1. Purpose and Policy Context

This Draft Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the South-East of Scotland has been prepared by the South-East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) which was set up under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. It covers eight constituent local authorities:

- City of Edinburgh
- Clackmannanshire
- East Lothian
- Falkirk
- Fife
- Midlothian
- Scottish Borders
- West Lothian

It is essential that the RTS addresses the transport problems and issues being experienced in the SEStran area. The purpose of this Draft RTS is to set out these challenges and how SEStran proposes to respond to them and to provide an opportunity for consultation and engagement prior to finalising the strategy.

1. Purpose and Policy Context

The new Regional Transport Strategy sits within and is being developed in the context of a policy hierarchy which spans the national, regional and local levels. In particular, the RTS is being developed within the policy framework provided by the National Transport Strategy 2 which was published in February 2020. It set out four strategic priorities as well as defining a Sustainable Travel Hierarchy. These four priorities and hierarchy have been used to guide the development of this Draft RTS.

2. Transport Challenges

Developing the RTS starts from a set of transport problems and opportunities.

From a user perspective, these transport problems will impact on individuals and groups including those with protected characteristics, the problems can include the following:

- cost of travel (especially relative to disposable income)
- lack of public transport connectivity
- personal security / safety
- physical accessibility of services
- punctuality of travel (public transport punctuality / congestion making road-based journey times unreliable)
- quality and comfort of journey
- reliability of travel (cancellation of public transport services)
- requirement for excessive interchange
- travel time (relative to other modes)

2. Transport Challenges

We have found that these transport problems as experienced by the user:

- can usually be traced back to a root cause, associated with the transport supply-side
- can have a travel choice consequence, e.g., use of less sustainable modes, journeys not being made
- have a wider societal consequence, e.g., economic (e.g., wasted time), environmental (e.g., emissions), health & wellbeing (e.g., reduced levels of walking), social (e.g., exclusion from employment opportunities)

Through our work, we have identified 29 individual transport problem which can be read on the following pages.

2. Transport Challenges

All Modes

1. Those living in new developments or travelling to new developments can have long journeys and / or implied car use to undertake day to day activities.

2. Use of the transport system brings the risk of accidents and personal injury.

Active Travel

3. Many do not find cycling a realistic option.

4. Walking or wheeling is not an attractive option for some short journeys.

Public Transport

5. Peak period bus-based journey times can be much longer than off-peak.

6. Peak period bus-based journey times can be much more variable than off-peak.

7. Some direct public transport journey speeds are slow so journey times are long and not competitive with car.

2. Transport Challenges

8. Some travel by public transport requires interchange(s) – adding to journey times, access issues, inconvenience and cost.

9. People can't get a seat on some public transport services.

10. Travel by bus or rail is unaffordable for some particularly the unemployed or those on low incomes.

11. Some journeys cannot be made by public transport.

12. Physical access to, and use of the public transport network is a problem or not possible for some users like the elderly, those with disabilities, parents with pushchairs and mobility impaired.

13. Vulnerable groups (e.g. young, elderly, disabled, women, ethnic minorities, etc.) not feeling safe on public transport.

14. People do not have full awareness of their public transport options.

Mixed Mode

15. Combining cycling and public transport use is not possible.

16. Preferred Park and Ride station cannot be used due to lack of parking during commuter (i) peak and (ii) inter peak.

2. Transport Challenges

Freight

17. In places, peak period commercial vehicle-based journey times can routinely be much longer than off-peak.

18. Peak period commercial vehicle-based journey times can be much more variable than off-peak.

19. Cost and practicality of rail freight prevents widespread use.

20. Commercial vehicle drivers have limited options for secure parking and rest.

21. Commercial vehicles are currently reliant on fossil fuels in the absence of viable / cost effective alternatives.

22. Direct sea-based international connectivity is poor.

Car

23. In places, peak period car-based journey times can routinely be much longer than off-peak.

24. Peak period car-based journey times can be much more variable than off-peak.

25. High cost of town / city centre parking.

2. Transport Challenges

26. Lack of availability of parking is inconvenient.

27. Road-based travel on the regional road network, including some external links (including ports and airports) can be slow even when traffic volumes are relatively low.

