

2017 - 2019



SEStran Mainstreaming and Equalities Outcomes Progress Report

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About SEStran – Role & Function

SEStran is one of seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTP's) in Scotland. The 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 its work, it lays out the 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 nine staff.

Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”)

Part 3 of Schedule 19 to the 2010 Act sets out that a Regional Transport Partnership established by Section 1(1) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the 2005 Act”) falls within the definition of a public authority for the purposes of the 2010 Act.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (“the 2012 Regulations”)

Para. 1 of Schedule 1 to the 2012 Regulations sets out that a Regional Transport Partnership established by Section 1(1) of the 2005 Act falls within the definition of a public authority for the purposes of the 2012 Regulations.

The Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005, which was made under Section 1(1) of the 2005 Act, established SEStran, meaning SEStran is covered by both the 2010 Act and the 2012 Regulations.

This means SEStran is covered by the public sector equality duty (PSED), as set out in the 2010 Act. The PSED requires that SEStran must, when exercising its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The 2010 Act explains that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics under the 2010 Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

About this report

This report sets out how SEStran is addressing its responsibilities under the 2010 Act. It summarises the progress made in mainstreaming equality and our progress in achieving the Equalities Outcome we identified in 2017 and demonstrates progress and continued commitment to developing and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in culture and behaviours and as a fundamental part of our day to day business and decision making.

Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming is a specific requirement for public bodies in relation to implementing the Equality Duty. It means integrating equality into the day to day working of the organisation.

Over the period 2017 – 2019, SEStran has sought to mainstream Equality into our core functions as outlined below.

1. How SEStran Assess Impact on Equality

SEStran seeks to involve and inform equality groups right from the start of discussions on any new proposals, policies or projects, progressing on to a more structured assessment in any subsequent stages.

SEStran is very clear on the need to ensure that the requirements of people with protected characteristics are taken in to 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 standard template Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), SEStran seeks to develop and inform projects in a spirit of co-design and will develop a protocol to this effect. Alongside this, SEStran is keen to ensure that staff have comprehensive knowledge of obligations under the equalities legislation and has provided a variety of staff training courses and workshops to support and enhance this knowledge and awareness.

2. Procurement

Equality is considered throughout the procurement and tender procedures and use is made of Public Contracts Scotland, frameworks and Scotland Excel, which is the Centre of Procurement Expertise for the local government sector in Scotland.

SEStran's Corporate Procurement Policy [[p73 Governance Scheme](#)] 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 relevant to equalities that form part of 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" And "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."

3. HR Policies

Equality and diversity are fundamental principles in all HR policies and procedures and are actively promoted in SEStran. All policies are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation and best practice. This is done in consultation with HR advisers, stakeholders and staff, before finally being presented to the Performance and Audit Committee for further scrutiny and feedback.

SEStran will continue to review all policies and procedures to ensure they reflect SEStran's commitment to ensuring that it promotes an equitable and inclusive workplace.

4. Corporate Planning and Reporting

To demonstrate commitment to embedding equality into the corporate planning process, SEStran has introduced a new format for the Business Plan to easily identify where equalities feature in objectives. The new format was positively received and will be used in future reporting publications.

5. Equate Scotland Placement

SEStran helped address the gender imbalance currently in STEM subjects in Scotland by working with Equate Scotland to take positive action by employing a female student for a summer placement. Two appointments were made over the reporting period, one in 2017 and another in 2018, with successful outcomes for both the student and the organisation.

6. Equalities & Access to Healthcare Forum

SEStran continues to hold an Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum which meets twice a year, involving local equalities groups and healthcare representatives, to discuss the work that SEStran is doing, how it operates and to get feedback and suggestions on how to improve on equalities and accessibility issues. This Forum is an important way for SEStran to co-design on 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 SEStran mainstreams equalities in to the work of the Partnership. Efforts are continuing to look to reinvigorate the membership of the Forum to engage with as wide a range of people and groups as possible and as part of that commitment SEStran held workshops at the most recent Forum "Exploring Disability and Public Transport" which were well attended. The evidence gathered at the workshops will be used in the development of a journey planner app for those with a disability.

