

New Regional Transport Strategy (RTS): Update Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Board on the ongoing progress of the work to deliver the new Regional Transport Strategy. The report also updates on the status of the Second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) 2 being undertaken by Transport Scotland.

2 Background

- 2.1 Board members will recall the last update report which was presented to the board on 13 November 2020. The report noted a revised programme resulting from alignment of RTS development with the emerging timescales for STPR2. This allowed for the development and assessment of options in the RTS that fully take account of how STPR2 has developed and its findings.
- 2.2 Procurement of consultants to provide transport consultancy service to support delivery of the new RTS was also under way in November 2020, and this concluded with the successful appointment of Stantec UK Ltd.
- 2.3 The RTS Steering Group continues to meet and has discussed a number of topics including the consultation and engagement strategy and the development of the public survey.

3 Progress

- 3.1 Following a competitive tendering process, Stantec UK Ltd was appointed to provide consultancy support for the RTS development, and they commenced work on 5 January 2021.
- 3.2 Work is now under way on a number of areas needed to deliver the RTS, with several different workstreams being developed at this initial stage of the project. A 'flash' update report, which is attached as appendix one to this report, highlights progress against agreed timescales. The anticipated completion date, which sees a draft RTS considered by the Board in September 2021 prior to a statutory 12 week consultation stage should still be met. However, it is noted that engagement and consultation is slower than the original consultant's programme.
- 3.3 Given the uncertainty introduced by Covid-19 and its potential impacts on travel demand and transport choices, and the two-phased approach now being applied to the Strategic Transport Projects Review (outlined below) it is likely that any strategy developed now will be subject to an early review as transport emerges from the pandemic and impacts become clearer. Also, Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2018–2032 – 2020 update indicates a

number of key targets such as: 'Reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030', and 'Phase out the need for petrol and diesel cars and vans in Scotland by 2030'. Therefore, to accommodate these key points within the timeframe of the strategy, the proposed lifespan of the RTS is to 2035.

3.4 Workshops have taken place, or have been arranged with, all eight of the partnership local authorities and a number of other meeting and briefing notes seeking views of interested stakeholders is ongoing.

3.5 A public survey has been launched and will run for 6 weeks finishing on Monday 19 April. To help us shape the new Strategy, we want to establish some understanding of the public views of the transport issues and how travel choices may be affected as a result of the impacts of Covid-19. The survey can be accessed via the [SEStran web pages](#).

3.6 **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

The scoping report has been completed and submitted to the statutory authorities for comment via the SES Gateway. This is a formal stage of the SEA process with a five-week time period during which the statutory authority are required to respond. The [SEA scoping report](#) has been published on the SEStran website.

3.7 **Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

As a first stage an RTS Equalities Duties Assessment Framing Note has been prepared and will form the basis of an initial discussion exercise with stakeholders who have been identified as representing equalities interests within the SEStran area of relevance to the emerging RTS. Other relevant stakeholder groups and interested individuals will also be encouraged to engage. The [Framing Note](#) has been published on the SEStran website.

4 **Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2)**

4.1 A comprehensive suite of publications have been issued for consultation by Transport Scotland as part of the work being undertaken for STPR2. Comments and feedback are required by 31 March 2021, and from the entire suite, the following consultation drafts are relevant to SEStran:

- [STPR2: Update and Phase 1 Recommendations Report - February 2021](#)
- [National Initial Appraisal Case for Change Report](#)
- [Initial Appraisal Case for Change Edinburgh and South East Scotland Region Report](#)
- [Initial Appraisal Case for Change Forth Valley Report](#)

4.2 The necessary level of consideration and scrutiny of these documents is being undertaken by SEStran officers, and responses will be submitted to Transport Scotland by the deadline. In advance of that, a summary reflection on the draft documents is provided for this board meeting.

4.3 The Draft Phase 1 Recommendations report focuses on the early actions that can be delivered within the next two to three years, can make a significant impact on the STPR2 objectives, support an inclusive economic recovery from Covid-19, and finally, that 'lock-in' the sustainable travel behaviours that have been evident during lockdown periods. The report arranges recommended actions under eight transport themes which are given below.

