

SESTRAN PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

European Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

Or via Microsoft Teams

09:30am Friday 17th March 2023

09:00 TEA/COFFEE
09:30 GOVERNANCE TRAINING FOR MEMBERS (MANDATORY)
10:30 PARTNERSHIP BOARD
12:30 LUNCH

AGENDA

09:30 GOVERNANCE TRAINING (MANDATORY) – by Gavin King

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS
2. APOLOGIES
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

AGENDA A – POINTS FOR DECISION

Page Nos.

A1.	MINUTES	
	(a) Partnership Board – Friday 2 nd December 2022	3
	(b) Performance & Audit Committee – Wednesday 3 rd March 2023	10
A2.	REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY – Report by Jim Stewart	TO FOLLOW
A3.	PARTNERSHIP DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Report by Brian Butler	14
A4.	AUDIT PLANS	
	(a) External Audit – Report by Christopher Gardner External Auditor, Audit Scotland	18
	(b) Internal Audit – Report by Dheeraj Shekhar, Internal Auditor	34
A5.	FINANCE REPORTS – Reports by Iain Shaw	
	(a) Revenue Budget 2023/24 and Indicative Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2025/26	46
	(b) Finance Officers Report	56
	(c) Annual Treasury Management Strategy	63
A6.	GOVERNANCE SCHEME UPDATE – Report by Gavin King	65

- A7. EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING AND EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 UPDATE REPORT – Report by Angela Chambers 71**
- A8. GO SESTRAN MAAS & DDRT – Report by Hattie James and Andrew Ferguson 97**
- A9. PROJECTS PERFORMANCE REPORT – Report by Brian Butler 114**
- A10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**
The date of the next meeting is scheduled for **10:00am on Friday 16th June 2023.**

AGENDA B – POINTS FOR NOTING

- B1. BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY TRACKER UPDATE 2023-2024 – 133**
Report by Keith Fiskien
- B2. MINUTES**
- | | |
|---|------------|
| B2.1 Integrated Mobility Forum – 22 nd November 2022 | 147 |
| B2.2 Chief Officers' Liaison Group Meeting – 27th February 2023 | 153 |
| B2.3 Equalities and Access to Healthcare 28th February 2023 | 159 |

Gavin King
Secretary to SESTRAN
Head of Democracy, Governance and Resilience
Strategy & Communication Division
The City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court 2.1
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

10 March 2023

Telephone: 0131 529 4239 or E-mail: gavin.king@edinburgh.gov.uk

Agendas and papers for all SEStran meetings can be accessed on www.sestran.gov.uk

SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10.00am, Friday 2 December 2022

Council Chamber, City Chambers, Edinburgh, and Microsoft Teams

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Colin Davidson (Chair)	Fife Council
	Cllr Scott Arthur	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Danny Aston	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Jule Bandel	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Marie-Clair Munro	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Fiona Law	Clackmannanshire Council
	Cllr John McMillan	East Lothian Council
	Cllr Paul Garner	Falkirk Council
	Cllr Derek Glen	Fife Council
	Cllr Robin Lawson (Deputy Chair)	Fife Council
	Cllr Dianne Alexander	Midlothian Council
	Cllr Sally Pattle (Deputy Chair)	West Lothian Council
	Cllr Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
	Linda Bamford	Non-Councillor Member
	Alistair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Geoff Duke	Non-Councillor Member
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Kate Sherry	Non-Councillor Member
	Paul White	Non-Councillor Member
<u>In Attendance</u>		
	Jamie Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Martin Scott	City of Edinburgh Council
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Peter Forsyth	East Lothian Council
	Ian Lennock	East Lothian Council

John Mitchell	Fife Council
Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
Brian Butler	SEStran
Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
Keith Fiskin	SEStran
Jim Grieve	SEStran
Hattie James	SEStran
Beth Harley-Jepson	SEStran
Anna Herriman	SEStran
Peter Jackson	SEStran
Jim Stewart	SEStran

Apologies for Absence

Gavin King	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Russell Imrie	Midlothian Council
Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
Angela Chambers	SEStran

A1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To agree the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 23 September 2022 as a correct record.
- 2) To agree the minute of the SEStran Performance and Audit Committee of 23 November 2022 as a correct record.
- 3) To agree the minute of the SEStran Appointments Committee of 27 September 2022 as a correct record.

A2. Governance

(a) Governance – Member Training Session

The Partnership secretary to SEStran was scheduled to present a Member Training Session.

Decision

To continue this item to a future meeting of the Partnership Board

(b) Update to the Governance Scheme

The SEStran Governance Scheme collated together the key documents which formed the basis for SEStran Partnership's decision making. Part of SEStran's organisational drive for continuous improvement was ongoing review of all its governance documentation. A recent review of its Governance Scheme had suggested it was due for amendment.

Decision

- 1) To agree to the Corporate Procurement Strategy replacing the existing Corporate Procurement Policy, attached for reference at Appendix Part 6, delegating to the Secretary to make appropriate adjustments to the Governance Scheme to reflect the Board's decision
- 2) To agree to the revision of Contract Standing Orders, as per Appendix Part 5, delegating to the Secretary to make appropriate adjustments to the Governance Scheme to reflect the Board's decision.
- 3) To note that the Appointments Committee, created by the Board in March 2022, had been codified in the SEStran Governance Scheme, as per Appendix Part 2.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 23 September 2022 (item A2); report by the Secretary, submitted)

A3. Appointment of Third Deputy Chair

At its last meeting on the 23 September, the Governance Scheme was updated to remove the requirement that the Chair and Deputy Chair must be from different Councils. This change allows for greater flexibility in appointing Board positions and consequently the Board agreed that any further nominations for Deputy Chair would be accommodated by the creation of a third Deputy Chair role. Members noted that there was no limit on the number of Deputy Chairs that could be appointed, and the Partnership has previously had three Deputy Chairs in office.

Cllr Imrie had expressed an interest in filling the role of a third Deputy Chair, which had been endorsed by the Chair.

Decision

To appoint Councillor Russell Imrie as Deputy Chair.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board 23 September 2022 (item A2); report by the Secretary, submitted)

A4. Finance Reports

(a) Indicative Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2025/26

An update was provided on financial planning being progressed for the 2023/24 revenue budget and on the indicative financial plans for 2024/25 – 2025/26.

Decision

- 1) To note the financial planning assumptions for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

- 2) To note that financial planning for 2023/24 to 2025/26 will continue to be developed for approval of a revenue budget by the Partnership at its meeting in March 2023.
- 3) 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, 23 November 2022 (item A5); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

(b) Finance Officer's Report

A second update on the financial performance of the Core and Projects budgets of the Partnership was provided for the year 2022/23, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. Analysis of financial performance to the end of October 2022 was also presented.

The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2022/23 were approved by the Partnership on 18th March 2022.

Decision

- 1) To note forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £10,000
- 2) To note the forecast slippage on the Projects revenue budget of £27,000.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board, 18 March 2022 (item A3(b)); report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A5. 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 and new areas of work were highlighted. An outline was provided to the Board on the proposed approach to streamlining project performance reporting.

The report also summarised the details around a contract to be issued to Bewegen, for provision and operation of hire e-Bikes, and outlines the next steps in relation to development of GO SEStran, the digital MaaS app pilot.

A verbal update to the report was provided for the Board, that in relation to the Bewegen award, SEStran will rely solely on the 2016 regulations, as a stronger justification for the award than the 2015 regulations;

The Board was also verbally asked to note that the reference in the report to Contract Standing Orders should read to paragraphs 2.3, 2.4 and 5.5.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress recorded in the past quarter (Appendix 1 of the report by the Senior Partnership Manager).
- 2) To note the awarding of a contract to Bewegen, of up to £186,000 (Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 of the report by the Senior Partnership Manager).

- 3) To agree that officers pursue work to extend DRT activities in the region, with available funds (Paragraph 4.2 of the report by the Senior Partnership Manager).
- 4) To agree to the suggested change to Project Performance Reporting arrangements (Paragraph 5.2(b) of the report by the Senior Partnership Manager).

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 23 November 2022 (item A7(c)); report by the Senior Partnership Manager, submitted)

A6. Progress On Go SEStran App, Tactran & NHS

At its meeting in September 2022, the Board agreed to request a progress update on the GoSEStran app pilot project, including details of the metrics applied to measure the pilot, to the next Partnership Board meeting in December; the report to also include information on the integrated NHS and Tactran trial project which gives people easy access to travel information so they could be better informed about the different ways to access, make and pay for journeys.

Further information on the GoSEStran project was provided.

During discussion the default setting of Go SEStran was raised. The Board agreed the most sustainable method of transport should be the default mode, not the mode with the least connections. The name of the Go SEStran app was also raised as being counter-intuitive, the Partnership Consultant agreed to continue the dialogue out with the meeting regarding the issues raised.

Decision

- 1) To note progress made on the project to date.
- 2) To support officers' efforts to promote the GoSEStran project and its expansion into other parts of the SEStran area.
- 3) To agree to support further collaboration with Tactran and others to share lessons learned and best practice across Scotland, including via the Open Learning Network.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board, 23 September 2022 (item A6); report by the Senior Partnership Manager, submitted)

A7. Regional Transport Strategy 2035 – Communications Plan Outline

The final draft of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for submission to Scottish Ministers for approval was approved by the Board at their meeting on 23 September.

The Board considered a report suggesting a proposal for the aims and outcomes of a communications plan which would promote and ensure engagement of stakeholders and partners in achieving the aims and objectives of the SEStran 2035 Strategy. Agreement was sought from the Board to develop this into a more detailed communications plan with associated actions.

Decision

- 1) To note the proposed approach to communicating the RTS following its approval.

- 2) To approve the development of a communications plan supported by external expertise and based on the approach outlined in the report.
- 3) To agree that an update would be provided at a future Board meeting on the communications plan.
- 4) To note that Board members should contact the Partnership Director between meetings if they had any ideas regarding the plan.

(References – SEStran Partnership Board, 23 September 2022 (item A5); report by the Partnership Director, submitted)

A8. Cycling Framework for Active Travel Consultation

Transport Scotland were consulting on a draft Cycling Framework for Active Travel for the period covering 2022-2030. This document was the replacement to the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) that was in place between 2010-2020.

Decision

To note the content of the report.

(Reference – report by the Strategy Manager, submitted)

A9. Programme of Meetings

The proposed calendar of SEStran Partnership Board meetings in 2023 was outlined, with the full schedule of SEStran meetings contained in Appendix 1 of the report. The schedule had been drafted in line with previous meeting cycles and complied with audit reporting requirements. Partnership Board meetings and the Performance and Audit Committee would be held as hybrid meetings, taking place in person at the City Chambers Edinburgh or via Microsoft Teams.

The proposed dates for the Partnership Board were:

- Friday 17 March 2023
- Friday 16 June 2023
- Friday 22 September 2023
- Friday 1 December 2023

Decision

To approve the proposed programme of meetings for 2023.

(Reference – report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A10. Date of Future Meetings

Decision

To note that the next meeting would be held on Friday 17 March 2023 at 10.00am in the Dean of Guild Courtroom, City Chambers, 253 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ/ Teams.

B1. Business Plan Activity Tracker Update 2022-2023

An update was provided on the Business Plan activity for the year April 2022 to March 2023.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To note the contents in Appendix 1 Activity update of the report.

(Reference – report by the Programmes Manager, submitted)

B2. Climate Change Duties Report

An update was provided on SEStran's responsibilities, as a public body, in relation to the Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the SEStran Project Officer, submitted)

B3. Risk Management Framework

A six-month update on the risk register was provided, which was an integral part of SEStran's Risk Management process.

The Risk Register was presented to Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting of 23 November for comment

Decision

To note the report.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee, 23 November 2022 (item A6); report by the Business Manager, submitted)

B4. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To note the minute of the Integrated Mobility Forum of 6 October 2022.
- 2) To note the minute of the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum of 12 October 2022.
- 3) To note the minute of the Chief Officer Liaison Group meeting of 9 November 2022.

Valedictory Remarks

On behalf of the Board, Councillor Davidson recorded thanks to Jim Grieve for his work and commitment during his tenure in the role as partnership director of SEStran and wished him well for the future.

PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**Diamond Jubilee Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ
and via Microsoft Teams
On Friday 3 March 2023
1.00pm**

PRESENT:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor Imrie (Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Councillor Glen (from Item A6)	Fife Council
	Councillor Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Councillor Pattle	West Lothian Council
	Councillor Arthur (Items A1 to A5)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Angela Chambers	SEStran
	Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
	Keith Fiskien	SEStran
	Peter Jackson	SEStran
	Gavin King	City of Edinburgh Council
	Matthew MacArthur	City of Edinburgh Council
	Martin Scott	City of Edinburgh Council
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Dheeraj Shekhar	City of Edinburgh Council
	Christopher Gardner	Audit Scotland
	Lucy Telling	Audit Scotland

Action by

A1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was confirmed that there was no change to the order of business.

A2. APOLOGIES

Councillor McMillan and Callum Hay

A3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

A4. MINUTES

To approve the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 23 November 2022 as a correct record.

A5 AUDIT PLANS 2021/22

(a) External Audit Plan 2022-23

A summary of the work plan for the 2022/23 external audit of the South-East of Scotland Transport Partnership (“the Partnership”) was provided.

Audit Scotland had been appointed as the Partnership’s External Auditor for the period from 2022/23 until 2026/27

Decision

- 1) To note the External Audit Plan for 2022/23.
- 2) To refer the External Audit Plan to the Partnership Board meeting of 17th March 2023.

(Reference – report by the External Auditor, submitted)

(b) Internal Audit 2022/23

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 2022/23 SEStran IA review. The Performance and Audit Committee’s insights were sought on areas for potential inclusion in the scope of the planned 2023/24 audit. It was noted that there was still time to provide suggested key areas of risk for the audit next year.

During the discussion the Chair suggested Doreen Steele contact the Partnership Director to discuss ways to improve the Thistle card and if any actions could be incorporated in to the Thistle Card programme.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress with completion of an audit action raised in 21/22 audit year.
- 2) To note outcomes of the 2023/23 IA review of the Thistle Assistance Programme, and the associated

costs.

(Reference – report by the Head of Internal Audit, submitted)

A6. FINANCE REPORTS

(a) Revenue Budget 2023/24 and Indicative Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2025/26

The revenue budget for 2023/24 and an indicative financial plan for 2024/25 to 2025/26 were presented for review by the Performance and Audit Committee.

The proposed revenue budget for 2023/24 would be presented to the Partnership Board for approval at its meeting on 17 March 2023.

Decision

- 1) To note the financial planning assumptions for the Partnership's proposed revenue budget for 2023/24.
- 2) To note that financial planning for 2024/25 to 2025/26 would continue to be developed throughout 2023 for consideration by the Partnership in December 2023.
- 3) 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.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

(b) Annual Treasury Management Strategy

A Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 was proposed.

Decision

- 1) To review the Annual Treasury Management Strategy.
- 2) To refer the Strategy to the Partnership Board to approve the continuation of the current arrangement, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A7. ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY

The Internal Audit Report presented to the Performance and Audit Committee in March 2022 raised one low level finding and

consequently made recommendations for an appropriate process to be developed and implemented that would enable staff to declare any conflicts of interest, including the provision of guidance that ensured conflicts of interest are clearly defined and understood.

Management had agreed to make changes to the Anti Bribery Policy to reflect the recommendations made in the report.

The Anti Bribery Policy was presented for review.

Decision

- 1) To approve the amendments made to the Anti Bribery Policy for implementation.
- 2) To note that a report on the annual HR policy review will be presented to Committee at a future meeting.

(References – SEStran Performance and Audit Committee 4 March 2022 (item A5b); report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A8. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY UPDATE 2023 - 2024

An update was provided to the Committee on the Business Plan activity for the year April 2023 to March 2024.

During the discussion it was noted that there was some overlap between the Business Plan Activity Update and the Project report. It was noted that the Business Plan Activity update was not the tracker and that a different document provided this function but there may be a need to review the overall package in terms of how the reports were presented to Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Programmes Manager.
- 2) To note the contents in Appendix 1 of the report Draft Activity Plan update.

(Reference – report by the Programmes Manager, submitted)

A9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 2nd June 2023.

PARTNERSHIP DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of achievements and activities since the last Board meeting in December 2022 and upcoming events and milestones. Given that this is the new Partnership's Director's first update to the Board, particular emphasis has been placed on initial observations and emerging plans for the future development of the organisation.

2. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 2.1 Development of the RTS is the absolute priority for Regional Transport Partnerships, as it is required by statute. The new RTS – SEStran 2035 – has been approved by Transport Scotland for submission to the Minister, and approval is anticipated to be imminent, subject to the Minister's workload. However, due to the lack of certainty around timescales, there is a risk that the planned update to this Board meeting may have to be withdrawn and submitted to a future Board meeting. It is possible that an Extraordinary Board meeting will be required to note this event.

3. THE SESTRAN TEAM

- 3.1 Given the size of the team and available budget, SEStran has a remarkable delivery record, excellent working relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, and is held in high regard across the transport environment.
- 3.2 The loss of 3 key members of staff since the start of 2023 – Jim Grieve (Partnership Director, retired 31/12/22), Anna Herriman (Senior Partnership Manager, resigned on 28/2/23 to take up a new role at Midlothian Council), and Jim Stewart (retiring on 31/3/23) will present a major challenge to continuity of this track record, but also an opportunity to align team skills and experience with the challenges ahead.
- 3.3 An external facilitator was engaged to help ensure that the team is ideally placed to manage these challenges and opportunities, by defining and agreeing:
- The purpose of the organisation
 - The key objectives
 - Project prioritisation criteria
 - Required skills and experience
 - Audit of current skills and experience
 - Gap analysis
- 3.4 This work is largely complete and has facilitated recruitment by identifying whether, and to what extent, job descriptions require to be amended so that we target individuals with the right skills, experience and behaviours rather than simply recruiting like for like replacements. The recruitment exercise will begin in week ending 17 March and, in the interim period between then and the posts being filled,

discussions are ongoing with a highly experienced external consultant to work on specific high priority projects.