7. Disability Confident Scheme

In 2017 SEStran became a Disability Committed Employer, which was progressed to the higher-level Disability Confident Employer in 2018. The Disability Confident Employment Scheme is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. SEStran employs the Disability Confident logo to demonstrate that applicants with disabilities are encouraged and welcome.

8. Inclusion Scotland Internship

Under Inclusion Scotland's National Disability Internship Programme, SEStran is in the process of offering a placement during summer/autumn 2019. The focus of the placement will be on the development of the journey planner app.

9. Living Wage Employer

In 2017 Living Wage accreditation was achieved. The living wage is currently £9.00ph and is based on cost of living. Research has shown that paying the living wage helps organisations recruit, retain better staff, reduce absenteeism and encourage higher productivity.

10. 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 organisations. It tries to undertake an equitable and impartial approach to establishing an evidence and competency-based pay structure. A job evaluation exercise was undertaken in early 2017 and a new pay and grading structure was implemented in October 2017.

11. Board Diversity

SEStran is committed to making progress on improving the diversity of its Board to encourage new and innovative thinking and maximise use of talent, leading to better decision making and governance.

To help achieve this aim, the SEStran Chair wrote to the constituent local authorities ahead of the May 2017 Local Government elections and asked them to assist SEStran in achieving its objectives of improving diversity by considering the gender balance of the representatives appointed to the Partnership Board.

Our Board membership information is available here:

<https://www.sestran.gov.uk/board-members/>

Whilst the majority of the SEStran Partnership Board is made up of elected members, we sought 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. We undertook an inclusive application process for the new Non-Councillor Members who were appointed in 2018. A Board Diversity Succession Plan sets out the process to help deliver a more diverse Board.

The 2012 Regulations set out that Scottish Ministers are required from time to time, to gather information about members' protected characteristics and that the Ministers will forward those to the public bodies covered by the duties. At the time of reporting, we are awaiting this information from Ministers. However, our commitment to improving the diversity of our board can be demonstrated as above and through board succession planning activities.

12. Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) Charter

SEStran demonstrated a commitment to the diversity and inclusion agenda by signing the Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) Diversity and Inclusion Charter in September 2016 and we continue to adhere to this Charter.

Recruitment and Employee Data

SEStran collects information at recruitment stage and from current employees but, is not required to publish information about the workforce for data protection reasons owing to the small number of staff employed. SEStran will use the data it collects in order to better perform the equality duty, and to better understand the recruitment and workforce profile, enabling it to identify areas of improvement and eliminate any adverse impact on equality.

This will allow the targeting of support for areas of under-representation within the workforce, enable us to take positive action and produce a dataset to inform long-term workforce planning and assess current policies and procedures. To be effective in assessing equality data, data from staff is relied upon to provide the widest possible analysis and efforts will be made to increase response rates over the period of 2019-2021, although it is recognised that this is a voluntary process at recruitment stage and for staff. SEStran is committed to undertaking effective monitoring of equality data relative to the workforce, as a clear sign to all that it is committed to equality and supporting a diverse workforce.

Equal Pay & Gender Pay Gap

SEStran is not covered by legal obligations in respect of publishing a Statement on Equal Pay or Gender Pay Gap information.

SEStran is committed to providing a flexible working culture and there are a range of policies which enable staff to work flexibly. Our commitment to mainstreaming equality throughout our functions is demonstrated through this report.

Providing Information in Various Formats

Information is provided in a variety of formats, including: reports provided in PDF and RTF format but can also be provided in alternative formats and/or languages such as large print or Braille.

Section 2: Equality Outcomes 2017-2021

SEStran's Equality Outcomes for 2017-2021 are set out over pages 8-12 of our 2017 Equalities Outcomes Report:

www.sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017_04_27_Equality_Outcomes.pdf

Progress on Equality Outcome 1: An Equitable, Diverse and Representative Organisation

Over the course of the reporting period 2017-2019, SEStran has made the following progress towards achieving Equality Outcome 1:

- **Staff Engagement**

SEStran is investigating ways to improve how it engages and supports employees and during 2019 has reviewed, updated and enhanced the annual equalities monitoring form for current staff to make it more detailed and to afford us a clearer picture. The new form was promoted with a view to increasing the participation rate and the response rate for 2019 was 100%.

Staff also have the opportunity to engage with their manager through annual development review meetings, 6-month review and regular 1:1 meetings.