- Supporting smart and sustainable travel across Scotland,
- Creating smart and sustainable towns and villages,
- Improving accessibility in rural and peripheral areas and for vulnerable groups,
- Transforming cities,
- Enhancing public transport provision,
- Supporting transition to low-carbon transport,
- Supporting a viable freight industry,
- Enhancing safety and resilience on the strategic transport network.

These themes are developed from the definition of transport option groupings which are used consistently across the National Case for Change Report and the two Regional case for change reports. Details are contained in Appendix A of the report on the STPR2 webpages.

4.4 The National Initial Appraisal Case for Change report presents an evidence-based assessment of the challenges and opportunities that exist for transport, presented within the NTS2 policy framework at a national level. The document outlines 11 transport option groupings that have been used to form the basis of categories that will progress options to the STPR2 appraisal stage. These 11 transport option groupings are consistent throughout the regional case for change documents, as well, and are listed below.

- Active Travel
- Behaviour Change
- Bus
- Rail
- Public Transport
- Ferries / Island Connectivity
- Road
- Freight
- Technology
- Multimodal Mobility
- Mass Transit

4.5 The Case for Change document also sets out the Transport Planning Objectives that have been set at a national level, and to which regional sub objectives are aligned. Finally, [Appendix E](#) of the report includes summary descriptions of the options that are currently being taken forward for further consideration through the appraisal stages of STPR2 at a national and at a regional level. An addendum in the report includes a summary of likely future transport impacts for Scotland, arising from Covid-19.

- 4.6 There are two Regional Transport Working Groups within the SEStran Region; Forth Valley which includes Clackmannanshire and Falkirk councils and Edinburgh and South East Scotland Region which covers the remaining six of the partnership councils. A case for change report has been prepared for each of the areas.
- 4.7 The Initial Appraisal Case for Change for both these Regional Transport Working Groups presents an evidence based assessment of the challenges and opportunities that exist for transport, presented within the context and setting created by the national Case for Change but with 'regional sub-objectives' Transport Planning Objectives that have been set at a regional level.
- 4.8 The two regional case for change documents carry forward the same 11 transport option groupings identified in the national case for change document. However, the individual regional options sifted in for further consideration through STPR2 are not repeated again having already been identified in [Appendix E](#) of the National Case for Change.
- 4.8 For both the regions there are too many options sifted in at this early stage of the assessment to discuss them individually. Board members were sent resource(s) packs prepared by Transport Scotland and their consultants to help understand the process and work undertaken.

5 New RTS –next steps

- 5.1 The next key stages upon completion of the consultation will be finalising Problems Framework, Evidencing the Problems, Defining the Future, Defining the Vision and Transport Planning Objectives as part of the ongoing Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process to deliver the Initial Appraisal case for Change in support of the RTS.
- 5.2 Update reports on progress will be presented to the Partnership Board meetings whenever appropriate.

6 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- 6.1 notes the continuing progress to deliver a new Regional Transport Strategy SEStran 2035;
- 6.2 notes that a number of consultations are underway for STPR2 and that the deadline for comments is 31 March 2021;
- 6.3 agrees that submission of the final response on the STPR2 consultations is delegated to the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chair, subject to including any further recommendations incorporating the views of the Board from the meeting.

Strategy and Projects Officer

19th March 2021

Appendix 1 - Flash Report.

Policy Implications	A new RTS will impact on future strategy development and local transport authorities' plans and strategies.
Financial Implications	Sufficient funds are contained within the projects budget for delivery of the RTS
Equalities Implications	The new RTS is subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) which is being carried out by Stantec as an integral part of the RTS development
Climate Change Implications	The new RTS is subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) SEA Scoping Report
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Flash Report.