4. THE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

4.1 The Partnership Director has now had meetings with the majority of Board members and a number of key external stakeholders. The meetings were mainly designed to

- Establish a rapport
- Understand how Board members perceived the organisation
- Understand how we could improve these perceptions (if required)
- Discuss how we engage with Board members, particularly regarding:
 - the initiation, progress monitoring and performance management of projects
 - the administration of Board meetings
- Identify and agree how we could make more use of Board members' skills, experience and capacity to help

4.2 The meetings identified a number of key strengths including:

- The SEStran team is perceived as being highly skilled, knowledgeable and having excellent communication and inter-personal skills
- Project delivery relative to team size and available funding is very impressive
- The organisation plays a crucial role in identifying, securing funding for, and delivering cross-boundary projects

4.3 However there is a strong view that SEStran should do more to publicise its successes, and to raise the profile of, and confidence in, the brand

4.4 In addition, a number of areas of potential improvement were identified. These include considering:

- Other roles that SEStran could adopt e.g. establish or helping to establish a bus passenger lobby group
- Providing consultancy to partners e.g. where local authority partners have lost staff due to financial restrictions, e.g. Road Safety Officer, SEStran could employ a Road Safety Officer and split costs / time across some or all partners

4.5 Board members are generally keen to become more involved with SEStran, and to help achieve the objectives in the RTS. Members made a number of suggestions for improving engagement with the Board, including:

- Adopting a more formal approach to project initiation and sign off, including Board, or sub-committee, approval (see point below)
- Creating a sub-committee, consisting of a small number of Board members to provide project assurance and strategic guidance to the team. In effect, these Board members would perform a similar role to that of Non-executive Directors (NEDs) in other organisations. The sub-committee would meet on a more regular basis than the Board, and as required, to perform dynamic guidance and governance

- Agreeing success criteria and key performance indicators as part of the project initiation process
- Increasing engagement with individual Board members during the scoping of projects – partly based on geographies likely to be impacted by the project but also based on Board members’ skills and interests
- Considering using project gates and informing Board members when each gate has been approved
- Ensuring that projects are described in the context of their contribution to the wider RTS
- Examining whether the size of Board packs could be reduced – it can be impossible for Board members to read all papers in conjunction with other responsibilities
- Including a brief summary of each Board paper – possibly in the form of an Executive Summary – covering the problem to be solved, options considered, recommendation, costs and risks – so that time constrained members are still able to understand the issue at hand and have an informed view in any discussions
- Limiting presentation time at Board meetings to, say, 5 minutes per item - focussing only on problem to be solved, options considered, recommendation, costs and risks. Possibly use slides / graphics to aid discussion
- Avoiding the use of transport jargon wherever possible in reports and at Board meetings
- Making the reason for a Board paper clear e.g. for decision, for information etc
- Encouraging physical attendance at Board meetings, wherever possible
- At Board meetings, including presentations not related to current projects but which will improve members’ knowledge and awareness of the wider transport environment in which SEStran operates e.g. new technologies or initiatives, Scottish Government strategies or targets (e.g. 20% reduction in vehicle km)
- Highlighting areas that feedback would be appreciated even from members who are unable to attend a Board meeting
- Encouraging Councillor Board members who are regularly unable to attend meetings to discuss this with their Councils with a view to sending substitutes or otherwise ensuring that the Council can be consistently represented
- Encouraging Councillor Board members to provide advocacy for SEStran within their Councils and to build strong relationships with key internal stakeholders
- Asking Board members for assistance to identify funding / profile-raising opportunities

4.6 A number of these measures will be introduced before the next Board meeting. Where appropriate, others will be consulted on and reported to the next meeting of the Board, with recommendations for approval.

5. EDINBURGH AND SOUTHEAST SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL (ESESCRD)

5.1 SEStran and ESESCRD are in discussion to optimise the working relationship between the two organisations.

- 5.2 The Partnership Director attended the most recent ESESCRD Directors' meeting, and has agreed to provide options for future ways of working to the next meeting on 6 April. A number of officers either seconded to ESESCRD or working for partner local authorities will assist in compiling the options.
- 5.3 if required, and proposed changes to the current ways of working will be presented to the SEStran Board for approval.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Board notes the contents of this report.

Brian Butler
Partnership Director
10 March 2023

External Audit - Annual Audit Plan 2022/23

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report presents the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for 2022/23.

2. MAIN REPORT

2.1 Audit Scotland has been appointed as the Partnership's External Auditor for the period from 2022/23 until 2026/27.

2.2 The Annual Audit Plan for 2022/23 is appended.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended the Partnership Board:

3.1 review and notes the External Audit Plan;

Hugh Dunn
Treasurer
27th February 2023

Appendix Annual Audit Plan 2022/23
Contact iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

Policy Implications	There are no policy implications arising as a result of this report.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications arising.
Equalities Implications	There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.
Climate Change Implications	There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

South East Scotland Transport Partnership

Annual Audit Plan 2022/23



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for South East Scotland Transport Partnership

March 2023

Contents

Introduction	3
Financial statements audit planning	5
Reporting arrangements, timetable, and audit fee	10
Other matters	13

Introduction

Summary of planned audit work

1. This document summarises the work plan for our 2022/23 external audit of South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran). The main elements of our work include:
 - an audit of the Annual Accounts, and provision of an Independent Auditor's Report
 - an audit opinion on the other statutory information published within the Annual Accounts including the Management Commentary, the Annual Governance Statement and the Remuneration Report
 - a review of the Annual Governance Statement, and concluding on the financial sustainability of SEStran over the medium to longer term.
 - reporting on the arrangements for securing Best Value.

Audit Appointment

2. We are pleased to be appointed as the external auditor of SEStran for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 inclusive.
3. In the first year of the audit appointment, we invest significant time gaining an understanding of your business and identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement to the financial statements. While we use our initial assessment of risk to inform our planned audit approach, we keep our assessment of risks under review as the audit progresses. We will inform you of any significant changes in assessed risks and any resulting changes in our planned audit work.
4. The audit team will actively engage with you over the course of the audit to ensure our audit work continues to be focused on risk.

Adding value

5. We aim to add value to SEStran through our external audit work by being constructive and forward looking, by attending meetings of the Performance and Audit Committee, and by recommending good practice. In so doing, we will help SEStran promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision-making and more effective use of resources.
6. The Code of Audit Practice includes provisions relating to the audit of less complex bodies. Where the application of the full wider scope is judged by auditors not to be appropriate to an audited body, then the annual audit work can focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement

and the financial sustainability of the body and its services. We plan to apply the less complex body provision of the Code to the 2022/23 audit of SEStran.

7. The [Code of Audit Practice 2021](#) sets out in detail the respective responsibilities of the auditor and SEStran. Key responsibilities are summarised below.

Auditor responsibilities

8. Our responsibilities as independent auditors are established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the [Code of Audit Practice](#) (including supplementary guidance) and guided by the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.
9. Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other information within the annual report and accounts. We also aim to support accountability and improvement.

The responsibilities of SEStran

10. SEStran is responsible for maintaining accounting records and preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view.
11. SEStran has the primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of public funds, compliance with relevant legislation and establishing effective arrangements for governance, propriety and regularity that enable them to deliver their objectives.

Financial statements audit planning

Introduction

12. The Annual Accounts are an essential part of demonstrating SEStran's stewardship of resources and its performance in the use of those resources.
13. We focus our work on the areas of highest risk. As part of our planning process, we prepare a risk assessment highlighting the audit risks relating to each of the main financial systems relevant to the production of the financial statements.

Materiality

14. The concept of materiality is applied by auditors in planning and performing the audit, and in evaluating the effect of any uncorrected misstatements on the financial statements. We are required to plan our audit to determine with reasonable confidence whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement over both the amount and the nature of the misstatement.

Materiality levels for the 2022/23 audit

15. We assess materiality at different levels as described in [Exhibit 1](#). The materiality values for SEStran are set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1

2022/23 Materiality levels for SEStran

Materiality	Amount
Planning materiality – This is the figure we calculate to assess the overall impact of audit adjustments on the financial statements. Materiality has been set based on our assessment of the needs of the users of the financial statements and the nature of SEStran's operations. For the year ended 31 March 2023 we have set our materiality at 1.5% of gross expenditure based on the audited financial statements for 2021/22.	£31,000
Performance materiality – This acts as a trigger point. If the aggregate of errors identified during the financial statements audit exceeds performance materiality, this could indicate that further audit procedures should be considered. Using our professional judgement, we have assessed performance materiality at 75% of planning materiality.	£23,500

Reporting threshold – We are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements more than the 'reporting threshold' amount. £1,500

Source: Audit Scotland

Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements

16. Our risk assessment draws on our cumulative knowledge of SEStran, its major transaction streams, key systems of internal control and risk management processes. It is informed by our discussions with management, meetings with internal audit, attendance at committees and a review of supporting information.
17. Audit risk assessment is an iterative and dynamic process. Our assessment of risks set out in this plan may change as more information and evidence becomes available during the progress of the audit. Where such changes occur, we will advise management and where relevant, report them to those charged with governance.
18. Based on our risk assessment process, we identified the following significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements. These are risks which have the greatest impact on our planned audit procedures. [Exhibit 2](#) summarises the nature of the risk, the sources of assurance from management arrangements and the further audit procedures we plan to perform to gain assurance over the risk.

Exhibit 2

2022/23 Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements

Significant risk of material misstatement	Sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p>1. Risk of material misstatement due to fraud caused by management override of controls</p> <p>As stated in International Standard on Auditing (UK) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of management's ability to override controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test journal entries with a focus on significant risk areas. We will consider any unusual material transactions identified through our audit testing for any evidence of management override of controls. Substantive testing of income and expenditure transactions around the year-end to confirm they are accounted for in the correct financial year. Review accounting estimates for evidence of management bias including assessing any changes

Significant risk of material misstatement	Sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p>2. Risk of material misstatement caused by fraud in expenditure</p> <p>The Code of Audit Practice expands the consideration of fraud under ISA 240 to include the risk of fraud over expenditure. There is a risk that expenditure may be materially misstated in the 2022/23 financial statements due to the extent and nature of the following significant expenditure streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-related expenditure (2021/22: £1.335m) • Other service expenditure (2021/22: £0.185m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls over expenditure and payment processes. • Scrutiny of monthly financial reports by management and quarterly financial monitoring reports by the Partnership Board and Performance & Audit Committee. • Fraud prevention arrangements. 	<p>to the methods and underlying assumptions used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing of expenditure transactions, focusing on the areas of greatest risk. • Review of budget monitoring reports focusing on significant budget variances. • Review of arrangements in place to detect and prevent fraud.

Source: Audit Scotland

19. As set out in International Standard on Auditing (UK) 240: *The auditor's responsibilities relating to fraud in an audit of financial statements*, there is a presumed risk of fraud over the recognition of revenue. There is a risk that revenue may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements. We have rebutted this risk for SEStran because, while the possibility of fraud exists, we assess the risk of the financial statements being materially misstated as a result of fraud to be low. This is due to the nature of the partnership's revenue streams and key sources of income, namely government grants and the constituent councils' contributions.

20. We have not, therefore, incorporated specific work into our audit plan in this area over and above our standard audit procedures.

Audit dimensions

21. The [Code of Audit Practice](#) sets out the four areas that frame the wider scope of public sector audit. These are: financial management; financial sustainability; vision, leadership and governance; and use of resources to improve outcomes.

22. The Code of Audit Practice includes provisions relating to the audit of less complex bodies. Where the application of the full wider scope is judged by auditors not to be appropriate to an audited body, then the annual audit work

can focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and the financial sustainability of the body and its services.

23. We plan to apply the less complex body provision of the Code to the 2022/23 audit of SEStran. Our wider scope work will therefore focus on the financial sustainability of SEStran and the services that it delivers over the medium to long term, and the arrangements in place for securing best value.

Best Value

24. Auditors have a duty to be satisfied that bodies that fall within section 106 of the 1973 Act have made proper arrangements to secure Best Value. We will consider how SEStran demonstrates that it is meeting its Best Value responsibilities and we will report our findings as part of our Annual Audit Report.

Wider scope risks

25. We have identified one wider scope audit risk in the area set out in [Exhibit 3](#). This exhibit sets out the risk, sources of assurance from management arrangements and the further audit procedures we plan to perform to gain assurances over the risks.

Exhibit 3

2022/23 wider scope risks

Description of risk	Sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p>1. Financial sustainability</p> <p>Funding from the Scottish Government and constituent councils has remained at the same level for several years and the partnership's budget assumes that this will continue. In addition, European Union funding for several projects is expected to end during 2023.</p> <p>There is a risk that SEStran may not be able to secure further funding or meet cost pressures as they arise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnership's business plan 2021-24 has identified a requirement to increase funding for the partnership in the medium term as an objective. Ongoing budget monitoring and reporting arrangements by management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing review of financial budget monitoring and reporting arrangements in place to achieve a balanced budget. Review of SEStran's strategy to seek additional funding in the short to medium term.

Source: Audit Scotland

Climate change

26. The Auditor General and Accounts Commission are developing a programme of work on climate change. In 2022/23, we will gather information on SEStran's arrangements for responding to climate change covering areas such as the development of climate change strategies and the monitoring and reporting of progress against targets for reducing emissions.

Reporting arrangements, timetable, and audit fee

Reporting arrangements

27. Audit reporting is the visible output for the annual audit. All Annual Audit Plans and the outputs, as detailed in [Exhibit 4](#), and any other outputs on matters of public interest will be published on our website: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk.
28. Matters arising from our audit will be reported on a timely basis and will include agreed action plans. Draft management reports will be issued to the relevant officers to confirm factual accuracy.
29. We will provide an independent auditor's report to SEStran and the Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual report and accounts. We will provide SEStran and the Accounts Commission with an annual report on the audit containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen during the audit.
30. [Exhibit 4](#) outlines the target dates for our audit outputs, and we aim to issue the independent auditor's report by the statutory deadline of 30 September 2023.

Exhibit 4 2020/21 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Performance and Audit Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan	3 March 2023	3 March 2023
Independent Auditor's Report	8 September 2023	8 September 2023
Annual Audit Report	8 September 2023	8 September 2023

Source: Audit Scotland



Timetable

31. To support an efficient audit, it is critical that the timetable for producing the annual report and accounts for audit is achieved. We have included a proposed timetable for the audit at [Exhibit 5](#) that has been discussed with management.

- 32.** Covid-19 has had a considerable impact on the conduct and timeliness of the audit. We recognise that it is in the best interests of public accountability to get the reporting of audited accounts back to pre-pandemic timelines. We are identifying ways to work more efficiently to expedite the 2022/23 audits whilst at the same time maintaining high standards of quality.
- 33.** We intend to take a hybrid approach to the 2022/23 audit with a blend of onsite and remote working. We will continue to work closely with management to identify the most efficient approach as appropriate and will keep timeframes and logistics for the completion of the audit under review. Progress will be discussed with management and finance officers over the course of the audit.

Exhibit 5

Proposed annual report and accounts timetable

 Key stage	 Provisional Date
Consideration of the unaudited annual report and accounts by those charged with governance	2 June 2023
Latest submission date for the receipt of the unaudited annual report and accounts with complete working papers package.	30 June 2023
Issue of draft Letter of Representation and proposed Independent Auditor's Report	TBC August 2023
Agreement of audited and unsigned annual report and accounts	TBC August 2023
Issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance.	1 September 2023
Signed Independent Auditor's Report	8 September 2023

Source: Audit Scotland

Audit fee

- 34.** In determining the audit fee, we have taken account of the risk exposure of SEStran and the planned management assurances in place. The audit fee for 2022/23 is £11,850 as set out in [Exhibit 6](#).
- 35.** Our fees have increased in 2022/23 and this is a reflection of the current audit market and the rising costs in delivering high quality audit work. There are increased regulatory expectations and risks placed on audit and its quality, as well as a widening in the scope of work audit must cover.

Exhibit 6**Audit fees (including VAT)**

Fee component	Fees (£)
External Auditor Remuneration	22,750
Contribution to Audit Scotland costs	860
Sectoral Cap Adjustment	(11,760)
Total 2022/23 fee	11,850

Source: Audit Scotland

- 36.** In setting the fee for 2022/23 we have assumed that SEStran has effective governance arrangements and will prepare comprehensive and accurate accounts for audit in line with the agreed timetable for the audit. The audit fee assumes there will be no major change in respect of the scope of the audit during the year and where our audit cannot proceed as planned, a supplementary fee may be levied.

Other matters

Internal audit

37. It is the responsibility of SEStran to establish adequate internal audit arrangements. We will review the internal audit plan and the results of internal audit's work.
38. While we are not planning to place formal reliance on the work of internal audit in 2022/23, we will review internal audit reports and assess the impact of the findings on our financial statements and wider scope audit responsibilities.

Independence and objectivity

39. Auditors appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland or Accounts Commission must comply with the [Code of Audit Practice](#) and relevant supporting guidance. When auditing the financial statements, auditors must also comply with professional standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council and those of the professional accountancy bodies. These standards impose stringent rules to ensure the independence and objectivity of auditors.
40. Audit Scotland has robust arrangements in place to ensure compliance with these standards including an annual 'fit and proper' declaration for all members of staff. The arrangements are overseen by the Executive Director of Innovation and Quality, who serves as Audit Scotland's Ethics Partner.
41. The appointed auditor for SEStran is Christopher Gardner, Senior Audit Manager. Auditing and ethical standards require the appointed auditor to communicate any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of audit staff. We are not aware of any such relationships pertaining to the audit of SEStran.

