

SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10am, Friday 24 September 2021

Microsoft Teams

Present

Name

Organisation Title

Cllr Gordon Edgar (Chair)	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Donald Balsillie	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr Colin Davidson	Fife Council
Cllr Dave Dempsey	Fife Council
Cllr Ian Ferguson	Fife Council
Cllr Jim Fullarton	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Norman Hampshire	East Lothian Council
Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Chris Horne	West Lothian Council
Richard Llewellyn	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Lesley Macinnes	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Claire Miller	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Laura Murtagh	Falkirk Council
Cllr Cameron Rose	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Peter Smail	Midlothian Council
Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
Barry Turner	Non-Councillor Member
Paul White	Non-Councillor Member

In Attendance

Lesley Birrell	City of Edinburgh Council
Audrey Cameron	Anderson Strathern LLP
Angela Chambers	SEStran
Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
Keith Fiskin	SEStran
Ken Gourlay	Fife Council

Jim Grieve	SEStran
Anna Herriman	SEStran
Peter Jackson	SEStran
Karen Jones	Azets Audit Services
Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
Jim Stewart	SEStran
Julie Vinders	SEStran

Apologies for Absence

Cllr Karen Doran	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr David Key	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Mike Watson	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr Craig Hoy	East Lothian Council
Cllr Fiona Collie	Falkirk Council
Cllr Russell Imrie	Midlothian Council
Cllr Cathy Muldoon	West Lothian Council
Laura Alexander	Non-Councillor member
Vivienne Gray	Non-Councillor member
Callum Hay	Non-Councillor member
Catherine Thomson	Non-Councillor member

A1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To agree the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 18 June 2021 as a correct record.
- 2) To agree the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 10 September 2021 as a correct record.

A2. Annual External Audit Report 2020/21

The Annual Audit Report for 2020/21 to members of South East of Scotland Transport Partnership and the Controller of Audit was submitted.

There were no qualifications to the audit certificate and the Auditor's opinion stated that the financial statements presented a true and fair view of the Partnership as at 31 March 2021 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Members considered the key messages from the audit which were set out on pages 3 to 6 of the Annual Audit report.

Members also noted that the Performance and Audit Committee had also reviewed the draft Annual Audit report at its meeting on 10 September 2021.

Decision

To note the Annual Audit Report to members of the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership and the Controller of Audit.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 10 September 2021 (item A5); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3(a). Audited Annual Accounts 2020/21

The audited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021 were presented in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

There were no qualifications to the audit certificate and the Auditor's opinion stated that the financial statements presented a true and fair view of the Partnership as at 31 March 2021 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Additional disclosures had been included in the Governance Statement in line with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework including confirmation of compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.

Decision

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

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 10 September 2021 (item A6); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3(b). Finance Officer's Report

The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2021/22 had been approved by the Partnership on 19 March 2021.

An update and analysis was provided on the financial performance of the Core and Projects budgets of the Partnership for 2021/2 in accordance with the Financial Regulations of Partnership.

The Core budget provided for the day to day running costs of the Partnership and included employee costs, premises costs and supplies and services.

Decision

- 1) To note the forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £45,000.
- 2) To note the forecast underspend on the Projects revenue budget of £17,000.
- 3) To note that a further update on 2021/22 financial performance would be presented to the next meeting of the Partnership.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 19 March 2021 (item A3(a)); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A4. Draft Annual Report 2020/21

The draft Annual Report for 2020/21 was presented. The Annual Report provided an overview of SEStran's project portfolio and highlighted the contributions that SEStran had made to the region over the last year in line with the agreed objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and SEStran's annual business plan.

The Performance and Audit Committee had noted the draft annual report at its meeting on 10 September 2021.

Decision

To authorise the Partnership Director to finalise and publish the Annual Report 2020/21.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 10 September 2021 (item A7); report by the Programmes Manager, submitted)

A5. New Regional Transport Strategy 2035

An update was provided on progress with the ongoing work to develop the new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The following key areas were highlighted:

- Finalised Case for Change
- Ongoing Statutory Assessments
- Preliminary Option Appraisal Report
- The revised delivery programme

Information was also provided on the development of priorities for regional mobility that would shape the content of the RTS together with the next steps in the process. The relationship of the emerging RTS to the ongoing development of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) was also detailed.