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SESTRAN RTS FLASH REPORT 12/03/2021

PROJECT PROGRESS

Table 1 Summary of Project Progress by Task

Task	Sub-Task	Task Progress	Task Lead	% Complete	Programme Status
Task 1 – Project Management & Support	1A: RTS Scoping Workshop	Workshop held and summary note circulated to attendees	Alec Knox	100%	
	1B: Communication and Liaison	Schedule of Progress Meetings and Flash Reports	Alec Knox	Ongoing	
Task 2 – Engagement & Consultation	2A: Case for Change Stakeholder Consultation	Stakeholder workshops held with Falkirk, Midlothian and West Lothian. Arranged with all other Councils except Edinburgh. Meetings taken place with SESplan, CPT and arranged with 14 other organisations.	Chris Paterson	30%	
	2B: Case for Change Public Survey	Survey is now live. 43 responses have been received to date. End date is 19 th April.	Chris Paterson	50%	
	2C: Transport Planning Objectives, Options and Appraisal Consultation		Chris Paterson		
	2D: Draft Strategy Consultation		Chris Paterson		
Task 3 – STAG Case for Change Appraisal	3A: Policy Review	All documents reviewed and used to populate 1 st draft of Problems Framework	Alec Knox	100%	
	3B: Problems Framework	1 st draft to be submitted by 19 th March. Proposed that Monthly Progress Meeting is moved to 25 th / 26 th March to allow discussion of this prior to finalisation by end of the month	Alec Knox	60%	
	3C: Evidencing the Problems	Analysis commenced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key transport trends • Employment mapping • Population mapping • Census TTW mapping 	Rachel Thomas	70%	



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Task	Sub-Task	Task Progress	Task Lead	% Complete	Programme Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional travel generators Road journey times Public transport interchange Average public transport speed Bus frequency mapping Labour market catchments 			
	3D: Defining the Future	Work commenced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collation of housing allocations Review of MaaS Review of Shared Mobility 	Alec Knox	25%	
Task 4 – Vision, Transport Objectives and Options	4A: Defining the Vision and TPOs				
	4B: Option Generation				
	4C: Option Sifting				
	4D: Option Development				
Task 5 – Policies	5A: Review of Previous RTS	Initial review of previous RTS undertaken. List of previous RTS schemes sent to SEStran for status update	Alec Knox	50%	
	5B: Drafting Policies				
Task 6 - Strategic Environmental Assessment	6A: Scoping Report	Report signed off and submitted to Consultation Authorities for comment	Duncan Smart	90%	
	6B: Environmental Report		Duncan Smart		
	6C: Post Adoption SEA Statement		Duncan Smart		
Task 7 - Impact Assessments	7A: Scoping Equalities and Defining Objectives	Report finalised ahead of engagement with equalities groups	Duncan Smart	90%	
	7B: EqIA Reporting		Duncan Smart		
Task 8 – STAG Preliminary Options Appraisal	8: Preliminary Options Appraisal				
Task 9 – Draft RTS preparation and consultation	9: Draft RTS				



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Task	Sub-Task	Task Progress	Task Lead	% Complete	Programme Status
Task 10 – Finalising the Strategy	10: Final RTS				