- **Policy and Procedure Reviews**

SEStran introduced policy review sessions as part of weekly staff team meetings, where policies are reviewed on rotation to provide staff with the opportunity to refresh their knowledge, understanding and ask questions.

SEStran has undertaken a review of our Equal Opportunities Monitoring form which is used at recruitment stage and updated the categories of data that are collected, again, to afford us a clearer picture.

- **Training**

During May 2018 staff attended training provided by Equate Scotland on Positive Language and Unconscious Bias. The Unconscious Bias training will also be provided to the Board in June 2019.

Training was provided to staff in March 2019 by our legal advisers Anderson Strathern LLP on the 2010 Act and the 2012 Regulations, specifically tailored to SEStran and setting out its obligations.

Furthermore, as of March 2019, staff now have access to Equalities and Diversity Training Modules via Falkirk Council's e-learning portal. This training aims to raise awareness and covers the legislation and is designed so that staff are encouraged to think about, reflect and challenge their perceptions. It includes examples, quizzes and a test at the end of the training which aims to help staff understand equality and diversity issues.

- **Non-Councillor Board Appointments 2018**

In consultation with Equate Scotland, Changing the Chemistry and Stonewall, we used an inclusive application process to attract a wider range of applicants for the Non-Councillor Board appointments which were made in June 2018. The result of this exercise has produced a gender balanced Board, in relation to the Non-Councillor Members.

- **Succession Planning Committee**

New appointments were made to the Succession Planning Committee in August 2017, when the new Board for the 2017-2022 term was established. The role of the SEStran Succession Planning Committee is to: lead on meeting the Board's responsibilities in relation to planning for succession through appointments and Board member development; offer advice to the Board on future appointments and reappointments; review and evaluate the skills, knowledge, expertise, diversity (including protected characteristics) of current Board members, and requirements of future members, on an annual basis; and monitor the development and continuous improvement of a succession plan that can be presented to the Board.

Due to availability of senior personnel during 2018, the Succession Planning Committee did not meet, however, plans are in place for the Committee to meet during summer 2019 and a report will be provided to the Partnership Board thereafter.

Progress on Equality Outcome 2: A Safe, Accessible and Equitable Regional Transport Network

Over the course of the reporting period 2017-2019, we have made the following progress towards achieving Equality Outcome 2:

- **Thistle Assistance Program**

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 looks 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. 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.

In 2019 SEStran will be developing a new Thistle Assistance dedicated website and promotional campaign to engage with the public and generate more awareness of the benefits of the program.

- **Journey Assistance Planner App**

Travel planning websites, satellite navigation and Apps (Google Maps & Traveline) are now common place. People use them every day to make their commute, shopping trip or recreational journey planning easier. However, for those in the community with disabilities (seen and unseen), learning difficulties or degenerative conditions, they can be difficult to use or understand.

SEStran, through the development and implementation of two key projects bustrackerSEStran and the Thistle Assistance Card has identified a need to address this lack of usability first hand – combining journey planning and disability awareness into one easy to use and versatile platform.

In 2018 SEStran was successful in an application to the Scottish Enterprise/Innovate UK, Can Do fund for a project that will develop a journey planning and wayfinding application for Thistle Assistance.

The aim is to develop a platform showing relevant route information in a clear way, proving information about which travel option to use, where to get on and where and when to get off, providing information about what to do if lost, and enabling a carer to monitor where the person is and communicate with them.

SEStran will be working with five software developers in 2019 to develop a phase one proof of concept for the Thistle Assistance Journey planner.

- **RTPI**

Building on a substantial investment over the past 9 years by SEStran, the major bus operators have now modernised their ticketing and RTPI technology and are now providing their own RTPI to Traveline and, directly, to the travelling public. Also, to keep pace with rapidly developing new technology and to able to continue to provide RTPI through their digital display screens, SEStran is investing in a new Content Management System being introduced by City of Edinburgh Council, later this year. This will also allow a number of other bus operators in the region to provide RTPI for their services. RTPI gives bus users confidence in arrival times and can minimise time spent at bus stops.