Audit Quality

42. Quality is at the core of public audit in Scotland and is the foundation for building consistency and confidence across all audit work. High quality audits provide assurance, add value and can support public bodies to achieve their objectives.
43. Until 2021/22, the applicable audit quality standard was International Standard on Quality Control 1 (ISQC (UK) 1). This set out an audit practice's responsibilities for its system of quality control for audits.
44. ISQC(UK) 1 has been replaced by two new audit quality standards: Internal Standards on Quality Management (ISQM (UK) 1) applicable from 15 December 2022 and (ISQM(UK) 2) effective for the 2023/24 audits. Work is underway at Audit Scotland to meet the requirements of these quality standards.

45. Audit Scotland is committed to delivering high quality audits. The foundation of our quality framework is our Audit Guide, which incorporates the application of professional auditing, quality and ethical standards and the [Code of Audit Practice](#) (and supplementary guidance) issued by Audit Scotland and approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. To ensure that we achieve the required quality standards, Audit Scotland conducts peer reviews and internal quality reviews. Additionally, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) has been commissioned to carry out external quality reviews.
46. As part of our commitment to quality and continuous improvement, Audit Scotland will periodically seek your views on the quality of our service provision. We welcome feedback at any time, and this may be directed to the engagement lead.

South East Scotland Transport Partnership

Annual Audit Plan 2022/23

Audit Scotland's published material is available for download on the website in a number of formats. For information on our accessibility principles, please visit:

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/accessibility

For the latest news follow us on social media or [subscribe to our email alerts.](#)



Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN
Phone: 0131 625 1500 Email: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

Internal Audit Assurance

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council Internal Audit (IA) team performs one annual review to provide assurance over the controls established to mitigate specific key SEStran partnership risks.
- 1.2 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the outcomes of the 2022/23 SEStran IA review of the Thistle Assistance Programme, progress with completion of previously raised audit actions, and to request the Partnership's recommendations on potential areas for inclusion in the planned 2023/24 audit.

2. BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND OUTCOMES OF 2022/23 IA REVIEW – THISTLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Audit Background

- 2.1 [The Thistle Assistance programme](#) aims to assist older people and those with disabilities or illness (protected characteristic) in using public transport. Stage one of the programme included development and operation of Thistle card and the mobile application, which advises the driver/conductor of passengers' protected characteristics and the assistance they need. Stage two involved creating awareness about the Thistle card/app symbols among transport operators, and stage three relates to the development of VoyagAR app, which aims to assist the passengers with protected characteristics in journey planning and way finding.
- 2.2 SEStran has engaged a third-party contractor to manage the generation and issuance of physical Thistle card. SEStran also administers generation and issuance of Thistle card for six other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) and charges them production and marketing costs on a pro-rata basis.
- 2.3 The VoyagAR project has been awarded with a funding of £150k by Scottish Enterprise in 2019 and a further grant of £150k in 2020. The funding has been used to invite third party providers under the Innovate UK framework to initially deliver a proof of concept and subsequently deliver the final product (website and application). In addition to the cumulative awarded funding of £300k, SEStran has further internally funded this project with £37.5k for the contracted third-party supplier to deliver the final tranche of work by March 2023.

Audit Scope

- 2.4 The scope of the 2022/23 IA review was to assess the adequacy of design and operating effectiveness of the key controls supporting the effective implementation of Thistle Assistance programme. The review also followed up on the implementation of

management actions raised in the previously completed internal audit review of 'Active Travel Network Development'.

Audit Outcomes

- 2.5 The overall assessment of the review was 'some improvement required' (amber) and confirmed that the while some control weaknesses have been identified in the governance, risk and control frameworks supporting the Thistle Assistance programme, they provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and programme objectives should be achieved.
- 2.6 Areas for improvement identified in the review include:
- i) formalising contracts and data sharing agreements with third party vendors, including regular review of their performance against key performance indicators (KPIs)
 - ii) reviewing software service provider's terms of agreement and cyber security controls to ensure continued operation of Thistle assistance mobile application
 - iii) developing a process to classify any business activity as a project and establishing formal project management governance arrangements.
- 2.7 Several areas of good practice were also identified as part of this review and are included in the opinion section of the detailed report.
- 2.8 Management has also addressed the low rated Internal Audit recommendations raised in the 2021/22 review of Active Travel Network Development by updating conflict of interest guidance and form in its Anti-bribery policy. The updated policy was presented for approval to March 2023 Performance and Audit Committee.
- 2.9 The full report is included at Appendix 1.

3. 2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

- 3.1 The Council's 2023/24 Internal Audit annual plan will be presented to the Governance, Risk, and Best Value Committee on 14 March 2023, and includes one review for SEStran, which is consistent with the level of assurance provided in prior years.
- 3.2 The most significant areas of risk and potential areas for SEStran 2023/24 annual review will be discussed with the management team by July 2023, and the review is likely to be completed between September to December 2023.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is requested to:

- note the progress with completion of an audit action raised in 2021/22 audit year
- note outcomes of the 2023/23 IA review of the Thistle Assistance Programme, and the associated costs, and
- provide insights or recommendations on key risks or areas of concern that the Board would like to recommend for inclusion in the 2023/24 IA review

Appendix 1: Internal Audit Report – Thistle Assistance Programme

Laura Calder

Head of Internal Audit, City of Edinburgh Council

E-mail: laura.calder@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3077

Key contact:

Dheeraj Shekhar, Principal Audit Manager, City of Edinburgh Council

E-mail: dheeraj.shekhar@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3221

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	SEStran is charged an annual fee for provision of the annual IA assurance review. The fee for 2022/23 is £5,000, which remains consistent with the 2021/22 fee applied.
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)

Internal Audit Report

Thistle Assistance Programme

23 February 2023

OO2201

Overall Assessment	Some improvement required
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Contents

Executive Summary 3

Background and scope..... 3

Findings and Management Action Plan 5

Appendix 1 – Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions 9

This Internal Audit review is conducted for SEStran under the auspices of the 2022/23 internal audit plan. The review is designed to help SEStran assess and refine its internal control environment. It is not designed or intended to be suitable for any other purpose and should not be relied upon for any other purpose. The City of Edinburgh Council accepts no responsibility for any such reliance and disclaims all liability in relation thereto.

The internal audit work and reporting has been performed in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and as a result is not designed or intended to comply with any other auditing standards.

Although there are specific recommendations included in this report to strengthen internal control, it is management’s responsibility to design, implement and maintain an effective control framework, and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud. This is an essential part of the efficient management of SEStran. Communication of the issues and weaknesses arising from this audit does not absolve management of this responsibility. High and Critical risk findings will be raised with senior management as appropriate.

Executive Summary

Overall Assessment

Some improvement required

Overall opinion and summary of findings

Our review of the Thistle Assistance Project identified that while effective operational arrangements have been put in place to support the generation and issuance of Thistle cards, they are not formalised and supported by effective controls governance. Regular oversight is maintained on the third-party supplier contracted to develop the journey planning VoyagAR application, but this is not supported by formalised project management governance and controls.

Improvements in following areas have been identified to support effective governance of the Thistle Assistance project:





- formalised contracts and data sharing agreements with third party vendors and service providers, including key performance indicators (KPI) and service standards
- contract payments linked to service delivery and performance against KPIs
- review of the software service provider terms of agreement and cyber security controls to ensure continued operation of Thistle assistance mobile application
- clarity over classification of a business activity as project and establishing formal project management governance arrangements.

Areas of good practice

Our review identified:

- the card issuance process is fully documented
- the Thistle Assistance card was received within 14 days from application in our audit testing
- there are multiple ways to contact Thistle Assistance via phone, email and an online form
- recharging arrangements for Thistle card production and marketing costs are formally established with other Regional Transport Partnerships
- SEStran has a documented data protection privacy notice published on Thistle assistance website and Thistle app.

Audit Assessment

Audit Area	Control Design	Control Operation	Findings	Priority Rating
1. Thistle Assistance Card and Application Operations			Finding 1 – Thistle Assistance Card Finding 2 - Thistle App cyber security and data privacy controls	Medium Priority
2. Thistle Assistance Project Management			Finding 3 – VoyagAR Project Management	Medium Priority

Background and scope

[See Appendix 1 for Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions](#)

The Thistle Assistance programme aims to assist older people and those with disabilities or illness (protected characteristic) in using public transport. Stage one of the programme included development and operation of Thistle card and mobile application (app), which advises the driver/conductor of passengers' protected characteristics and the assistance they need. The app was further developed during the Covid-19 pandemic to advise drivers about passengers' face mask exemption, where applicable. Stage two involved creating awareness about Thistle card/app symbols among transport operators, and stage three relates to the development of VoyagAR app, which aims to assist passengers with protected characteristics in journey planning and way finding.

SEStran has engaged a third-party contractor to manage the generation and issuance of physical Thistle cards. SEStran also administers generation and issuance of Thistle cards for six other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) and charges them production and marketing costs on a pro-rata basis.

The VoyagAR project was awarded funding of £150k by Scottish Enterprise in 2019 and a further grant of £150k in 2020. The funding has been used to invite third party providers under the Innovate UK framework to initially deliver a proof of concept and subsequently deliver the final product (website and application). In addition to the cumulative awarded funding of £300k, SEStran has further funded this project internally with £37.5k for the contracted third-party supplier to deliver the final tranche of work by March 2023.

Scope

The objective of this review was to assess the adequacy of design and operating effectiveness of the key controls supporting the effective implementation of Thistle Assistance programme.

The review also confirmed that the action raised in the previously completed internal audit review on 'Active Travel Network Development', to update the anti-bribery policy with a Conflict of Interest guidance and form, has been addressed. The updated policy is still in draft, but management has confirmed that it will be presented to the Performance and Audit committee in March 2023, along this audit report.

Risks

The review provides assurance in relation to the following SEStran corporate risks, relevant to the Thistle Assistance programme:

- R002 Financial risk
- R003 Project management risk
- R005 Third party service level agreements - Contract Management

Limitations of Scope

The following areas were excluded from scope:

- Technical elements of the Thistle assistance programme, including the accuracy of recharging arrangements to other partnerships

Reporting Date

Testing was undertaken between 10 January 2023 and 26 January 2023.

Our audit work concluded on 26 January 2023, and our findings and opinion are based on the conclusion of our work as at that date.

Findings and Management Action Plan

Finding 1 – Thistle Assistance Card

Finding Rating

Medium Priority

Audit testing of the Thistle card design and mail out process established that

- while the first invoice for card and leaflet design and printing is approved by the Partnership Director, there is no documented authorisation of designer/printer's appointment and commercial arrangement
- although the ongoing mail out of cards is performed by a printing vendor, the invoice is issued by a design agency
- there is not a formal agreement or contract between SEStran and the designer or mail-out printing supplier with established key performance indicators of service delivery. Management has confirmed that a formal contract is now being drafted
- there is no reconciliation performed between the order spreadsheet shared with the printer and the invoice paid
- a data sharing agreement has been drafted by the mail-out partner and shared with SEStran, but it has not yet been signed by both the parties.

Management have advised that they periodically perform mystery shopping (*secret shopping to gather information about service delivery and customer service quality*) of Thistle cards however, results of this activity are not formally recorded.

Customers can raise queries or complaints via telephone (voicemail), email or an online form. Management advised that they manage these queries/complaints using a shared email inbox, however, there is no log to record customer queries/complaints and monitor that they are addressed in a timely manner.

Risks

- **Contract Management** – Inability to manage contracts appropriately leading to potential service delivery risks
- **Financial** – Potential overbilling and duplicate payments in case of lack of reconciliation.
- **Reputational** – Customer queries and concerns are not addressed in a timely and appropriate manner

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Thistle Assistance Card Controls

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Contributors	Timeframe
1.1	Appointment of the leaflet designer and mail out printer should be formally authorised as per SEStran financial governance, and an agreement, with service delivery KPIs, should be formalised with all the third-party suppliers.	SEStran will formalise and put in place a new agreement with third party design and printing supplier.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023
1.2	SEStran should request confirmation details from the printer when a batch of card order sheet has been processed by the printer. A reconciliation among batch order sheet, batch confirmation sheet	Confirmation of batch processing and reconciliation to order sheet will be included in the new	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023

	and invoice details should be performed before any payment is made to the printer.	agreement and process document, agreed with the printer, as part of ongoing process management.			
1.3	Data Exchange Agreement with the printer should be formalised and physically/digitally signed.	Data exchange agreement will be updated as part of new agreement with the third-party design and printing supplier.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023
1.4	Results of mystery shopping should be formally recorded and used as a tool for contract monitoring.	Mystery shopping results will be formally recorded and included in new process management flow and held in project folder.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023
1.5	A customer query/complaints log should be created and maintained to record details of received concerns with their resolution date and comments to monitor any thematic customer complaints, understand their concerns and ensure that they are addressed in a timely manner.	Customer query and complaints log will be formally recorded and included in the new process management flow and held in project folder.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023

Finding 2 – Thistle Assistance application cyber security and data privacy controls

Finding Rating

Medium Priority

The development and maintenance partner of SEStran's Thistle card mobile application (app) ceased to trade in 2022, and no alternative vendor had been appointed for app's maintenance and ongoing support, until 11 January 2023.

Internal Audit cannot comment on the effectiveness of mobile app's cyber security due to lack of available information. Our audit testing however found that while SEStran data privacy policy is linked on the application store, the Apple App store and Google Play Store are not populated with application specific data privacy information, resulting in a warning notice on both the store pages.

Risks

- **System and technology** – Service delivery would be affected if the application developed a software bug.
- **Reputational** – Potential customers may not download the app due to data privacy warning on the app stores

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Thistle Assistance App cyber security and data privacy controls

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Contributors	Timeframe
2.1	SLAs and the terms of agreement with new software services provider should be regularly monitored. Management should also consider exit clauses and strategies to be prepared for future contingencies, where the supplier ceases to operate.	New agreement is currently in place (Jan 2023) with a third-party software services provider and SLA monitoring has been put in place. Exit clauses will also be considered as part of SEStran risk management process for future contingency planning. SEStran will also be setting a new developer account on both the Apple and Google play store.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	SLA monitoring is ongoing. Risk register to be updated by 30/06/2023
2.2	SEStran should request and review assurance details from the new app developer on their cyber security controls, including data protection arrangements, on a periodic basis. Some examples of cyber security certifications and assurances include ISO 27001 standard , ISAE 3000/3402 assurance reports and Cyber Essentials certification .	Management will request the details of cyber security controls, including recommended assurance reports, from the new software services provider. These reports and details will be reviewed on an annual basis.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023
2.3	Data privacy information specifying how the app manages personal data should be uploaded to both Apple App store and Google Play store.	SEStran data management and information policy will be reviewed, updated and published on Apple and Android App stores.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023

Finding 3 – VoyagAR Project Management

Finding Rating

Medium Priority

Discussion with the team and management established that there is a lack of clarity in the team regarding identification of the development of VoyagAR app as a formal project managed by SEStran. The team have instead approached it as an outsourced activity supervised by SEStran through monthly meetings.

Consequently, there are no formally established project management arrangements including but not limited to the following best practice used in other SEStran projects:

- Project governance (Project Board and Senior Management reporting)
- Project progress/milestones review and monitoring
- Project risk management
- Project financial and budget management
- Project third party contract monitoring.





Risks

- **Project Management** – Potential under performance by outsourced contractor and failure to obtain best value delivery in the agreed timeframe.
- **Financial** – Lack of project governance leading to budgetary issues not being identified and addressed in a timely manner.
- **Governance** – Key person dependency risk and significant project delivery risks are not identified and escalated to Senior management / Committee members in a timely manner.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Project Governance

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Contributors	Timeframe
3.1	Management should review the existing progress of the VoyagAR project and consider formalising project management controls, proportionately for the remainder of project.	Noted and agreed. Implementation of formalised project management controls will depend on successful completion and testing of final Voyager application in March 2023.	Partnership Director	Programmes Manager	30/06/2023
3.2	For all future projects, a Project Initiation Document should be drafted and agreed by the Project SRO and Senior Management, to formally establish a project with clearly defined project management arrangements.	SEStran will review the current arrangements and consequently implement the recommended actions, as needed.	Partnership Director	Business Manager/Programmes Manager	30/09/2023

Appendix 1 – Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions

Control Assessment Rating		Control Design Adequacy	Control Operation Effectiveness
Well managed		Well-structured design efficiently achieves fit-for purpose control objectives	Controls consistently applied and operating at optimum level of effectiveness.
Generally Satisfactory		Sound design achieves control objectives	Controls consistently applied
Some Improvement Opportunity		Design is generally sound, with some opportunity to introduce control improvements	Conformance generally sound, with some opportunity to enhance level of conformance
Major Improvement Opportunity		Design is not optimum and may put control objectives at risk	Non-conformance may put control objectives at risk
Control Not Tested	N/A	Not applicable for control design assessments	Control not tested, either due to ineffective design or due to design only audit

Overall Assurance Ratings	
Effective	The control environment and governance and risk management frameworks have been adequately designed and are operating effectively, providing assurance that risks are being effectively managed, and SEStran objectives should be achieved.
Some improvement required	Whilst some control weaknesses were identified, in the design and / or effectiveness of the control environment and / or governance and risk management frameworks, they provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed, and SEStran objectives should be achieved.
Significant improvement required	Significant and / or numerous control weaknesses were identified, in the design and / or effectiveness of the control environment and / or governance and risk management frameworks. Consequently, only limited assurance can be provided that risks are being managed and that SEStran objectives should be achieved.
Inadequate	The design and / or operating effectiveness of the control environment and / or governance and risk management frameworks is inadequate, with several significant and systemic control weaknesses identified, resulting in substantial risk of operational failure and the strong likelihood that SEStran objectives will not be achieved.