RISK REGISTER

Table 2 Risk Register and Mitigation

Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Risk Impact	Mitigation Measure
Programme is dependent on timely outputs from the client and for which subsequent tasks are dependent.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Any delays would impact on the project timescale but are considered unlikely.	Monitor through change control process and programme implications and advise SEStran accordingly.
Increase in scope (differential between bid and delivery) with implications for timescales and programme	Medium	Medium	Medium	Increase in project costs / longer timescale or additional tasks not taken forward.	Stantec will review any increases in scope carefully with SEStran and ensure the works are delivered efficiently (or if appropriate not taken forward) to minimise impact on programme and costs
Risk of negative exposure if constituent local authorities not bought into the process and / or have differing views and priorities to SEStran	Medium	High	High	RTS not accepted by constituent local authorities.	<p>Consultation and engagement with client team and stakeholders will be important throughout the study. A key issue will be to clarify scope and outputs with stakeholders early in the process, in particular highlighting that this study will not deliver a 'shopping list' of preferred options.</p> <p>Our engagement strategy allows for an extensive engagement with the constituent local authorities in the SEStran area.</p>
Complex project with multiple technical inputs and engagement requirements requires ongoing documentation and management	Medium	Medium	Medium	Risk of different strands of the project not aligning, thus undermining the credibility of the RTS.	The complexity of the project is one of the reasons we have provided a senior management partnership with a long track-record of working together. Senior Thematic Leads with experience of delivering this type of work have also been included in our team.
Uncertainty over emerging STPR2 policies and implications of such on evolving RTS	Medium	Medium	Medium	RTS does not align with national priorities.	We will work closely with SEStran, constituent local authorities and, where appropriate, Transport Scotland with regards to ensuring consistency with the emerging STPR2 outputs.
Uncertainty and limited technical insight to evolving and emerging new technologies and associated travel	Medium	High	High	RTS rooted in present day transport circumstances only and is quickly overtaken by events.	Stantec will draw on their in-house expertise as and when required and will liaise with SEStran to ensure access to field experts and academics in emerging technologies. We have also reviewed this issue in the context of NTS2 and the SPT RTS, and thus start from a strong position.



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Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Risk Impact	Mitigation Measure
behaviour, which needs to be inherent in future RTS scenarios					
The approach to the RTS diverges from the equivalent reports prepared by other RTPs.	Low	Medium	Low	The RTS diverges from other RTS documents, leading to significant inconsistency in the regional approach sitting under the NTS2.	Stantec is drafting the SPT RTS, supported the South-West Scotland Transport Study in the SWESTRANS area, and is currently working closely with HITRANS, NESTRANS and ZetTrans. We are therefore well-placed to ensure that the RTS aligns with the approaches being adopted at the regional level elsewhere in Scotland. The other RTPs will also be consulted as part of the engagement process.
The study team encounters 'group think' when setting objectives and undertaking the appraisal.	Medium	Medium	Medium	The key outputs of the RTS (e.g. the record of problems, the objectives and the options / option packages and options appraisal) are not sufficiently challenged and unravel during the later RTS process.	We have included Paul McCartney in our project team as a Peer Reviewer. Whilst he will act as a Technical Adviser on the study, his role will be largely strategic and thus he will provide a challenge function at key points in the appraisal.
A conflict emerges between this study and other Stantec commissions.	Low	High	Low	Stantec advice in the RTS is not considered independent and its credibility is undermined.	We actively manage conflicts within the company. We have already issued a notification of the SEStran RTS work around the company and no conflicts have been identified. If a conflict does arise, our management team would inform SEStran immediately and agree an appropriate course of action.
Loss of a key member of the project team	Low	Medium	Low	In the event of a key team member leaving, we have considerable resource depth in this field of work, including staff members who have worked on other regional appraisal studies of this nature – for example Emily Seaman who managed the South-West Scotland Transport Study and Graham Bell who managed the Borders Transport Corridors Study.	Replacement with an equally skilled individual from our staff or, if necessary (although unlikely), sourced externally.
Computer or system failures	Low	Low	Low	We back up all of our systems daily and so data losses are minimised.	We will store separate copies of all documents to ensure any system failure will not affect all stored documents
Inadequate or inappropriate resourcing following a review of requirements at inception, or as the project progresses	Low	High	Medium	We have carefully selected our team members on the basis of the tasks we feel will be carried out and the skills, knowledge and experience of staff to deliver these. Our Project Managers typically undertake a weekly review of progress and resources on all projects and	If it is concluded that we need additional or different resources, we have additional, well qualified, staff available within the company to be deployed to meet timescales.