- **Hate Crime Charter**

SEStran is involved in a working group, along with Transport Scotland, Police Scotland and Disability Equality Scotland, to develop a regional Hate Crime Charter for public transport. Hate Crime is a key work package which came out of the Accessible Travel Framework developed by Transport Scotland.¹ Building on the Edinburgh Hate Crime

¹ Transport Scotland (2016) 'Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework' available at: <http://accessibletravel.scot/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Going-Further-Scotlands-Accessible-Travel-Framework-Full-Report.pdf>.

Charter for Public Transport², SEStran is developing a similar charter on a regional scale in partnership with Transport Scotland, Police Scotland and Disability Equality Scotland for all protected characteristics considered under the current hate crime legislation. Public transport operators and different equalities groups have been involved through consultation events and surveys and the outcomes have been incorporated into the drafting of the Charter. Once the draft version is finalised, SEStran will trial the Charter in Fife, Clackmannanshire and West Lothian. Based on the learnings from this trial, SEStran hopes to roll out the Charter nationally.

- **Regional Transport Strategy**

SEStran are commencing a review and rewrite of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). This is likely to be an ongoing process during the next two-year period for reporting on the Equality Duty. A key component of the development of the RTS is engagement and consultancy work. Work has just commenced on the development of a brief to secure consultancy support for the issues and objectives stage of the review, which most importantly, will include a requirement to scope the EQIA, identifying an engagement and consultancy strategy with all relevant stakeholders. This stage of the review will identify how equality is to be embedded within the development of the strategy, including integration with the other workstreams/tasks.

- **GO e-Bike Hubs**

SEStran launched GO e-Bike in 2018 with the aim of increasing usage and awareness of power-assisted cycling across the South East of Scotland and beyond. GO e-Bikes launched with 5 different projects in St. Andrew's, Buckhaven, West Lothian, Falkirk, and also encouraging employers to get involved with a 'Try a GO e-Bike Roadshow'. GO e-Bike aims to promote a healthier more active population, reduce inequalities in our communities and improve our environment. The hubs were selected on a criterion of fulfilling a social or community benefit from their implementation.

Future hubs are being developed across the South East of Scotland awarded funding as part of the Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge Fund established by Transport Scotland from funds awarded under European Regional Development Fund 2014- 2020 programme and Transport Scotland funding, where relevant, to enable everyday functional journeys to be taken by walking, cycling and public transport and to support an increased proportion on ultra-low emission vehicles on Scotland's roads.

- **CLEAR Buckhaven**

The community organisation CLEAR (Community-Led Environmental Action for Regeneration) sits in the heart of a rural isolated community with no rail links. Currently the organisation is limited to a van with issues of a lack of licenses and insurance, this is taking up valuable senior staff time. 6 e-bikes are being offered on

² http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2318/the_capital_drives_out_hate_crime_on_public_transport.

short & medium-term loans to the community centre staff of 30 volunteers. An electric cargo bike will be shared by staff to move tools and produce between expanding fruit growing orchard sites comprising over 10,000 trees. The e-cargo bike will free up staff resources and provide a low carbon alternative to transport tools and various produce from the orchards.

- **West Lothian Bike Library**

West Lothian Bike Library is a social enterprise based in Livingston. The Bike Library is working in partnership with West Lothian Council to help people to get active and connected through cycling, improving health and increasing independence, confidence, employability and skills. The catchment area is all of West Lothian which includes several areas of high deprivation according to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

9 standard e-bikes are offered on short hire periods with a try before you buy offer. 1 e-trike opens up the social inclusion to a wider all-ability audience and is available on longer term loan. The e-trike has proved to be a great asset for challenging social isolation with trained pilots regularly taking users out who live alone.

- **Grace's Sign**

Grace, a schoolgirl, who has Crohn's disease, headed up a campaign to make people more aware of "invisible" disabilities after she experienced negative attitudes when she used disabled toilets. Grace designed a new sign for public loos that draws attention to the fact that people might not have a visible disability but may still need to use an accessible toilet. Her sign has been championed by many organisations, including SEStran and is now used at a growing number of sites, including SEStran offices, Scottish Government buildings, the Scottish Parliament, sports centres, Edinburgh airport and Hibs' Easter Road ground. We featured Grace's sign in our [Winter 2017 Newsletter](#)

Performance Reporting

SEStran will publish a Mainstreaming Report and new set of Equalities Outcomes before the end of the next period, i.e. 30 April 2021.

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