Decision

- 1) To note the continuing progress to deliver a new SEStran Regional Transport Strategy 2035.
- 2) To note the role of the STAG Preliminary Options Appraisal in the development of the RTS.
- 3) To agree with the Priorities for Regional Mobility as the basis for the draft RTS document.
- 4) To note that the next stage of the process would be consideration of the draft RTS on 24 October 2021.
- 5) To agree that the list of the 62 accepted options be circulated to Members as soon as it was available in advance of consideration of the draft RTS on 24 October 2021.
- 6) To note that the proposed statutory consultation period for the RTS was from 1 November 2021 until 4 February 2022.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 18 June 2021 (item A7); report by the Strategy and Projects Officer, submitted)

A6. Projects Performance Update

Information was provided on the current status and progress of the various projects and key workstreams SEStran was involved in. An update was also provided summarising the role of SEStran during the Covid-19 pandemic and response.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress outlined in the Performance Report (Appendix 1) including impacts and delays recorded in relation to Covid-19.
- 2) To note the agreed time extension to the PriMaaS and Connect projects and time and funding extensions to the BLING, Surflogh and Regio-Mob projects.
- 3) To note the work and role of SEStran during the pandemic as set out in the addendum to the report.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 18 June 2021 (item A5); report by the Senior Partnership Manager, submitted)

A7. Implementation of Part 3 (Bus Services) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 Consultation

The Scottish Government had launched a consultation on the proposed implementation of Part 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 relating to bus services. The consultation deadline for responses was 6 October 2021.

A proposed response to the consultation was submitted for consideration by members.

In addition to approving the proposed response to the consultation, Councillor Davidson asked members to also consider a proposal to support, in principle, the STUC's "Our Climate: Our Buses" campaign as follows:

"The STUC's "Our Climate: Our Buses" campaign is supported by unions such as Unite the Union who represent bus workers, as well as by Trades Councils across Scotland, the Poverty Alliance, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Engender, Common Weal, Get Glasgow Moving, the International Transport Workers' Federation, One Parent Families Scotland, and the Young Women's Movement.

The campaign is calling for:

1. Local Authorities to write to the Scottish Government to express interest in bus re-regulation and public ownership of buses.
2. The Scottish Government to provide financial support to Local Authorities to establish publicly owned bus companies and take back control of their bus networks.

Regional Transport Partnerships provide the ideal platforms for Local Authorities to work together to utilise these new powers in order to deliver fully-integrated and affordable services across each region."

Members urged caution at this stage and expressed the view that it would be premature to pass such a resolution at this time before the full detail was known and discussions had taken place with Trades Unions.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposed response to the consultation.
- 2) To delegate to the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chair, to make any necessary textual amendments to reflect the views of members before submitting the response to meet the deadline of 6 October 2021.
- 3) To note the position relating to the STUC “Our Climate: Our Buses” campaign at this time and to ask Partnership officers to report back to the Board as soon as practicable on the issues around supporting the campaign and the implications for the Partnership’s engagement with all stakeholders.

(Reference – joint report by the Strategy Manager and SEStran Consultant, submitted

Declaration of Interest

Paul White declared an interest in the above item as a Director of the Federation of Passenger Transport in Scotland.

A8. Dates of Next Meetings

- 1) To note that an additional meeting of the Partnership Board to consider the RTS would be held on Friday 29 October 2021 at 2pm.
- 2) To note that the next meeting of the Partnership Board would be held on Friday 3 December 2021 at 10am.

B1. Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (PSRA)

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 imposed duties on Scottish public bodies to publish information on expenditure and other matters as soon as was reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year.

The Statement of Compliance produced by the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership was presented.

Decision

To note the content of the material for publication under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report by the Regional Cycle Training and Development Officer.

(Reference – report by the Regional Cycle Training and Development Officer 24 September 2021, submitted)

B2. Consultation Responses

B2.1 Traffic Regulation Orders

Details were provided of SEStran's response submitted to Transport Scotland on a review of Traffic Regulation Order procedures and additional information received during the passage of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.

Decision

To note the terms of the consultation response.

B2.2 Ethical Standards Commissioner Strategic Plan 2021-24

Details were provided of SEStran's response submitted to Ethical Standards Commissioner on the development of the Commissioner's Strategic Plan 2021-24.

Decision

To note the terms of the consultation response.

B2.3 Review of the Operation of Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland

Details were provided of SEStran's response submitted to the Scottish Government on the key areas of focus set out in the Stage 1 report published on 24 March 2021 on the operation of the public sector equality duty in Scotland.

Decision

To note the terms of the consultation response.

B3. Minutes

Decision

To note the minute of the Chief Officers Liaison Group meeting of 25 August 2021.