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Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Risk Impact	Mitigation Measure
				report this internally and to the client. We will therefore be aware of and address any risks at an early stage.	
Fire and flood	Low	Low	Low	We have established procedures for fire safety and we back up all of our systems daily and so data losses are minimised.	Our daily back up of systems ensure any system failure will not affect stored documents.
Analytical work can't be completed within timescales impacting on programme and outputs	Low	High	Low	The RTS is not completed within the required timescales	We have considered timescales carefully in the preparation of the work programme and our approach is designed to minimise risk through using proven techniques, methods and capable staff resource. Additional skilled resource can be deployed if required from within Stantec
Uncertainty around options to be considered and option appraisal leading to resource and programme impacts	Low	High	Low	Options cannot be developed or appraised suitably meaning the RTS cannot be finalised	Our methodology, budget and project management is cognisant of this risk and seeks to address it as far as reasonably practicable at this stage. We would liaise with SEStran and work collaboratively during refinement of all Project and Quality Management Plan documents
Unforeseen changes to the emerging RTS may require components to be reassessed to ensure compliance with SEA and EqIA statutory requirements, with implications for timescale, programme and budget	Medium	Medium	Medium	The development of the RTS is delayed to take account of the SEA and EqIA feedback.	An iterative approach to undertaking the SEA and EqIA will be adopted to allow changes in emerging RTS components to be considered at the earliest opportunity.
Through the SEA process consultees could request changes to the RTS for environmental reasons which do not align with its intended content, potentially resulting in the need to amend the RTS or impacting the viability of individual proposals.	Low	Medium	Low	The RTS needs amended to reflect feedback received through the SEA process.	Early engagement with the SEA Consultation Authorities is proposed. Each version of the Environmental Report will explain the proposed RTS component and define any reasonable alternatives, which will be subject to the same level of analysis. All SEA consultation responses received will be evaluated promptly and any wider implications will be addressed by the project team.



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Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Risk Impact	Mitigation Measure
Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic undermine the ability to develop a credible RTS	Low	Medium	Low	Uncertainty around future travel patterns and what the 'new normal' will entail make it difficult to develop a RTS	Consider a range of sensitivity scenarios and likely futures then test the RTS against them to identify the extent to which it would be impacted under those circumstances



PROJECT WORK PROGRAMME

Table 3 Project Milestones and Invoicing Schedule

Milestone	Date	Invoicing Schedule	Invoiced?
M1 – Inception Report	Week beginning 18 th January 2021	10% of Total Fee - £17,536.50	Issued
M2 – SEA Scoping Report	Week beginning 15 th February 2021	5% of Total Fee - £8,768.25	To Be Issued By 31 st March
M3 – Equalities Scoping Report	Week beginning 15 th February 2021	5% of Total Fee - £8,768.25	To Be Issued By 31 st March
M4 – Problems Framework	Week beginning 29 th March 2021	10% of Total Fee - £17,536.50	To Be Issued By 31 st March
M5 – Initial Appraisal: Case for Change Report	Week beginning 3 rd May 2021	15% of Total Fee - £26,304.75	
M6 – SEA Case for Change Report	Week beginning 3 rd May 2021	5% of Total Fee - £8,768.25	
M7 – EqIA Reporting	Week beginning 19 th July 2021		
M8 – Preliminary Options Appraisal Report	Week beginning 19 th July 2021		
M9 – Draft RTS for RTP Board	Week beginning 9 th August 2021	20% of Total Fee - £35,073.00	
M10 – SEA Report	Week beginning 9 th August 2021	10% of Total Fee - £17,536.50	
M11 – Final RTS for RTP Board	Week beginning 14 th March 2022	20% of Total Fee - £35,073.00	
M12 – Post Adoption SEA Statement	Week beginning 14 th March 2022		

Table 4 Dates for Project Meetings and Flash Reports

Date	Description
19th March	Flash Report
25th/26th March	Monthly Progress Meeting - TBC
2nd April	Project Managers Progress Meeting
9th April	Flash Report
23rd April	Monthly Progress Meeting
30th April	Flash Report
7th May	Project Managers Progress Meeting
14th May	Flash Report



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Date	Description
21st May	Monthly Progress Meeting
28th May	Flash Report
4th June	Project Managers Progress Meeting
11th June	Flash Report
17th June	Monthly Progress Meeting
25th June	Flash Report
2nd July	Project Managers Progress Meeting
9th July	Flash Report
23rd July	Monthly Progress Meeting
30th July	Flash Report