Finding Priority Ratings	
Advisory	A finding that does not have a risk impact but has been raised to highlight areas of inefficiencies or good practice.
Low Priority	An issue that results in a small impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Medium Priority	An issue that results in a moderate impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
High Priority	An issue that results in a severe impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Critical Priority	An issue that results in a critical impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited. The issue needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Revenue Budget 2023/24 and Indicative Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2025/26

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This report presents a revenue budget for 2023/24 and an indicative financial plan for 2024/25 to 2025/26, for approval.
- 1.2** The proposed revenue budget for 2023/24 was reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 3rd March 2023.

2. MAIN REPORT

Scottish Government Budget 2023-24

- 2.1** The Scottish Budget Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 21st February 2023. At the time of writing, there has been no information received from Transport Scotland as to the Partnership's revenue grant for 2023/24.
- 2.2** On 1 June 2022, Transport Scotland advised a review was being undertaken of Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) grant and how this is allocated between RTPs, following the Scottish Government's Resource Spending Review.
- 2.3** The most recent indication is there will be no change in the revenue grant for 2023/24, with the re-allocation of grant among RTP's deferred for one year.
- 2.4** If further information is available by 17th March 2023, a verbal update will be provided to the meeting of the Partnership Board.

Proposed Revenue Budget 2023-24

- 2.5** Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended by the Section 122 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the constituent councils of a Regional Transport Partnership to meet the estimated net expenses of the Partnership.
- 2.6** A financial planning report was considered by the Partnership on 2nd December 2022. The Partnership noted the financial planning assumptions being progressed for 2023/24 to 2025/26. These assumptions included no change from 2022/23 funding levels for constituent council requisitions and Transport Scotland grant.
- 2.7** A revenue budget with a standstill council requisition of £190,000 has been prepared in consultation with officers of the Partnership and the Partnership's Chief Officers Group.

- 2.8** The three-year planning assumptions presented to the Partnership on 2nd December 2022 have been updated for:
- 2.8.1** Forecast employee costs, following recent employee changes;
 - 2.8.2** staff recharges to EU projects – these are forecast to be £4,000, following review of EU projects;
 - 2.8.3** other minor budget planning changes to reflect current activity.
- 2.9** An analysis of the proposed core budget for 2023/24 and indicative financial plans for 2024/25 to 2025/26 is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.10** Proposed Project activity for 2023/24 is shown in Appendix 2(a). Indicative Project activity for 2024/25 is shown in Appendix 2(b) with 2025/26 Project activity shown in Appendix 2(c). The indicative plan presents expenditure and income balanced for each financial year.
- 2.11** Appendix 3 shows all budgeted expenditure and income since 2018/19. Scottish Government grant funding has remained fixed at £782,000 since 2011/12. Council requisitions reduced by 5% in 2017/18 from £200,000 to £190,000.
- 2.12** For 2023/24, external income of £498,000 is anticipated to fund 33% of proposed expenditure.
- 2.13** The 2023/24 Council requisitions, based on the proposed budget are shown in the table below.

Council	Requisition
Clackmannanshire	£6,047
East Lothian	£12,858
Edinburgh	£61,773
Falkirk	£18,856
Fife	£43,969
Midlothian	£11,109
Scottish Borders	£13,613
West Lothian	£21,775
Total	£190,000

- 2.14** In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated General Fund reserve of £31,000, based on 5% of the core revenue budget for 2022/23.
- 2.15** In the Finance Officer report on this agenda, the Partnership Board is advised of Project budget slippage of £158,000 forecast for 2022/23.
- 2.16** An earmarked balance will be established to meet any slippage on project delivery from 2022/23 to 2023/24, in line with the Partnership's approved Reserves Policy.

- 2.17** Following confirmation of the 2022/23 outturn, a realignment of the Projects budget will be presented to the Partnership Board to take account of Projects budget slippage. This will include activity agreed by the Board on 2nd December 2022 for the promotion of the new Regional Transport Strategy, once Ministerial approval of the RTS is received – estimated to cost £39,000 - and development of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), which is currently estimated to cost £35,000.
- 2.18** A risk assessment for 2023/24 is included at Appendix 4.

3 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1** Following approval of the proposed budget by the Partnership, requisitions will be issued by the Treasurer to constituent councils.
- 3.2** An update of the Projects budget, including project slippage, will be reported to the Partnership, following confirmation of the final outturn for 2022/23 and after conclusion of the Annual External Audit.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1** It is recommended that the Partnership:
- 4.1.1** approves the proposed Core budget for 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix 1;
 - 4.1.2** approves the proposed Projects budget for 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix 2(a);
 - 4.1.3** notes that financial planning for 2024/25 to 2025/26 will be developed throughout 2023 for review by the Partnership in December 2023;
 - 4.1.4** note that the proposed budget is subject to a number of risks. All income and expenditure of the Partnership will continue to be monitored closely with updates reported to each Partnership meeting.

5 BACKGROUND READING/EXTERNAL REFERENCES

- 5.1** [Indicative Financial Plan 2023-24 to 2025-26](#)

Hugh Dunn
Treasurer
10th March 2023

- Appendix** Appendix 1 – Proposed Core Budget 2023/24 and Indicative Budget 2024/25 to 2025/26
- Appendix 2(a) – Projects - Proposed Activity 2023/24
- Appendix 2(b) - Projects - Indicative Activity 2024/25
- Appendix 2(c) – Projects – Indicative Activity 2025/26
- Appendix 3 – Summary of Revenue Budget 2018/19 – 2025/26
- Appendix 4 - Risk Assessment 2023/24

Contact iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

Policy Implications	There are no policy implications arising as a result of this report.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications arising.
Equalities Implications	There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.
Climate Change Implications	There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

**Proposed Core Budget 2023/24 and Indicative Budget
2024/25 to 2025/26**

	Approved Budget 2022/23	Proposed Budget 2023/24	Indicative Budget 2024/25	Indicative Budget 2025/26
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employee Costs				
Salaries	408	428	447	467
National Insurance	50	49	51	54
Pension Fund	144	151	157	164
Recharges – EU Projects	(172)	(4)	0	0
Recharges – Cycling Officer	(20)	(20)	0	0
Training & Conferences	10	10	10	10
Interviews & Advertising	2	2	2	2
	422	616	667	697
Premises Costs	17	18	18	18
Transport	8	8	8	8
Supplies and Services				
Communications/Computing	48	48	48	48
Hosted ICT – Novus FX	46	44	44	44
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	7	7	7
Insurance	6	7	7	7
Equipment, Furniture, Materials, Miscellaneous	4	4	4	4
	111	110	110	110
Support Services				
Finance	30	31	31	31
Legal Services / HR	7	7	7	7
	37	38	38	38
Corporate & Democratic				
Clerks Fees	12	12	12	12
External Audit Fees	11	12	12	12
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	1	1
	24	25	25	25
Interest	0	0	0	0
Total Gross Expenditure	619	815	866	896
Funding				
Scottish Government Grant	(429)	(625)	(676)	(706)
Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)	(190)	(190)
Total Funding	(619)	(815)	(866)	(896)

Projects – Proposed Activity 2023-24
Appendix 2(a)

	2022-23	2023-24			
Service	Approved Budget £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Activity/Notes
Sustainable Travel	63	28	0	28	Implement RTS Activity
Urban Cycle Network	0	100	(100)	0	100% funded by Sustrans
Urban Cycling	21	21	0	21	Cycle Training and support
Active Travel Fund	0	350	(350)	0	100% funded by Transport Scotland
RTS	60	18	0	18	Monitoring of RTS
GO e-BIKE	10	10	0	10	Maintenance
Thistle Assistance	6	30	(24)	6	Scheme development and promotion
Consultancy support	30	43	0	43	Projects development
Equalities Action	10	10	0	10	Operator training and survey
EU – Funded Projects					
ShareNorth	18	0	0	0	Ended June 2022
Surflogh	49	5	(2)	3	Ends April 2023
Bling	33	5	(2)	3	Ends June 2023
Primaas	9	5	(3)	2	Ends July 2023
Regio-Mob	5	0	0	0	Ended November 2022
Connect	34	5	(2)	3	Ends March 2023
Real-Time Passenger Information System (RTPI)					
Maintenance	25	25	0	25	
Income – screens	(20)	0	(15)	(15)	
Total	353	655	(498)	157	
Scottish Govt Grant	(353)			(157)	

Projects - Indicative Activity 2024-25
Appendix 2(b)

	2023/24	2024-25			
Service	Proposed Budget £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Activity
Sustainable Travel	28	31	0	31	Implement RTS Activity
Urban Cycle Network	0	100	(100)	0	100% funded by Sustrans.
Urban Cycling	21	0	0	0	
Active Travel Fund	0	400	(400)	0	
RTS	18	18	0	18	Monitoring of RTS
GO e-BIKE	10	10	0	10	
Thistle Assistance	6	30	(24)	6	
Consultancy support	43	21	0	21	
Equalities Action	10	10	0	10	
EU – Funded Projects					
ShareNorth	0	0	0	0	Ended June 2022
Surflogh	3	0	0	0	Ends April 2023
Bling	3	0	0	0	Ends June 2023
Primaas	2	0	0	0	Ends July 2023
Regio-Mob	0	0	0	0	Ended November 2022
Connect	3	0	0	0	Ends March 2023
Real-Time Passenger Information System (RTPI)					
Maintenance	25	25	0	25	
Income – screens	(15)	0	(15)	(15)	
Total	157	645	(539)	106	
Scottish Govt Grant	(157)			(106)	

Projects - Indicative Activity 2025-26

Appendix 2(c)

	2024/25	2025-26			
Service	Indicative Budget £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Activity
Sustainable Travel	31	1	0	1	Implement RTS Activity
Urban Cycle Network	0	100	(100)	0	100% funded by Sustrans.
Active Travel Fund	0	450	(450)	0	
Regional Transport Strategy	18	18	0	18	Monitoring of RTS
GO e-BIKE	10	10	0	10	
Thistle Assistance	6	30	(24)	6	
Consultancy support	21	21	0	21	
Equalities Action	10	10	0	10	
Real-Time Passenger Information System (RTPI)					
Maintenance	25	25	0	25	
Income – screens	(15)	0	(15)	(15)	
Total	106	665	(589)	76	
Scottish Govt Grant	(106)			(76)	

Summary of Revenue Budget 2018/19 – 2025/26

	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Core	531	584	581	663	619	815	866	896
Projects	614	590	1,030	786	882	630	620	640
RTPI	108	100	50	23	25	25	25	25
Total Budget	1,253	1,274	1,661	1,472	1,526	1,470	1,511	1,561
External Funding								
EU Grants	139	82	142	106	210	9	0	0
Other income ¹	142	220	547	394	344	489	539	589
Total External Funding	281	302	689	500	554	498	539	589
Scottish Government	782	782	782	782	782	782	782	782
Council Requisition	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
Total Funding	1,253	1,274	1,661	1,472	1,526	1,470	1,511	1,561

¹ External funding from 2023/24 subject to final written confirmation. Any decrease in funding will require a compensating reduction in planned expenditure.

Risk Description	Existing Controls
<p>Pay awards</p> <p>The proposed budget makes provision for a pay award of up to 3% in 2023/24. An uplift of 1% in pay award equates to an increase of £6,280.</p>	<p>Alignment with Local Government Pay Policy.</p>
<p>Staff recharges – Projects</p> <p>The indicative budget assumes that £4,000 of staff time can be recharged to Projects. There is a risk this may not be achievable.</p>	<p>Any shortfall in employee cost recharges will be offset by a corresponding reduction in Projects Budget expenditure.</p>
<p>Inflation</p> <p>There is a risk that the indicative budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.</p>	<p>Allowance made for specific known price inflation. Budgets adjusted in line with current cost forecasts.</p>
<p>Delays in payment of grant by the EU -</p> <p>results in additional short-term borrowing costs.</p>	<p>SEStran grant claims for EU funded projects are submitted in compliance with requirements of EU processes to ensure minimal delay in payment. Ongoing monitoring of cash flow will be undertaken to manage exposure to additional short-term borrowing costs.</p>
<p>Pension Fund Contributions</p> <p>The deficit on the staff pension fund could lead to increases in the employer's pension contribution.</p> <p>There is a risk the contribution rate may increase from 2024/25, following the Actuarial Review in 2023.</p>	<p>Following Lothian Pension Fund's Triennial Actuarial Review in 2020, Partnership employer pension fund contribution rates are confirmed at 33.1% until 31 March 2024.</p>
<p>Funding Reductions</p> <p>Reduction in funding from Transport Scotland and/or council requisitions.</p> <p>On 1 June 2022, Transport Scotland advised of a review of Regional Transport Partnerships revenue grant and how this is allocated between RTPs.</p> <p>There is a risk that current levels of staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.</p>	<p>Continue to seek to source external funding.</p> <p>Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.</p>

Finance Officer's Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the third update on the financial performance of the Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2022/23, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. This report presents an analysis of financial performance to the end of January 2023.
- 1.2 The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2022/23 were approved by the Partnership on 18th March 2022.

2. CORE BUDGET

- 2.1 The Core budget provides for the day-to-day running costs of the Partnership and includes employee costs, premises costs and supplies and services. The approved Core budget is £619,000. Details of the Core budget are provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Cumulative expenditure for the ten months to 31st January 2023 was £494,000. This is within the Core budget resources available for the period.
- 2.3 Estimates have been updated to reflect current expenditure commitments.
- 2.4 It is projected expenditure for the year will be £9,000 less than budget. This is mainly due to increased employee recharges to EU projects and underspends on staff travel. These underspends are forecast to be partly offset by additional expenditure on the Novus FX hosted ICT service.

Projects Budget

- 2.5 The approved Projects budget for 2022/23 is £907,000, which is funded by externally generated income of £554,000. The balance of £353,000 is met from the Partnership's funding from the Scottish Government. Following confirmation of the audited outturn for 2021/22 at the Partnership Board meeting on 23rd September 2022, project budget slippage of £131,000 was added to the 2022/23 Projects budget. The Projects budget is detailed in Appendix 2.
- 2.6 During 2022/23, it has not been possible to procure and fully-deliver all projects for which expenditure was carried forward from 2021/22, given carry forward was confirmed in late-September 2022. For 2022/23, slippage of £158,000 is forecast.
- 2.7 On 2nd December 2022, the Board approved the following projects should be carried over to 2023/24, due to delivery timelines and dependencies:

- 2.7.1** the promotion of the new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), once Ministerial approval of the RTS is received. This is estimated to cost £39,000.
- 2.7.2** development of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT). This is estimated to cost £35,000.
- 2.8** The Partnership's Reserves Policy recommends that where slippage occurs on approved revenue projects, the slippage is carried forward to the next financial year by means of an earmarked balance.
- 2.9** Following confirmation of the 2022/23 outturn, an earmarked balance will be established to meet any slippage on project delivery from 2022/23 to 2023/24. To mitigate the risk of further slippage, project planning will be commenced based on the current forecast of slippage of £158,000. Expenditure will not be legally committed until the audited outturn has been reported to and approved by the Partnership Board.
- 2.10** Expenditure on both the core and projects budgets will be subject of ongoing review for the remainder of 2022/23. The Partnership's Reserves Policy will be applied when reviewing the year-end outturn.

Cash Flow

- 2.11** The Partnership maintains its bank account as part of the City of Edinburgh Council's group of bank accounts. Cash balances are managed by the Council and are offset by expenditure incurred by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Partnership.

An update of month-end balances is shown in the following table:

Date	Balance due to SEStran(+ve) /due by SEStran (-ve)
	£
30 April 2022	-431,862
31 May 2022	-37,157
30 June 2022	+187,681
31 July 2022	+68,265
31 August 2022	+75,128
30 September 2022	-33,073
31 October 2022	+50,154
30 November 2022	+31,302
31 December 2022	-50,117
31 January 2023	-88,593

- 2.12** Interest is charged/paid on the month end net indebtedness balances between the Council and the Partnership. Interest will be calculated in March 2023.
- 2.13** The negative cash balance at 31st January 2023 is mainly attributable to expenditure having been incurred on grant-funded projects, with the corresponding grant claim due to be submitted to Transport Scotland. Projects include Active Travel Fund and Mobility as a Service Investment Fund.

