of Passenger Transport Scotland.

(Reference – report by the Strategy and Projects Officer, submitted)

A7. Projects Report

An update was provided on the status and progress of the various projects SEStran were involved in and covered the position on the EU exit process.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the Programmes Manager, submitted)

A8. Date of Next Meeting

Decision

To note that the next meeting would be held on Friday 6 December 2019 at 10am in the European Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh.

B1. Public Service Reform (Scotland) Act (PSRA) 2017/18

The Regional Transport Partnerships were included in the schedule of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. This required annual publication of information on expenditure and certain other matters as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial years. Details were provided of the information to be published.

Decision

To note the content of the material for publication under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and detailed in appendix 1 of the report.

(Reference – report by the Business Support Officer, submitted)

B2. Consultation Responses

(a) Low Emission Zones

Details were provided of the Partnership's response to the Edinburgh Low Emission Zone Consultation.

Decision

To note the response.

(b) City Centre Transformation

Details were provided of the Partnership's response to the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation – Proposed Strategy for Consultation.

Decision

To note the response.

(c) Meadows to George Street

Details were provided of the Partnership's response to the Meadows to George Street Consultation.

Decision

To note the response.

(d) Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee Pre-budget Scrutiny

Details were provided of the Partnership's response to the initial call for views from the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee.

The response had been developed taking into account discussions held with a number of partners and stakeholders.

Decision

To note the response.

B3. Minutes

Decision

To note the minute of the Chief Officers Liaison Group meeting of 21 August 2019.