

SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10.00am, Friday 18 March 2022

Microsoft Teams

Present

Name

Organisation Title

Cllr Gordon Edgar (Chair)	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Donald Balsillie	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr Dave Dempsey	Fife Council
Cllr Jim Fullarton	Scottish Borders Council
Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Chris Horne (A2(a) onwards)	West Lothian Council
Cllr Russell Imrie	Midlothian Council
Richard Llewellyn	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Lesley Macinnes (A3(a) onwards)	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr John McMillan (A8)	East Lothian Council
Cllr Laura Murtagh	Falkirk Council
Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
Catherine Thomson (A2(b) onwards)	Non-Councillor Member
Barry Turner	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Mike Watson	Clackmannanshire Council
Paul White	Non-Councillor Member

In Attendance

Angela Chambers	SEStran
Gavin Cluckie	City of Edinburgh Council
Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
Andrew Ferguson	SEStran

Keith Fisken	SEStran
Peter Forsyth	East Lothian Council
Ken Gourlay	Fife Council
Joanne Gray	Transport Scotland
Jim Grieve	SEStran
Beth Harley-Jepson	SEStran
Anna Herriman	SEStran
Peter Jackson	SEStran
Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
Karen Jones	Azets
Gavin King	City of Edinburgh Council
Alec Knox	Stantec
Scott Leitham	Stantec
Graeme Malcolm	West Lothian Council
Daisy Narayanan	City of Edinburgh Council
Derek Oliver	Midlothian Council
Jamie Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
Jim Stewart	SEStran
Sarah Stirling	City of Edinburgh Council

Apologies for Absence

Cllr Colin Davidson	Fife Council
Vivienne Gray	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr David Key	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Cameron Rose	City of Edinburgh Council

A1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To agree the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 3 December 2021 as a correct record.
- 2) To agree the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 4 March 2022 as a correct record.

A2. Audit Plans

(a) External Audit Plan 2021-22

Azets, the appointed independent external auditor of the Partnership, prepared an Annual Audit Plan for 2021/22. The plan detailed the audit approach based on an understanding of the characteristics, responsibilities and principal activities, risks and governance arrangements of the Partnership.

The External Audit Plan 2021/22 was considered and noted by Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting of 4 March 2022.

Decision

To note the External Audit Plan for 2021/22.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 4 March 2022 (item A5(a); report by the External Auditor, submitted)

(b) Internal Audit Plan 2021/22

The City of Edinburgh Council Internal Audit (IA) team performed one annual review to provide assurance over the controls established to mitigate certain key SEStran partnership risks.

An update was provided on the outcomes of the 2021/22 SEStran IA review. The Performance and Audit Committee's insights were sought on areas for potential inclusion in the scope of the planned 2022/23 audit.

Decision

To note the outcomes of the 2021/22 IA review, and the associated costs.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 4 March 2022 (item A5(b); report by the Chief Internal Auditor, submitted)

A3. Finance Reports

A3(a) Revenue Budget 2022/23 and Indicative Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2024/25

The revenue budget for 2022/23 and an indicative financial plan for 2023/24 to 2024/25 were presented for approval by the Partnership Board.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposed Core budget for 2022/23, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2) To approve the proposed Projects budget for 2022/23, as detailed at Appendix 2(a).
- 3) To note that financial planning for 2023/24 to 2024/25 would be developed throughout 2022 for review by the Partnership in December 2022.
- 4) To note that the proposed budget was subject to a number of risks. All income and expenditure of the Partnership would continue to be monitored closely with updates reported to each Partnership meeting.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 4 March 2022 (item A6(a)); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3(b) Finance Officer's Report

An update was provided on financial planning being progressed for the 2022/23 revenue budget and on the indicative financial plans for 2023/24 – 2024/25.

The third update on financial performance of the Core and Projects budgets of the Partnership for 2021/22 was presented, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. An analysis of financial performance to the end of January 2022 was provided.

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

Decision

- 1) To note the forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £59,000.
- 2) To note the forecast slippage on the Projects revenue budget of £17,000.

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

A3(c) Annual Treasury Management Activity

A Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 was proposed.

Decision

To approve the Annual Treasury Management Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 4 March 2022 (item A6(b)); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A4. Governance Reports

A4(a) Recruitment of Partnership Director

The current Partnership Director had indicated his intention to retire this year.