Reserves

- 2.14** In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated General Fund reserve of £31,000, based on 5% of the core revenue budget for 2022/23.
- 2.15** An earmarked balance of £131,000 was established following slippage on project delivery and core budget underspend in 2021/22. It is currently forecast there will be project slippage of £158,000, which will be carried forward as an earmarked balance from 2022/23 to 2023/24.
- 2.16** An update of Financial Risks and mitigations is included at Appendix 3.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Partnership:

- 3.1** notes the forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £9,000;
- 3.2** approve the final outturn Core revenue budget variance is transferred to the Partnership's unallocated Reserves for a decision as to expenditure in 2023/24;
- 3.3** notes the forecast slippage on the Projects revenue budget of £158,000;
- 3.4** notes that, following confirmation of the 2022/23 outturn, an earmarked balance will be established to meet slippage on project delivery from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

Hugh Dunn
Treasurer
10th March 2023

Appendix Appendix 1 – Core Budget Statement at 31st January 2023
Appendix 2 – Projects Budget as at 31st January 2023

Contact iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

Policy Implications	There are no policy implications arising as a result of this report.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.
Equalities Implications	There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.
Climate Change Implications	There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

Core Budget 2022/23 – as at 31st January 2023

Appendix 1

	Annual Budget £'000	Period Budget £'000	Period Actual £'000	Annual Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
Employee Costs					
Salaries	408	340	342	410	2
National Insurance	50	42	40	47	(3)
Pension Fund	144	120	102	144	0
Recharges – EU Projects	(172)	(143)	(167)	(194)	(22)
Recharges – Cycling Officer	(20)	0	0	(20)	0
Training & Conferences	10	8	2	13	3
Interviews & Advertising	2	2	11	11	9
	422	369	330	411	(11)
Premises Costs					
Office Accommodation	17	13	18	18	1
Transport					
Staff Travel	8	7	2	3	(5)
Supplies and Services					
Communications & Computing	48	40	51	56	8
Hosted Service - Novus FX	46	46	50	50	4
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	6	1	3	(4)
Insurance	6	6	7	7	1
Equipment, Furniture & Materials, Miscellaneous	4	3	5	7	3
	111	101	114	123	12
Support Services					
Finance	30	28	28	30	0
Legal Services / HR	7	0	0	1	(6)
	37	28	28	31	(6)
Corporate & Democratic					
Clerks Fees	12	0	0	12	0
External Audit Fees	11	3	3	11	0
Other	0	0	(1)	1	1
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	0	0	(1)
	24	4	2	25	0
Total Expenditure	619	522	494	610	(9)
Funding:					
Scottish Government Grant	(429)	(371)	(371)	(429)	0
Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)	(190)	(190)	0
Total Funding	(619)	(561)	(561)	(619)	0
Net Expenditure/ (Income)	0	(39)	(67)	(9)	(9)

Projects Budget 2022/23 - as at 31st January 2023

Appendix 2

	Approved Budget	2021/22 Carry Forward	EU /Other Grant	Budget Realign ment	Net Expenditure Budget	Annual Forecast	Forecast Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
EU Projects							
Share-North	36	(22)	(18)	10	6	5	(1)
Surflogh	99	(23)	(50)	23	49	52	3
Bling	66	(5)	(33)	12	40	37	(3)
Primaas	59	5	(50)	(9)	5	0	(5)
Connect	68	7	(34)	(7)	34	24	(10)
Regio-Mob	30	(1)	(25)	(2)	2	(9)	(11)
Total EU Projects	358	(39)	(210)	27	136	109	(27)
RTPI	25	30	(20)	8	43	26	(17)
Active Travel Fund	200	0	(200)		0	0	0
Regional Transport Strategy	60	57	0		117	49	(68)
Sustainable Travel	63	59	0	(63)	59	30	(29)
GO e-Bike	10	36	0	(25)	21	24	3
Urban Cycle Networks	121	(6)	(100)	25	40	38	(2)
Projects Consultancy Support	30	(14)	0	24	40	43	3
Equalities Action	10	3	0	(2)	11	0	(11)
Thistle Assistance	30	5	(24)	6	17	22	5
Bus Partnership Development	0	0	0	0	0	(15)	(15)
Total	907	131	(554)	0	484	326	(158)

Risk Description	Mitigation and Controls
Pay awards The revenue budget made provision for a pay award of up to 3% in 2022/23 (£17,980). The 2022/23 pay award to Local Government employees resulted in an increased cost of £12,141.	Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2022/23, to contain the pay award within the approved budget.
Staff recharges – Projects The Core budget assumes that £192,000 of staff time can be recharged to Projects. There is a risk this may not be achievable.	Any shortfall in employee cost recharges will be offset by a corresponding reduction in Projects Budget expenditure.
Inflation There is a risk that the approved budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.	Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2022/23.
Delays in payment of grant by the EU - results in additional short-term borrowing costs.	SEStran grant claims for EU funded projects are submitted in compliance with requirements of EU processes to ensure minimal delay in payment. Ongoing monitoring of cash flow will be undertaken to manage exposure to additional short-term borrowing costs.
Pension Fund Contributions The deficit on the staff pension fund could lead to increases in the employer's pension contribution.	Following Lothian Pension Fund's Triennial Actuarial Review in 2020, Partnership employer pension fund contribution rates are now confirmed at 33.1% until 31 March 2024.
Funding Reductions Reduction in funding from Scottish Government and/or council requisitions. There is a risk that current levels of staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.	Scottish Government grant and Council contributions are confirmed for 2022/23. Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023-24

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24.

2 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Partnership currently maintains its bank account as part of the City of Edinburgh Council's group of bank accounts. Any cash balance is effectively lent to the Council, but is offset by expenditure undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Partnership. Interest is given on month end net indebtedness balances between the Council and the Partnership in accordance with the former Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee's (LASAAC) Guidance Note 2 on Interest on Revenue Balances (IoRB). These arrangements were put in place given the existing administration arrangements with the City of Edinburgh Council and the relatively small investment balances which the Partnership has. Although the investment return will be small, the Partnership will gain security from its counterparty exposure being to the City of Edinburgh Council. If interest rates are negative the Board won't be charged for positive or negative balances, interest will be floored at zero.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Partnership Board approve the Annual Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1.

Hugh Dunn
Treasurer

Appendix Appendix 1 - Annual Treasury Management Strategy

Contact/tel Iain Shaw, Tel: 0131 469 3117
(iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Annual Treasury Management Strategy

(a) Treasury Management Policy Statement

1. The Partnership defines its Treasury Management activities as:

The management of the Partnership's investments, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

2. The Partnership regards the successful identification monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation.
3. The Partnership acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

Treasury Management is carried out on behalf of the Partnership by the City of Edinburgh Council. The Partnership therefore adopts the Treasury Management Practices of the City of Edinburgh Council. The Partnership's approach to investment is a low risk one, and its investment arrangements reflect this.

(b) Permitted Investments

The Partnership will maintain its banking arrangement with the City of Edinburgh Council's group of bank accounts. The Partnership has no Investment Properties and makes no loans to third parties. As such the Partnership's only investment / counterparty exposure is to the City of Edinburgh Council.

(c) Prudential Indicators

Whilst the Partnership has a Capital Programme this is funded by grant income and no long term borrowing is required. The indicators relating to debt are therefore not relevant for the Partnership. By virtue of the investment arrangements permitted in (b) above, all of the Partnership's investments are variable rate, and subject to movement in interest rates during the period of the investment.

Corporate Procurement Strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Part of SEStran's organisational drive for continuous improvement is ongoing review of all its governance documentation. At its meeting in December 2022, the Board agreed to the Corporate Procurement Strategy replacing the previous Corporate Procurement Policy.

2. AMENDMENT OF CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

- 2.1 Recent discussions with the auditors suggested that SEStran should have a written corporate procurement strategy. There was a Corporate Procurement Policy, written in 2017, which covered similar ground as such a strategy would. Accordingly, it has been updated and amended to reflect the current position of both the legal framework and SEStran's current, and possible future, context.
- 2.2 The opportunity was taken to simplify and streamline the wording of the Policy in converting it into a strategy and the Board agreed in December 2022 to the Corporate Procurement Strategy replacing the Corporate Procurement Policy, delegating to the Secretary to make appropriate adjustments to the [Governance Scheme](#) to reflect the Board's decision.
- 2.3 At its meeting in December 2022, the Board requested the Strategy be updated to include how the principles of the strategy would give due regard within procurement processes to the relevance of all contracts in supporting SEStran's commitment to meet its statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is accordingly recommended that the Board:

To approve the revised Corporate Procurement Strategy, attached for reference at Appendix Part A, delegating to the Secretary to make appropriate adjustments to the Governance Scheme to reflect the Board's decision.

Appendix A: Proposed Corporate Procurement Strategy

Related Papers: <https://sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SEStran-Governance-Scheme-Dec-2022.pdf>

Gavin King
Partnership Secretary
17th March 2023

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	Meet obligations of the Equality Act 2010 and the specific Public Sector Equality Duty
Climate Change Implications	None

Date	Author	Version	Status	Reason for Change
Aug 2017	Andrew Ferguson	1.0	Board Approval	Implementation
March 2021	Gavin King	1.0	FINAL	Reviewed, no changes
December 2022	Anna Herriman	1.1	FINAL	Removes reference to historic procedures Meets requirements for a CP Strategy
March 2023	Gavin King	1.2	FINAL	Adds specific reference to equalities duties.

SEStran Corporate Procurement Strategy

1. Introduction

This procurement strategy has been prepared in response to the changing procurement agenda where it is now recognised that there is a need to further emphasise the importance of the role in the delivery of efficient and effective public services. SEStran is a body governed by public law and therefore defined as a contracting authority for the purposes of the regulations as specified in Part 1 Section 1 (1) (b) of the 2014 Act.

The SEStran Procurement Strategy sits within the framework of the Scottish Government's Public Services Reform Agenda and complies with Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016. The Procurement Strategy ensures that the procurement activities support the key objectives of SEStran and contribute to the achievement of best value in line with SEStran's existing contract standing orders.

SEStran is committed to ensuring that its procurement activity maximises its contribution towards the delivery of efficient and effective public services. To achieve this, procurement processes and procedures must be open, robust and continuously improved to reflect recognised best practice.

This strategy sets out our approach to procurement and provides a clear framework for linking the procurement function to the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy as well as supporting SEStran's duties as a public body in improving services and outcomes for all. Specifically, this includes demonstrating commitment to the obligations of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The strategy links to and complements the SEStran Contract Standing Orders. The strategy applies to all aspects of procurement: purchasing supplies, services and works, ranging from contracting a whole service to the purchase of day-to-day consumables.

2. Vision

SEStran's vision for procurement is to ensure best value for SEStran and support the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy with high quality outcomes.

3. Strategy Principles

- To support the wider context of SEStran's Regional Transport Strategy and Scheme of Governance.
- Take account of national developments, the Public Services Reform agenda and the needs of the SEStran area.
- Operate within the legislative framework imposed by the Public Procurement Directives, national legislation and SEStran Standing Orders and recognise the accounting requirements
- Adhere to the principles of best value (Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete) whenever appropriate.
- Set out the reasons and justification for the approach taken to procurement and issues such as awarding a contract without competition.
- Meet SEStran's needs for goods, services and works in a way that generates benefits to the organisation, and to society, economy and environment.
- Consider how procurement can improve the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the SEStran area with reference to reducing inequality in the SEStran area, facilitating the involvement of small and medium enterprises, third sector bodies and supported business, and promoting innovation.
- Give due regard within procurement processes to the relevance of all contracts in supporting SEStran's commitment to meet its statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 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.

- Abide by the highest standards and treat all relevant economic operators without discrimination and act in a transparent and proportionate manner for all procurement activity.
- Protect public spending, ensuring integrity and accountability.

4. Use of Competition and Best Value

The aim of our procurement strategy is to use competition where this is both appropriate and necessary to improve the delivery of goods, works and services and where the risks and benefits of competition have been clearly established.

SEStran operates on behalf of partner councils, a number of regulated contracted services which have been awarded following a competitive tendering process. There are some instances where best value may be achieved by the continued delivery of an existing contract without competition and in these situations SEStran will clearly outline the rationale for this in line with relevant Regulations.

5. Contract Standing Orders

As a public body, all SEStran procurement activity follows relevant legislation and the rules set out within SEStran Contract Standing Orders¹. Their purpose is to ensure accountability, openness, and transparency in the way that we do business with suppliers and to protect SEStran and its employees from any legal challenge or allegation of impropriety in the way we conduct our business.

6. Advertisement, Application and Award

Procurement contract awards will be announced on Public Contracts Scotland as appropriate, and all procured contracts and values are reported annually to the Partnership's Performance and Audit Committee and the Partnership Board, as part of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 duties. In awarding any tender, SEStran officers will comply with the General Duties of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, and, if applicable, The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, and the Sustainable Procurement Duty outlined within the 2014 Act. This will be done in a proportionate way but applied to all regulated procurements undertaken by SEStran.

Compliance with the general duties and sustainable procurement duties have aided compliance with the Equality Act, specific Scottish duties, the Climate Change Act 2009 and associated Public Bodies Reporting duties.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Procurement Strategy will be kept under review to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of SEStran and delivers measurable contributions towards the achievement of SEStran objectives. Member scrutiny is provided through SEStran's Performance and Audit Committee.

March 2023

Progress Update 2023: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board a draft copy of the Progress Update 2023: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Report for approval.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 SEStran is listed under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (“the 2012 Regulations”) and as such has an obligation to publish a report on the progress it has made in integrating the general equality duty into the exercise of its functions, so as to better perform that duty. Reports are required to be published at intervals of not more than two years.
- 2.2 The [Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Report](#) was approved by the Partnership Board in March 2021 and this draft report provides an update on the mainstreaming activities that SEStran has undertaken in the last two years and the progress being made towards achieving its Equalities Outcomes.
- 2.3 The Progress Update 2023 was presented to the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum at its meeting on the 28th February 2023 for review and comments received have been incorporated into the latest draft report.

3. MAIN REPORT

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 Some examples of how SEStran have mainstreamed the equalities issues are set out in the report. These include:
- The Thistle Assistance Programme
 - Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) project
 - Reviewing and updating our Corporate Procurement Strategy
 - Providing refresher training to staff on Equality Impact Assessments
- 3.3 As part of our ongoing pledge to increase the diversity of membership of the Board, the Partnership is asked to note that officers will undertake equalities monitoring and a skills audit exercise of members in March/April. This information will be used by the Succession Planning Committee to identify the skills, knowledge, expertise and diversity of the

current board. A gap analysis will identify a programme of training and allow for a tailored approach to the recruitment of Board Observers, which is a commitment set out in our Equalities Outcomes.

- 3.4 The Partnership should note that figures for the gender balance of Board Members at section 1, paragraph 8 of the appended report will be completed for inclusion in the final report before publication in April 2023, and that a meeting of the Succession Planning Committee will be called in May 2023. Membership of the committee consists of the Chair, Cllr Dianne Alexander and Non-Councillor Member, Doreen Steele.

3.5 Section 2: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025

An equality outcome should further one or more of the following needs: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. By focusing on outcomes rather than objectives, the duty aims to bring practical improvements in the life chances of those who experience discrimination and disadvantage.

- 3.6 SEStran recognised that a proportionate approach was required in determining what can be achieved, given available staffing and resources. Therefore, keeping in line with the organisation's statutory requirement to produce a Regional Transport Strategy and alongside our duties as an employer, five outcomes were developed:

- Increase the representation of ethnic minorities and disabled people on the SEStran Partnership Board, whilst retaining the gender balance of the Non-Councillor Members.
- To ensure design and development of all active travel initiatives deliver increased opportunities for disabled people to access active travel initiatives.
- Increased opportunities to access public transport in rural areas for ensuring the benefits of concessionary travel are available to relevant groups, mainly disabled people, elderly and young people.
- Develop a Thistle Assistance Journey and Wayfinding solution to help disabled people, older people, vulnerable people and women access public transport and plan their journeys more easily.
- Expand the RTPI network and continue to promote the Hate Crime Charter to improve safety and accessibility to public transport within the region.

- 3.7 An update of the activities and progress being made towards achieving each equality outcome has been added to the report template. Some examples include:

- Engagement with Equate Scotland and the Mental Health Foundation
- Writing to the councils prior to the local government elections in May 2022 to consider gender balance when making appointments to the SEStran Board
- Upgraded Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) screens and purchase of new screens, to extend number of passengers able to access information
- Wayfinding and journey planning app in development

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 SEStran will continue in its mainstreaming activities and making progress in achieving its equality outcomes by maintaining engagement with stakeholders, equalities groups and staff.
- 4.2 SEStran will publish a new report in 2025 which will provide a set of new equality outcomes and mainstreaming report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Partnership Board is asked to approve the report, subject to providing delegated authority to SEStran Officers to finalise the report with the gender balance data, prior to the publication deadline of 30 April 2023.

Angela Chambers
Business Manager
 10th March 2023

Appendix 1: Progress Update 2023: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Report

Policy Implications	None.
Financial Implications	Any expenditure has been accounted for within approved budgets.
Equalities Implications	Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and advancement in achieving our Equality Outcomes by progressing the actions outlined in the report.
Climate Change Implications	None.

DRAFT Progress Update 2023: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Report



Contents

About SEStran – Role & Function	2
Legal Context	2
About this report	3
Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality	4
How SEStran Assesses Impact on Equality	4
Employee Data	14
Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap	14
Section 2: Equality Outcomes 2021-2025	15
Progress Update on our Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025	16
Performance Reporting	21
Providing Information in Various Formats	21

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 (in the current version) and includes a focus on links to and from Edinburgh, as the economic hub of the region. SEStran has completed the development of a new RTS for the period up to 2035, prompted by a new National Transport Strategy (NTS 2), the climate emergency, new technology and by the impact of COVID 19. The draft RTS SEStran 2035 was approved by the SEStran Partnership Board in September 2021 and is awaiting final approval from Scottish Minister prior to its formal adoption. It is expected that an approved version will be published in April 2023. SEStran currently has a staff complement of 9.

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 sets out the progress SEStran has made towards achieving its Equalities Outcomes for the reporting period 2021-2025. It demonstrates the 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.

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.

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 2021 – 2023, SEStran has sought to mainstream Equality into its core functions as outlined below.

1. How SEStran Assesses Impact on Equality

SEStran is committed in ensuring that the needs 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. SEStran aims to consult with relevant groups from the start of discussions on any new proposals, policies, or projects, before progressing on to a more structured assessment in any subsequent stages.

Working with our legal advisers, SEStran has developed an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) template. SEStran is keen to ensure that staff have a comprehensive knowledge of its obligations under the equalities legislation and has provided a variety of staff training courses and workshops to support and enhance this knowledge and awareness, which will assist in engagement with people with protected characteristics. In addition, EQIA's are published on the SEStran website.

2. Procurement

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

SEStran's Corporate Procurement Strategy [Governance Scheme](#) was updated in December 2022 and takes account of the Scottish Government's Public Services Reform Agenda and the subsequent Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the associated Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016, and the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. Following Board member input, the strategy has further been amended to include specific reference to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. This is still in draft stage, awaiting Board agreement.

In addition, SEStran's Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract, which apply to all consultancy contracts, clauses 20.1 and 20.2 require consultants to demonstrate that they will comply with the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

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.