28. Electric car operation and ownership not practical for all.

29. Cost of electric cars is higher than equivalent ICE cars and too expensive for many at present.

3. Vision and Strategy Objectives

The vision for the Regional Transport Strategy has been developed to reflect national, regional and local policy aspirations. It sets out the type of region we want the South-East of Scotland to be and how transport can contribute to achieving that for everyone. The vision also shapes the strategy objectives by providing a high-level context and long-term focus for the strategy.

"A South-East of Scotland integrated transport system that will be efficient, connected and safe, creating inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable places to live, work and visit, affordable and accessible to all, enabling people to be healthier and delivering the region's contribution to net zero emissions targets."

3. Vision and Strategy Objectives

Drawing upon the problems outlined in Section 2, a series of transport planning objectives, each linked to a specific problem, were identified. These were subsequently used to define four Strategy Objectives which provide the strategic framework for the RTS. These are set out below along with the societal outcomes that they will deliver.

Strategy Objective 1 - Transitioning to a sustainable, post-carbon transport system:

• Climate Change and Net Zero
• Air Quality Transformed
• Equitable Access to Transport

Strategy Objective 2 - Facilitating healthier travel options:

• Improved Physical Health and Activity
• Increased Wellbeing
• Transformed Neighbourhoods

Strategy Objective 3 - Widening public transport connectivity and access across the region:

• Greater Equality of Opportunity
• Travel Barriers Removed
• Reduced Social Isolation

3. Vision and Strategy Objectives

Strategy objective 4: Supporting safe, sustainable and efficient movement of people and freight across the region:

- Reduced Road Causalities
- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Improved Regional Competitiveness

4. Regional Mobility Themes

Following on from the Strategy Objectives a set of Regional Mobility Themes were defined which collate the options that have been demonstrated to contribute to the delivering the objectives under a series of relevant headings. They are:

- Shaping development and place

- Delivering safe active travel

- Enhancing access to public transport

- Enhancing and extending the bus service

- Enhancing and extending the train service

- Reallocating road-space on the regional network

- Improving integration between modes

- Decarbonising transport

- Facilitating efficient freight movement and passenger travel

- Working towards zero road deaths and serious injuries

- Reducing car kilometres

- Responding to the post-Covid world

4. Regional Mobility Themes

The Regional Mobility Themes have been mapped against the Strategy Objectives. Each of these themes as well as specific policies and actions have been developed within the draft Strategy.

5. Draft RTS

The full RTS can be viewed by clicking the following **link.**

6. Supporting Documentation

This Draft RTS has been prepared in accordance with RTS development guidance (Transport Scotland, 2006), the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and all relevant legislative and policy requirements. It is supported by a suite of evidence drawn from published policy documents, data analysis as well as stakeholder and public consultation.

Supporting RTS documentation includes and can be downloaded below:

- SEStran Main Issues Report 2020
- Case for Change Report 2021
- STAG Preliminary Options Appraisal Report

6. Supporting Documentation

Supporting Strategic Environmental Assessment documentation includes and can be downloaded below:

- SEA Environmental Report Final
- Non Technical Summary

6. Supporting Documentation

Supporting Equality Impact Assessment documentation includes and can be downloaded below:

- Equalities Duties Summary Report
- Equalities Impact Assessment Record Report
- Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment
- Child Rights and Welfare Impact Assessment

7. Consultation Process

As part of our statutory responsibilities, there is a requirement to consult on the draft RTS. We have prepared a series of questions which cover the following topics:

- Transport Problems and Challenges
- Vision and Objectives;
- Regional Mobility Themes including the proposed policies and actions for each theme; and
- Any other comments and concerns.

The survey itself can be accessed by following the **link**.

All responses are anonymous but you must be 16 years of age or above to complete the survey.

The deadline for participation is Friday 11 February 2022.