At its meeting of March 2022, the Performance and Audit Committee:

- a) Agreed to the current Partnership Director's appointment being extended to 31 December 2022, to ensure continuity;
- b) Agreed the recruitment process as set out in the Appendix of the report, and recommended to the Board that they establish an Appointments Committee to enable the recruitment process to be finalised;
- c) Agreed the terms and conditions on which the new Partnership Director would be appointed, delegating to the Business Manager and HR Adviser, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, any further changes to such terms as may be deemed necessary;

- d) Agreed to the appointment of specialist HR consultants to assist and advise on the recruitment process for this level of post.

Accordingly, the Board was requested to consider the creation of a new Appointments Committee to oversee the process.

Decision

- 1) To note the position regarding recruitment of the Partnership Director.
- 2) To agree the creation of an Appointments Committee as set out in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 of the report to appoint a new Partnership Director, delegating to the Secretary to make appropriate adjustments to the Governance Scheme to reflect the Board's decision.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 4 March 2022 (item A8; report by the Secretary, submitted)

A4(b) Non-Councillor Member Appointments

An update was provided on the progress with the Non-Councillor Member appointments and approval sought of the recommendations made by the selection panel for the new term of office from 2022-2026.

Following the conclusion of an appraisal exercise, 4 Non-Councillor Members were being recommended for reappointment by the selection panel. Those members were:

- Callum Hay
- Simon Hindshaw
- Doreen Steele
- Paul White

From the candidates interviewed, the following met the criteria set out in the application pack and were therefore being recommended for appointment to the Board:

- Linda Bamford
- Alastair Couper
- Geoff Duke
- John Scott
- Kate Sherry

Decision

- 1) To appoint the above candidates as Non-Councillor Members of the SEStran Board until 31 March 2026, subject only to formal approval by the Scottish Ministers.
- 2) To thank retiring members and officers for their work in service of the SEStran Partnership Board.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board, 3 December 2021 (item A3(b)); report by the Partnership Director, submitted)

A4(c) Annual Treasury Management Activity

Approval was sought for the revised Code of Conduct for Members of the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran).

Decision

To approve the revised Code of Conduct for Members of SEStran for submission to Scottish Government.

(Reference – report by the Standards Officer, submitted)

A5. Regional Transport Strategy 2035

The final version of the draft Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) had been submitted to the Partnership Board for approval. Following the advice from Scottish Borders Council officers to delay approval of the RTS, and given the detailed response agreed by the Scottish Borders Council of 27 January and SEStran's subsequent comments which would require more time to allow the Council to respond before sign off of the RTS, it was felt that the strategy could not be agreed without approval of all partner councils.

Decision

To continue the draft Regional Transport Strategy SEStran 2035 to a further meeting of the SEStran Partnership Board to allow the concerns of the Scottish Borders Council to be addressed.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board, 24 September 2021 (item A5); report by the Strategy and Projects Officer, submitted)

A6. Projects Performance Report

Details were provided on progress over the last quarter across SEStran's projects and key work streams. Impacts on progress or delivery were explained where required.

Decision

- 1) To note progress on existing projects outlined in the Performance Report at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2) To note the inception of the Go SEStran project summarised in paragraph 2.3 of the report and outlined in the Performance Report at Appendix 1
- 3) To note the decision to award to Trapeze summarised in Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.2 of this report relating to section 3.1 of the Performance Report at Appendix 1, for a new 3-year contract for provision of the NOVUS FX local authority bus scheduling and SEStran's real-time passenger information platform.

(Reference – report by the Senior Partnership Manager, submitted)

A7. Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) Consultation Draft: SEStran Response

The draft response to the Fourth National Planning Framework for Scotland was presented, included at Appendix 1 of the report, for consideration and agreement.

Additionally, a draft response to the consultation on the draft Local Development Planning Regulations and Guidance, was provided, which the Board was also asked to consider and agree.

Discussion occurred on the potential ambiguities in the language and the shift to guidance being of benefit to developers. It was requested that Question 37 was considered in further detail as there was expansive criteria to allow for objections but it was felt that it was important to achieve a balance for future developments within the context of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood.

Decision

- 1) To agree draft responses to NPF4 Consultation, at Appendix 1, for submission through the Scottish Government's online survey, by the closing date of 31 March 2022.
- 2) To agree the draft response to Local Development Plan Guidance consultation at Appendix 2, for submission through the Scottish Government's online survey, by the closing date of 31 March 2022.

(Reference – report by the Senior Partnership Manager, submitted)

A8. Date of Next Meeting

Decision

To note that the next meeting would be held on Friday 17 June 2022 at 10.00am.

B1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To note the minute of the Logistics and Freight Forum of 26 January 2022.
- 2) To note the minute of the Chief Officers' Liaison Group Meeting of 16 February 2022.