All our policies can be found here: <https://sestran.gov.uk/publication-category/policy/>

4. Corporate Planning and Reporting

SEStran has established a matrix for reporting on any equality implications within our formal reporting procedures and continues to include a series of icons throughout the Business Plan and projects reports, which easily identifies where equalities feature in the organisational objectives.

5. Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum

SEStran hosts the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum twice a year, with membership comprising of a variety of equalities groups, healthcare representatives, Board members, and stakeholders. This forum is an important way for SEStran to co-design projects and policies and gain input from individuals with protected characteristics or from groups representing the interests of those with protected characteristics.

In spring 2022 non-councillor member Dr Doreen Steele became Chair of the forum. She initiated a new Terms of Reference (TORs) which refreshed the remit, governance and membership arrangements of the forum and has been looking at ways in which to establish better collaboration with NHS counterparts.

Over the course of the reporting period, the forum has provided input into a selection of SEStran workstreams including the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), Thistle Assistance, Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI), Mobility as a service (MaaS) and Demand Responsive Transport projects.

6. Disability Confident Scheme

In 2017 SEStran became a Disability Committed Employer and progressed to the higher-level Disability Confident Employer in 2018. This is the level that we continue to retain. 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.

7. Living Wage Employer

In 2017 Living Wage accreditation was achieved and SEStran continue to uphold this commitment. The living wage is currently £10.90ph 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.

8. Board Diversity

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

Our Board membership information is available here:

<https://sestran.gov.uk/the-board/>

Two thirds of the SEStran Partnership Board is made up of elected members and their appointments are made by their respective councils alone. However, SEStran took steps to encourage diversity by writing to councils to request that they take this into account when making their appointments to the SEStran Board, prior to the local government elections in May 2022.

SEStran undertook an inclusive application process for the non-councillor members who were appointed in 2022. Their appointments are legislated by the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 and the purpose of the Act is to improve the representation of women on the boards of Scottish public authorities. The Act sets a gender representation objective for the non-executive member component of public boards. The objective is that 50% of non-executive members are women.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 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. In order to regularise data collection, SEStran has developed its own equalities monitoring procedure and will publish the current

gender balance of the Partnership Board. No other data on protected characteristics will be made available.

The gender of SEStran's members is as follows:
Identified as MaleXX; Identified as Female XX; Identified as Non-Binary XX; Didn't Answer XX

The Succession Planning Committee and the Board Diversity Succession Plan¹ sets out the process to help deliver a more diverse Board. New appointments were made to the Succession Planning Committee in June 2022 when the Board for the 2022-2027 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 and monitor the development and continuous improvement of a succession plan that can be presented to the Board.

A skills audit and an equalities monitoring exercise has been undertaken for Board members and the results will identify key areas of expertise and where development opportunities lie. A key commitment made in our Equalities Outcomes is to increase the diversity of the board by appointing Observers. The data obtained from the monitoring exercise will identify the areas where there is a gap in representation and allow recruitment to be tailored appropriately. A meeting of the Succession Planning Committee will be called by summer 2023 to coordinate this exercise.

9. Chartered Institute of Highways and 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 principles of this Charter.

10. Staff Engagement

At the start of the COVID pandemic, all the SEStran staff worked from home. The IT infrastructure was already in place to support remote working, therefore the transition, from a technical perspective, was relatively straightforward. Staff have now transitioned to a hybrid working arrangement, whereby the full team spend two days working together from the SEStran office. They have been supported through this process by a range of policies, including the introduction of a Home Working

¹ <https://sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Board-Diversity-Succession-Plan-2.pdf>

Policy and Hybrid Working Policy. The hybrid arrangements will be kept under review to allow for a flexible and supportive working environment.

The mental health and wellbeing of all staff is paramount and SEStran has supported its staff through the issuing of relevant guidance on topics ranging from homeworking, managing mental wellbeing, eating well and staying active. Regular engagement activities are arranged through a variety of mediums, including staff meetings, 1:1s and a few social events.

11. Policy and Procedure Reviews for Staff

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

12. Training

As part of the induction training programme for the new Board, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) delivered a session on equality and public boards. The objectives of the session were to provide members with an improved awareness and understanding of the public sector equality duties, how the duties apply to members responsibilities and how they can become more inclusive leaders. The session was tailored to also look at the issues of poverty, inequalities and transport.

In January 2023 staff attended a refresher training session provided by our legal advisers Anderson Strathern LLP on Equalities Impact Assessments. Anderson Strathern also worked with staff to develop the SEStran EqIA template.

Also in January 2023, the Mental Health Foundation delivered a training session to staff on how the most marginalised groups in society can be supported to feed into processes to improve community services. This included how refugee and asylum seekers needs and views can be better represented or heard in transport.

Staff can access 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.

13. Thistle Assistance Programme

SEStran has operated the Thistle Assistance Programme² since 2011. This has been an extremely successful scheme that aims to give those with mobility challenges, disabled and elderly transport users more confidence in using public transport.

Thistle Assistance is part of the Scottish Government's Accessible Travel Framework and is a key priority in the current delivery plan³.

Since its launch SEStran has distributed over 100,000 cards and had over 15,000 downloads of the App. SEStran will seek to continue to promote the programme. 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 Assistance 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 December 2019 SEStran launched a new Thistle Assistance dedicated website and promotional campaign to engage with the public and generate more awareness of the benefits of the program.

<https://www.thistleassistance.com/>

14. Journey Assistance Planner App

SEStran, through the development and implementation of two key projects, Real Time Passenger Information and the Thistle Assistance⁴ Programme, has identified a need to improve the door-to-door journey for people with mobility challenges

² <https://www.thistleassistance.com/>

³ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/accessible-travel-delivery-plan-progress-report-20192020/>

⁴ www.thistleassistance.com

allowing them to access the public transport network more easily and with confidence – combining journey planning, wayfinding and disability awareness into one easy to use and versatile platform. The platform would deliver in two key areas which respond to passengers needs as identified by the Campaign for Better Transport⁵:

1. improving availability of information.
2. making connections between different steps in the journey, and different modes of transport, easier.

People rely on public transport to access jobs, services, facilities, family and friends. While many of the barriers identified by disabled people and non-disabled people in undertaking journeys are the same, the impact can be different⁶.

In 2018 SEStran made a successful application to the Scottish Enterprises “CanDo” Innovation fund for funding to develop the concept through a two-phase approach.

Phase one of the project identified and described in detail the barriers faced by disabled people when travelling (contributing to existing knowledge). SEStran also explored the extent to which these barriers affect disabled peoples’ travel plans and modal choices for travelling and looked to develop door to door journey planning solutions that help alleviate these barriers.

Phase one delivered five ‘proof of concept’ (POC) for a door to door journey planning platform that showed relevant route information in a clear way, provided information about which travel option to use, where to get on and where and when to get off, provided information about what to do if lost and also enabling a carer to monitor where the person is and communicate with them.

The POCs showed various options for developing a multiuser interface that adapts to various disabilities, for example, sight impairment, hearing impairment, mobility issues and Dementia. Specific features/requirements included:

- ✓ incorporate journey planning and way-finding features.
- ✓ allow third parties (family, emergency services and transport providers) to track the user in case of difficulty.
- ✓ Have a feature that allows the user to ask for help.
- ✓ focus on the door-to-door journey and include multi-model transport options.

Phase Two: SEStran are currently working with Sentireal (a specialist software developer) on the development and testing of a fully developed working prototype

⁵ Transport Research Laboratory (2011) – *Door to Door Journeys* www.bettertransport.org.uk/files/door-to-door-journeys-full-report.pdf

⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706248/accessibility-action-plan.pdf

which will be tested in the public realm. This work is due to be completed in March 2023.

15. Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)

Building on a substantial investment over the past 10 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.

SEStran has worked with the City of Edinburgh Council and Journeo to develop and launch a new, common regional RTPI system that will improve the information provided on the public-facing regional screen network incorporating multiple transport operators (bus, rail & tram) data and scheduled information.

The new system went live in December 2021 with operator data being integrated over the following months. SEStran received funding from Transport Scotland to update the existing RTPI screen system with new PCs so that the new system will operate and integrate with other systems more efficiently. The rollout of these new PCs with the new software started in February 2022.

SEStran is also working with partner local authorities to place new on street signage across the region, again working with the contractor Journeo.

16. Hate Crime Charter

SEStran has been involved in the Transport Scotland Hate Crime Working Group. This working group, which is being led by Disability Equality Scotland, has been working on a programme aimed at tackling hate crime on public transport by raising awareness and encouraging people to report incidents of hate crime. Following a series of public consultations on the topic, the group developed a Hate Crime Charter, which was piloted in partnership with Stagecoach East, First Bus, and ScotRail. The pilot reached over 1.2 million people in an eight-week period. Awareness was raised amongst transport staff who felt better equipped to recognise and report hate crime. 70% of bus staff said they felt the Charter would make a difference. Furthermore, the post-pilot survey indicated that 79% of transport staff would welcome more training on hate crime, which is being taken forward by Disability Equality Scotland and Police Scotland. Based on the feedback from the pilot, the working group agreed the final design of the Charter which was officially launched on 23 March 2021. SEStran have since been involved in conversations with the Transport Scotland Hate Crime Working Group to see how we can assist in promotion of the campaign and key messages. In early 2022, the Minister for Transport announced that the Scottish Government would consult on the safety of women and girls when using public transport, including both public transport users and those working within the public transport system in Scotland. SEStran were involved in a stakeholder workshop to discuss the draft recommendations, to see how our organisation could help take these recommendations forward. The final

report [Women's and girls' views and experiences of personal safety when using public transport](#) can now be found on the Transport Scotland website.

17. Regional Transport Strategy

SEStran has completed work to develop a new (draft) Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) 2035. This was approved by the Partnership Board in September 2022. Equalities matters were considered throughout the development of the RTS including an initial Equalities Duties Assessment Framing Note at the Case for Change stage and in support of the final draft strategy published for statutory consultation in November 2021. The following reports can be found on the SEStran website.

[Equalities-Duties-Summary-Report.pdf \(sestran.gov.uk\)](#)

[Equality Impact Assessment \(EQIA\) record \(sestran.gov.uk\)](#)

[Fairer Scotland Duty summary template \(sestran.gov.uk\)](#)

[2021-10-22-Draft-SEStran-RTS-CRWIA_FINAL.pdf](#)

18. Go e-Bike

GO e-Bike is a regional e-bike share programme with locations across the South East of Scotland, which launched in April 2017, supporting the then Programme for Government. It aims to increase the awareness, accessibility to and usage of power-assisted cycling across the region and beyond. The programme supports community outreach charities, sustainability organisations, tourism and hospitality outlets, healthcare practitioners, and academic institutions. The programme also incorporates a public hire scheme at sites in East Lothian and Midlothian. By enabling further distances to be travelled, e-bikes and e-cargo bikes supplied through Go e-Bike can expand the reach of the organisations involved. E-bikes have the potential to help widen access to cycling to a much greater audience. Due to their power assist they can allow people to take up or continue cycling into later life, so supporting improving health into older age. They can also enable those with reduced mobility or injury to be able to use a bike.

Phase 1 – Community Hubs

Phase 1 of the project, involved setting up a series of community e-bike hubs across the region. Each hub is unique and tailored to its community to support long term sustainability. Ongoing support is provided for each GO e-Bike hub. SEStran also offers cycle training in association with Cycling Scotland. Each hub supports the sustainability of the program by helping to promote GO e-Bike and contributing to ongoing research. Alongside the hubs, an Employer Roadshow scheme ran from May to October 2019, offering short term trials of e-bike fleets to employers to promote active travel. Phase 1 of the project has involved hubs at West Lothian Bike Library, Transition St Andrews, CLEAR Buckhaven, Social Bite Village, Walkerburn Community Development Trust and Cargo Bike Movement.

Phase 2 – Public Hire Scheme

The public hire scheme is designed to promote short and long-cycle trips within core communities, where clusters of residents, students, tourist destinations and services can readily be connected in East Lothian and Midlothian.

During March 2021 final construction of the public hire scheme was completed with the installation of four bike charging hire points across Midlothian and East Lothian, linking Eskbank and Musselburgh with their respective town centres. The system was launched in April 2021. The Equality Impact statement for the project can be found here: [EQIA-Go-e-bike](#)

Phase 3 – Supporting Marketing Campaign

The '[Do The Ride Thing](#)' behaviour change media campaign, focussed on the sharing of outdoor spaces with all users, continued throughout 2021. Using a mixed media approach of radio and podcast adverts, social media, online adverts, and public hoardings allowed for targeted contact across the region. The campaign ended with near 11 million views on social media and a reach of just under 2 million social media users. This resulted in the project achieving more than twice the usual rate of 'clicks' on campaign adverts.

19. Demand Responsive Transport

SEStran worked with a wide range of stakeholders, including local authorities, other public bodies (i.e. higher education), shortlisted specialist technology providers (including both Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)), shared and public transport operators, the Open Transport Initiative, community councils and Mott MacDonald's MaaS Advisory team, to prepare a Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) project proposal for the Transport Scotland MaaS Investment Fund Round 2. MaaS can be described as a digital platform which allows users to plan, book and pay for all the various transport modes for a particular journey. Part of SEStran's plans to develop a region-wide MaaS platform is to integrate new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) routes to support bus services and introduce DRT in rural areas experiencing transport poverty. SEStran's bid was successful and the GoSEStran MaaS integrated journey planning app launched in August 2022 and continues to grow in popularity. A new DRT service will launch in March 2023 in partnership with Prentice Coaches and The Routing Company in East Lothian.

The SEStran DRT Strategic Study, which was carried out by SYSTRA in March 2020, considered the strengths and weaknesses of the current DRT (including community transport) sector, and identified digital innovation as an opportunity to optimise the DRT services in the SEStran region. Furthermore, it is recognised that bus patronage has dropped over the last decade. Increasing fares, longer journey times, and discontinued rural services are some of the causes of a falling patronage and Covid-19 is putting additional pressure on the viability of bus services across the region. SEStran sees DRT technology as a way of optimising and supporting

transport services, particularly in areas where traditional fixed-line bus services are not commercially viable.

20. SEStran Strategic Network

In 2020 SEStran published the Strategic Networkⁱ, which was the culmination of partnership working to develop cross boundary active travel routes across the region, ensuring the connection of people to places. The network was developed on the basis of a quality standard which would provide access to all users to a route that was physically separated from motor traffic and be safe and comfortable. From the outset the project looked to establish small high quality routes that would link to create a wider network that could be used for longer travel.

Since its publication SEStran have started the process of designing routes and through the prioritisation set out in the SSN, routes are undergoing various stages of development dependant on funding availability. Key criteria in the assessment of routes look to address transport poverty and opportunities for greater active travel. This has been reflected in the routes taken forward to date.

A review of the multi criteria assessment is under in 2023 to ensure the most update information is being used for the pipeline of projects being taken forward in the coming years.

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 uses 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 allows the targeting of support for areas of under-representation within the workforce, enables 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. SEStran is committed to undertaking effective monitoring of equality data relative to the workforce.

Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap

Due to having less than 20 employees, SEStran is not covered by legal obligations in respect of publishing a Statement on Equal Pay or Gender Pay Gap information.

However, there is no discrimination in terms of equal pay for work of equal value.

Section 2: Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, as amended, requires SEStran to publish equality outcomes. Our equality outcomes specify a result that we aim to achieve to further one or more of the needs of the general equality duty, which are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

To help inform our equality outcomes, SEStran gathered and considered relevant evidence. Evidence was obtained through:

- Engagement with SEStran's Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum who represent the interests of people with the relevant protected characteristics
- An analysis of reports and evidence finder tools published by the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, third sector organisations that represent the interests of people with the relevant protected characteristics, public bodies and other organisations
- An analysis of our workforce data
- An analysis of our public involvement data
- Staff engagement
- Engagement with and attending workshops run by the EHRC
- Engagement with the other RTPs

The Equality Outcomes which we have set primarily relate to the relevant protected characteristics of age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We have not included the protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnerships in our Equality Outcomes. After analysis of equalities monitoring data there was no evidence of inequalities relating to this characteristic. This data will be monitored, however, and actions relating to these protected characteristics are being achieved through mainstreaming activities.

Progress Update on our Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025

SEStran's Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 build on the progress made since the implementation of our original Equality Outcomes in 2017.

1. Increase diversity of the Partnership Board	
Inequality	The representation of women, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people serving on public boards is disproportionate to population levels.
Equality outcome	Increase the representation of ethnic minorities and disabled people on the SEStran Partnership Board, whilst retaining the gender balance of the non-councillor members.
General equality duty	Will help to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for women, disabled people, and people from ethnic minorities.
Link to strategic priority	Links to the Gender Representation on Public Boards Act, Scottish Government's Race Equality Framework, the EHRC Is Scotland Fairer.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The barriers facing women, disabled people and people from ethnic minorities identified. - Recruitment channels widened. - Application process simplified. - Use positive action to appoint Observers with relevant protected characteristics to the board.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with relevant equalities groups and third sector organisations. - Review application process for Non-Councillor Member and Board Observer recruitment. - Collect equalities monitoring data from board members. - Write to partner authorities to consider diversity when appointing Elected Members to the SEStran Board at the next Local Government elections in May 2022. - Arrange meetings of the Succession Planning Committee. - Host meetings virtually to reduce barriers in relation to travelling and access to physical meetings.
Measuring progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify base line evidence. - Monitor progress using equalities monitoring data collected from the Board members.
2023 Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with Equate Scotland and Mental Health Foundation. - Application process for Non-Councillor Members reviewed. - Consider positive action for appointment of Board Observers, following collection of equalities monitoring data from Members

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils were contacted prior to the Local Government elections in May 2022, resulting in an increased balance in gender representation on the board. - The Succession Planning Committee met November 2021 and will meet in mid-2023 following completion of skills audit and equalities monitoring exercise. - All SEStran meetings are held as hybrid meetings or exclusively online.
2. Facilitate access to Active Travel facilities for disabled people	
Inequality	There are insufficient opportunities for disabled people to take part in active travel, due to, for example, insufficient space and access to specialised equipment such as adapted bikes.
Equality outcome	To ensure design and development of all active travel initiatives deliver increased opportunities for disabled people to access active travel initiatives.
General equality duty	Will help to eliminate inequality between able bodied and disabled people in developing healthier lifestyles.
Link to strategic priority	The encouragement of and provision of active travel facilities is now the highest priority in NTS2 and will be in the emerging Regional Transport Strategy.
Outputs	Policy within the RTS that will guide development of active travel facilities to ensure that any new facilities should be inclusive by design and include sufficient available provision for disabled people to both access and use active travel provision, safely.
Activities	<p>Consult with appropriate bodies to establish appropriate guidance and the types of provision required.</p> <p>Ensure policy refers to appropriate design guidance and requires facilities to make appropriate provision.</p> <p>Ensure LA's partners who are required to deliver RTS policies and other delivery bodies are aware of the policy requirement.</p>
Measuring progress	<p>Establish baseline statistics</p> <p>Survey use</p>
2023 Update	<p>The existing e-bike provider advised SEStran in late 2022 that their intention to bring into production an e-trike that could be integrated into the existing Go-eBike hire system will not now progress.</p> <p>Officers from SEStran had been in discussion with the provider for a period of 18 months previous to this notice, on the understanding that the system could be improved to provide an e-trike style bike.</p> <p>Information provided to SEStran indicates the provider's decision was due to lower-than-expected market demand for the more</p>

	accessible bike within the system. This has been reflected in an update to the Go eBike EqIA.
3. Increased Access to public transport in rural areas for disabled people, the elderly and young people.	
Inequality	A lack of access to public transport in rural areas disadvantages disabled people, the elderly and reduces opportunities for young people to access education, training and employment. Many more opportunities to access public transport exist in urban areas. This is particularly relevant to people using concessionary travel cards.
Equality outcome	Increased opportunities to access public transport in rural areas for ensuring the benefits of concessionary travel are available to relevant groups, mainly disabled people, elderly and young people.
General equality duty	Will help to improve outcomes for individuals, communities and society and narrow or remove the biggest inequalities experienced by the identified groups.
Link to strategic priority	The encouragement of promoting increased public transport use is now a high priority in NTS2 and will be in the emerging Regional Transport Strategy. To ensure that the RTS policies and specific actions and projects creates a framework and actions to deliver change.
Outputs	RTS policies that promote and facilitate alternative public transport solutions. Commercial bus operators encouraged to provide demand responsive bus services in areas where timetabled services are not commercially viable.
Activities	Regional implementation needed and lead role for SEStran in seeking consistent approaches across the Region. Partnership working with tech companies and bus operators to introduce services, initially on a trial basis that increase access to services in these rural areas. Co- ordination with other Community Transport Services to maximise opportunities.
Measuring progress	Number of services introduced and or narrative on progress.
2023 Update	RTS draft has been submitted to Scottish Ministers with one of the twelve new Regional Mobility Theme focussing exclusively on Enhancing the Accessibility of Public Transport. Early progress on delivery of new RTS action under this theme includes, - Completion of deployment of upgraded Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) screen computers,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase of new RTPI screens to extend the number of passengers able to access information, <p>A trial DRT style service being implemented in semi-rural parts of East Lothian and is planned to commence on 6 March 2023, with learning and results shared across the region's partners.</p>
4. Develop and Promote the Thistle Assistance Programme	
Inequality	People with disabilities (seen/unseen) and mobility challenges often face difficulties when trying to access and use public transport.
Equality outcome	Develop a Thistle Assistance Journey and Wayfinding solution to help disabled people, older people, vulnerable people and women access public transport and plan their journeys more easily.
General equality duty	SEStran will help develop and promote an accessible and safer public transport system for disabled people, older people, and women, which will help to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity.
Link to strategic priority	Scotland's ten-year Accessible Travel Framework and These aims assist with delivering on the pledges within Scotland's first ever National Accessible Travel Framework published in 2016 (Going Further) .
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journey planning and Wayfinding tool to help with the door to door journey - Community/Equalities platform established to assist in journey planning - Continue promotion of Thistle Assistance (www.thistleassistance.com)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder engagement - Marketing activity – online/print - App development and review
Measuring progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey - Workshop feedback - Successful wayfinding solution developed - Thistle Assistance leaflets sent out & app downloads
2023 Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test (and if successful) launch VoyagAR the wayfinding and journey planning application. - Develop an updated survey - Continue to promote programme with stakeholders and public - Work with transport operators using new training tools for staff <p>Progress to date: Thistle Assistance leaflet and poster produced and circulated to all Scottish public transport operators – this helps train staff to</p>

	<p>support public transport that have any additional assistance needs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEStran continues to support and promote awareness of the Thistle Assistance Scheme to potential operators and transport users, through communications, marketing and awareness raising activities.
<p>5. Expansion of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) Network and promotion of Hate Crime Charter.</p>	
Inequality	Disabled people, older and vulnerable people, people from ethnic minorities, LGBT people and women do not always feel safe using public transport and experience difficulty accessing information.
Equality outcome	Expand the RTPI network and continue to promote the Hate Crime Charter to improve safety and accessibility to public transport within the region.
General equality duty	This outcome will help to eliminate discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.
Link to strategic priority	This links to the NTS focus on reducing inequalities, the SEStran RTS and the Accessible Travel Framework.
Outputs	Availability of travel information to allow for better journey planning. Promotion of Hate Crime Charter with commercial bus operators.
Activities	Financial commitment to new Content Management System (CMS). Meetings with bus operators. Meetings with RTPI group. Engage with Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum.
Measuring progress	Increase in the number of RTPI screens installed. Increased awareness of Hate Crime Charter.
2023 Update	<p>Continue to work with Local Authority partners and transport operators to expand and develop the network. Further utilise the functionality of the new system to disseminate information to the public. Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of deployment of upgraded Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) screen computers, - Purchase of new RTPI screens to extend the number of passengers able to access information,

Performance Reporting

SEStran will publish a Mainstreaming Report and new set of Equalities Outcomes Report before the end of the next period, i.e. 30 April 2025.

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

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.

DRAFT



GoSEStran MaaS and DDRT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Board, at its meeting of 2nd December received a report on GoSEStran, updating on progress in this pilot project to trial Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT). The Board agreed:
- 1) To note progress made on the project to date.
 - 2) To support officers' efforts to promote the GoSEStran project and its expansion into other parts of the SEStran area.
 - 3) To agree to support further collaboration with Tactran and others to share lessons learned and best practice across Scotland, including via the Open Learning Network.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update on progress since December.

2 PROGRESS

- 2.1 The project has continued to show promising results. The nominal target of 1000 users for GoSEStran was achieved in mid-February; just as importantly, there is evidence of good repeat use compared to other apps of this kind. Appendix 1 shows the data received from the MaaS platform provider, Fuse, on performance of the app so far.
- 2.2 In addition, the on-demand bus service, which is piloting DDRT software, was launched on Monday 13th March 2023. The technology is provided by The Routing Company and we are also in partnership with Prentice Coaches as the bus operator. The service runs between Tranent, Humble and Haddington with a key aim to help passengers travel to the East Lothian Community Hospital.
- 2.3 Clearly a number of lessons have been learned in relation to a project of this nature. The key issue to evaluate is whether the app is contributing to the overall objective of making use of more sustainable forms of travel easier and more convenient. The final monitoring and evaluation report, scheduled now for June (see below) will seek to answer that question.
- 2.4 However, running the pilot has in general been a learning curve for SEStran and its partners East Lothian Council, Tactran, Fuse Mobility, Prentice and The Routing Company. Issues such as how to assemble a successful consortium, equalities issues, procurement of digital technologies, appropriate contract arrangements, and how best to market digital enhancements to transport of this kind have been shared more widely via the two Open Learning Network events that were held online in January and February. Both events were attended by roughly 60 people which included representatives from different local authorities, transport operators, and other third party organisations to allow us to share our learnings from the project and give the opportunity for people to ask questions. We plan to run further events over the next few

months to summarise the monitoring and evaluation findings for the GoSEStran pilot and to also provide updates on the next steps.

3 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 Following the successful procurement of The Routing Company for the on demand bus pilot, savings were identified in the MaaS Investment Fund (MIF) funding for the project. Accordingly a Change Request was sent to and approved by Transport Scotland, reprofiling the remaining funding into the next financial year.
- 3.2 This allows, firstly, the GoSEStran pilot to be extended to the end of June 2023 – along with the three Tactran pilots which share the licence fee from Fuse. Given that the GoSEStran formal start date was July 1st last year, with the app's 'soft launch' occurring in mid-August, this extension effectively allows a year-long pilot and therefore more meaningful monitoring and evaluation.
- 3.3 The reprofiling of the MIF funding also allows a year-long pilot of the Prentice/Routing Company on demand bus service. The total DRT project will cost £37,200 and the MIF funding from Transport Scotland will cover £19,100 of this total. Some additional funding had been set aside from SEStran's budget for sustainable travel to cover the other amount, but crucially SEStran has committed a total of £35,000 of next year's budget to trial other on-demand transport pilots.
- 3.4 Following the Board's decision in December, SEStran, in partnership with Tactran, have put together a bid for further funding to Smarter Choices Smarter Places. Coupled with potential match funding from constituent councils and other bodies in both regions, this further funding bid could lead to procurement of a digital platform that would continue to pilot MaaS until March 2024 to further test the market of the MaaS platform providers, allowing other bodies such as constituent councils to 'buy into' the platform, either adopting GoSEStran to trial in their own area or, potentially, trialling their own 'white label' app if a business case exists for one. A model is under development which would maximise savings on technology spend whilst allowing for nimble governance decisions on matters such as procurement.
- 3.5 Further updates following the outcome of the Smarter Choices Smarter Places bid can be provided to the Board. In the meantime, the Board is asked to note the extension of the existing licence agreement with Fuse until end June to allow procurement decisions to be taken in the interim, in line with paragraph 5.5 of the Contract Standing Orders.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board:

- 4.1 Note the progress made since the last meeting;
- 4.2 Agree to receive updates on the project as appropriate
- 4.3 Note the extension of the Fuse licence agreement at no cost to SEStran.

Hattie James
Projects Officer

Andrew Ferguson
SEStran Consultant

17th March 2023

Policy Implications	The project is in line with the new RTS as set out in the December 2 nd Board report.
Financial Implications	Sufficient funds are contained within the projects budget for delivery of the project.
Equalities Implications	The project has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA).
Climate Change Implications	The project will contribute to overall aims to reduce CO2 emissions. These are quantified in the journey options set out in the app.
Appendices	1. February update



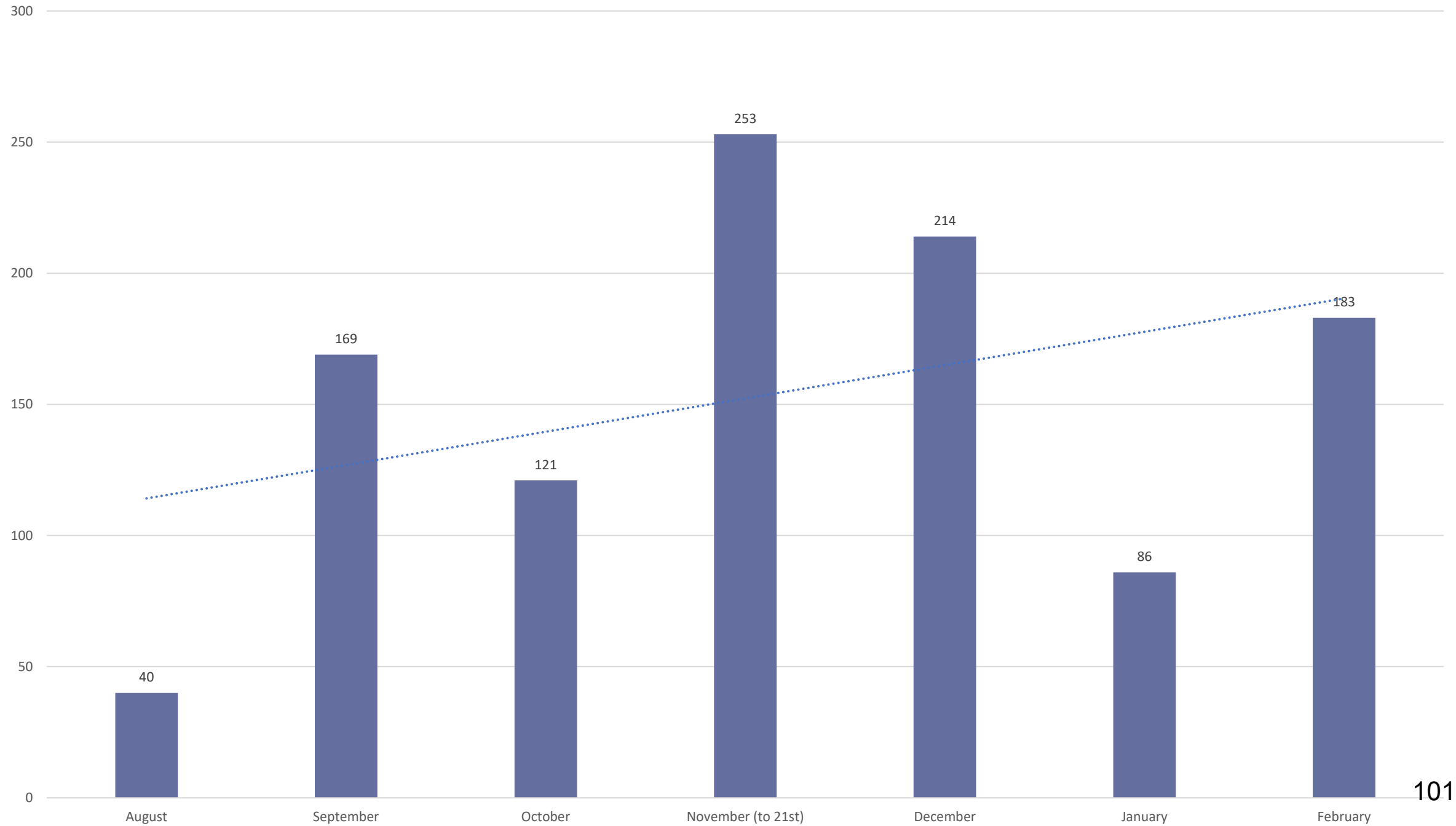
GoSESTRAN February 2023 figures

23rd January to 26th February 2023

CONFIDENTIAL

New User Sessions

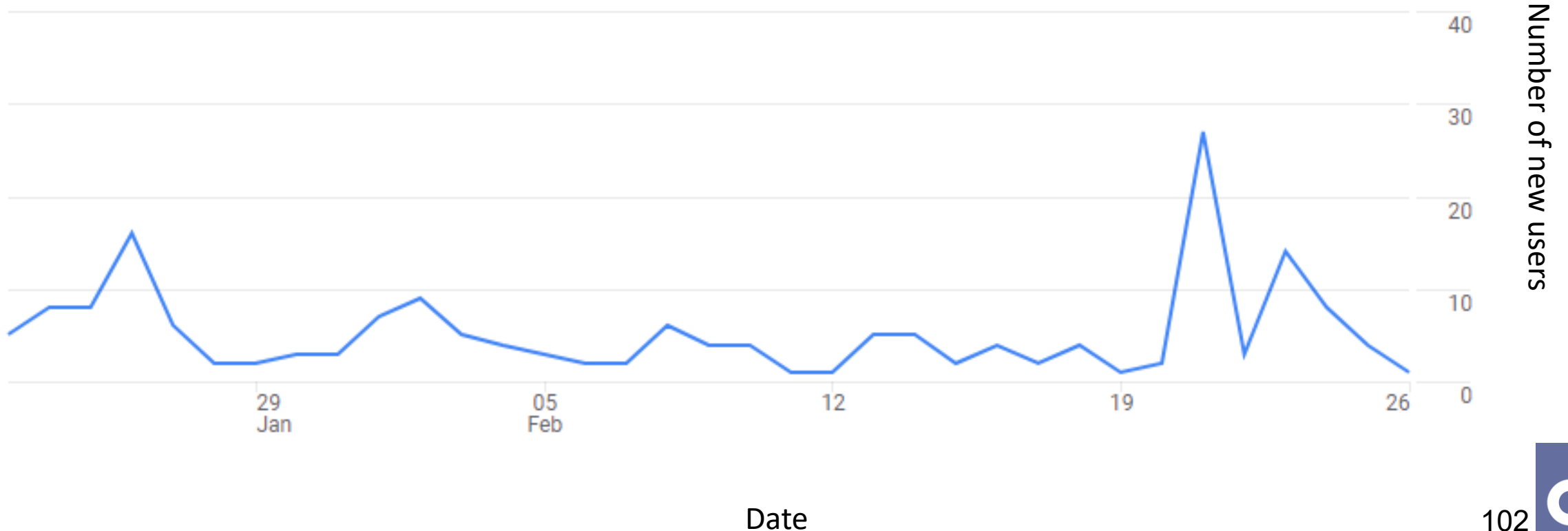
TOTAL since launch = 1,066



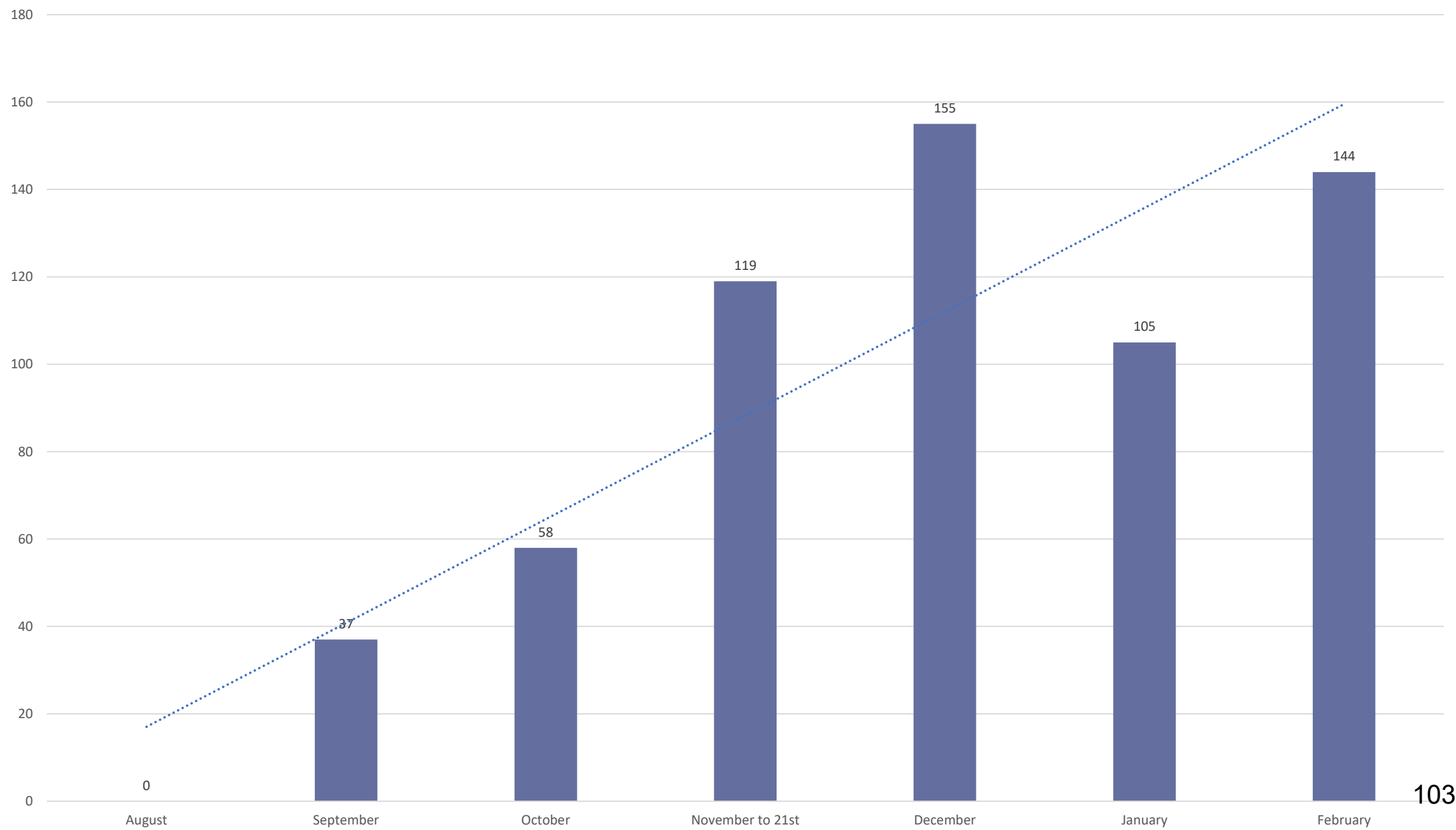
New user spikes

Notable points:

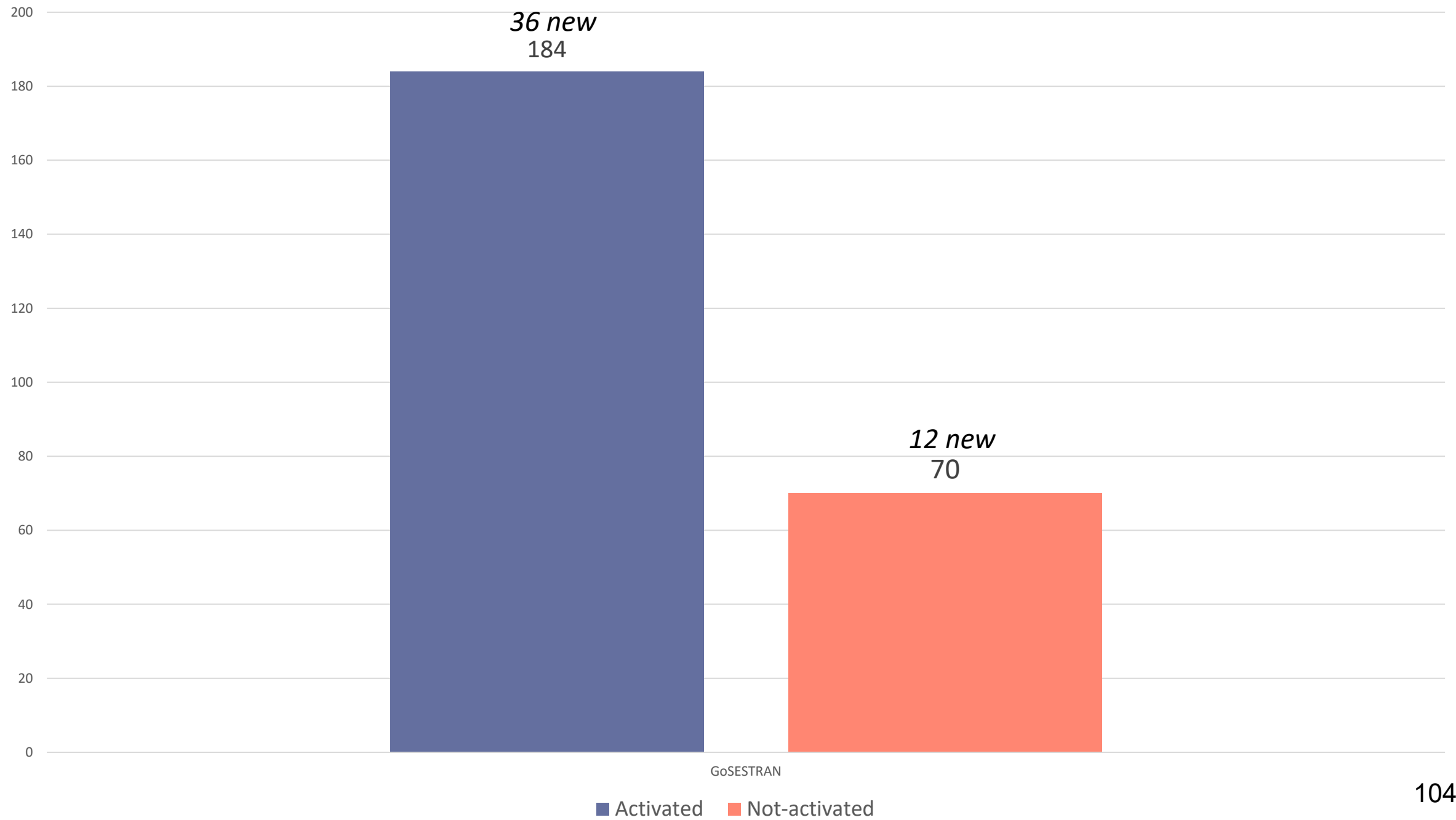
- 27 new users on 21st February (leaflet drop)
 - 16 new users on 26th Jan (1st OLN)
 - 14 new users on 23rd Feb (2nd OLN)
 - **EVERY day** had at least 1 new user



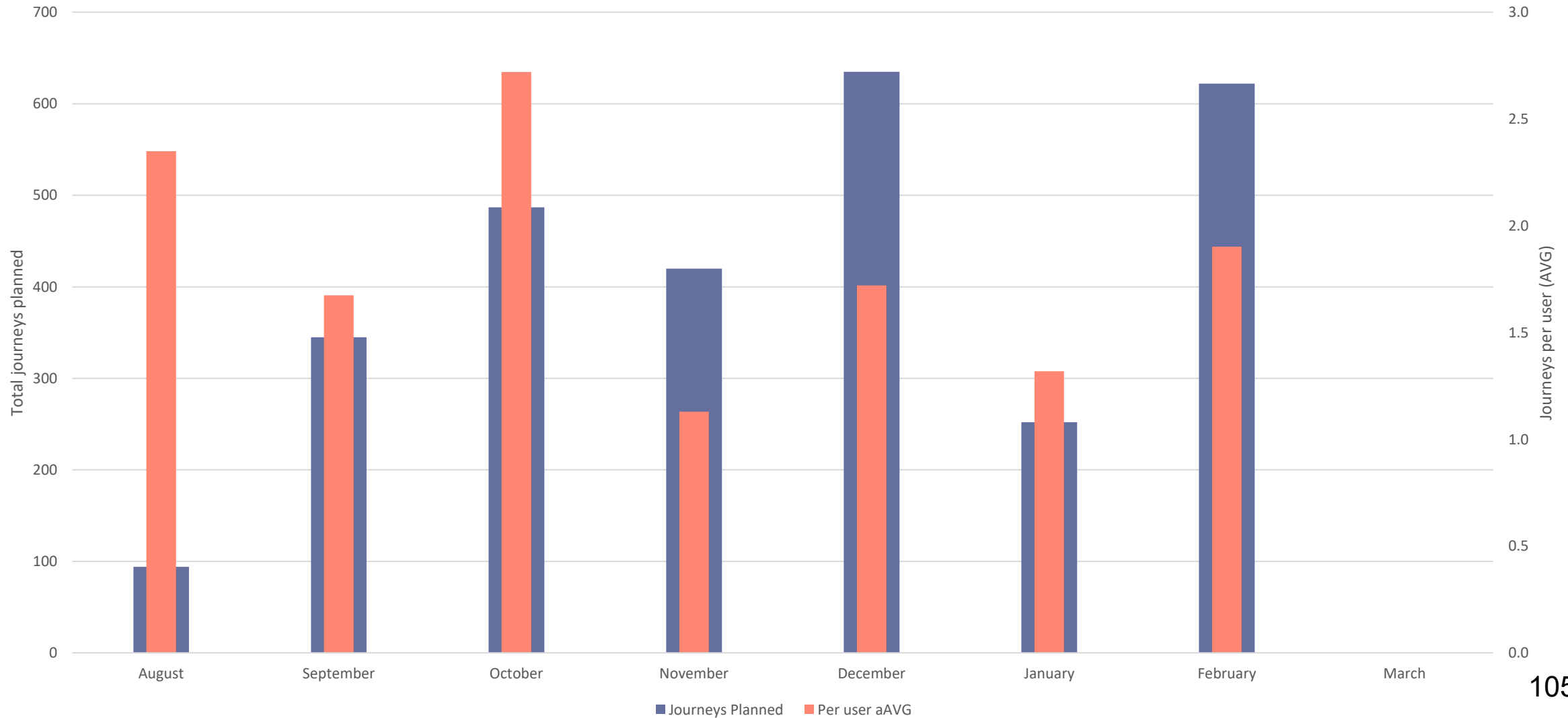
Returning User Sessions



User accounts

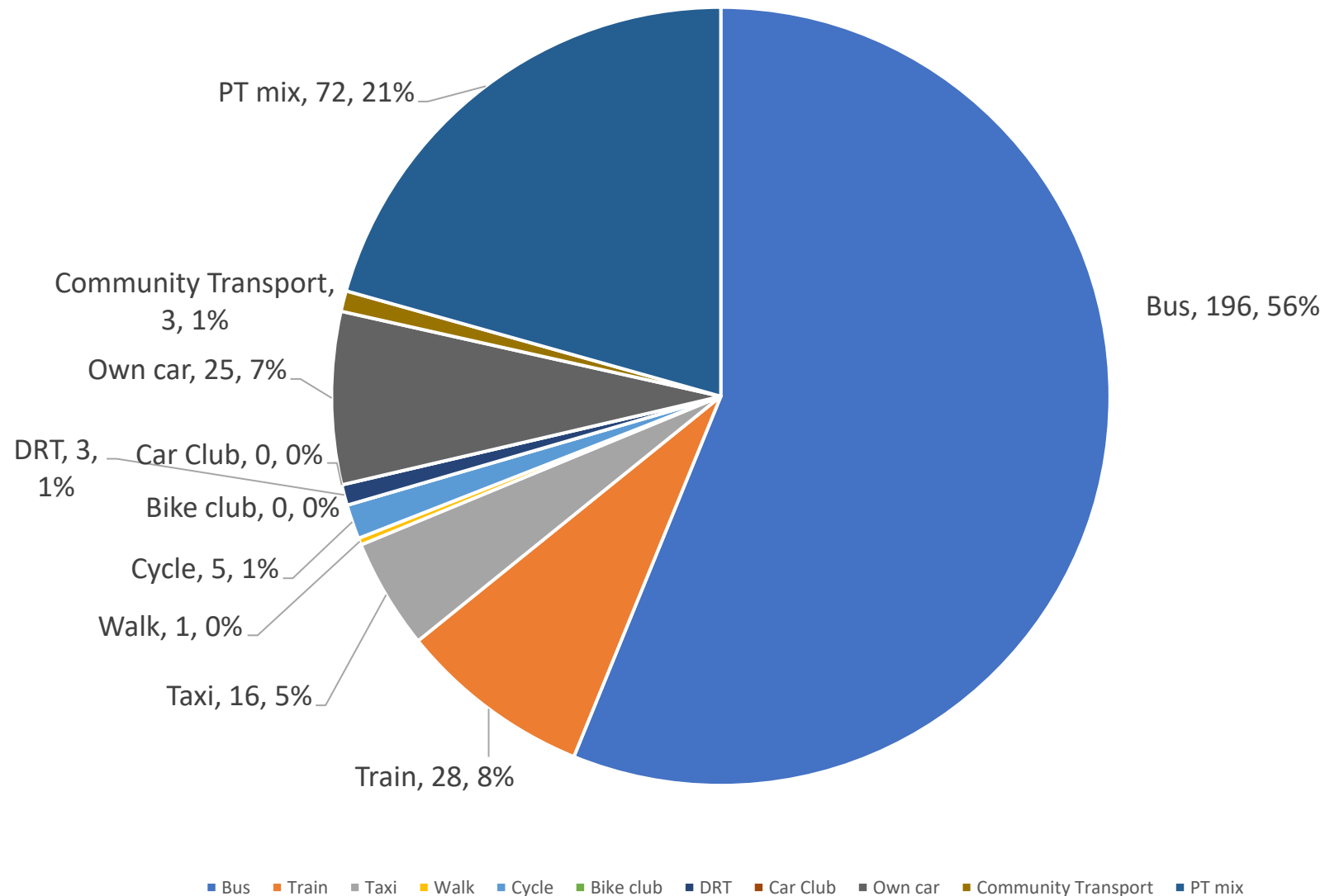


Number of Journeys Planned



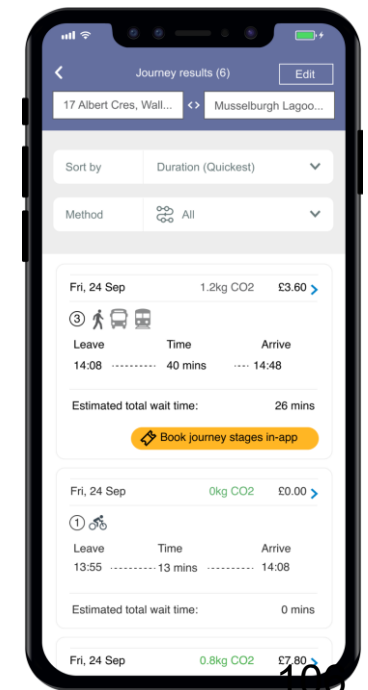
23rd January to 26th February 2023

What types of journey are being planned? (Final viewed journey)



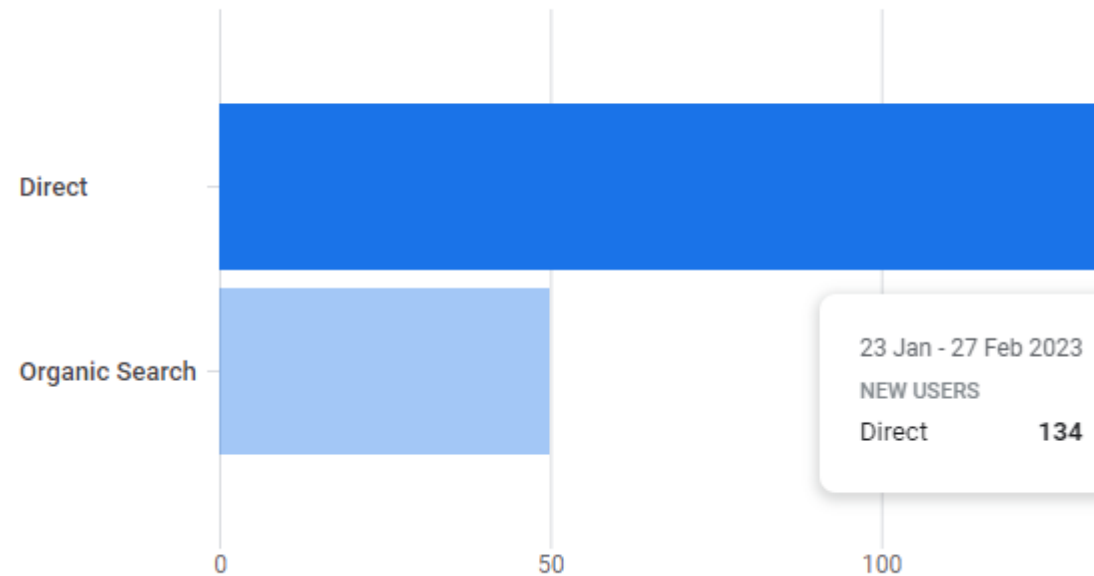
87% sustainable journeys

273 (44%) of users didn't view detailed journey info beyond the summary info screen so we don't know what they viewed



How did we acquire new users?

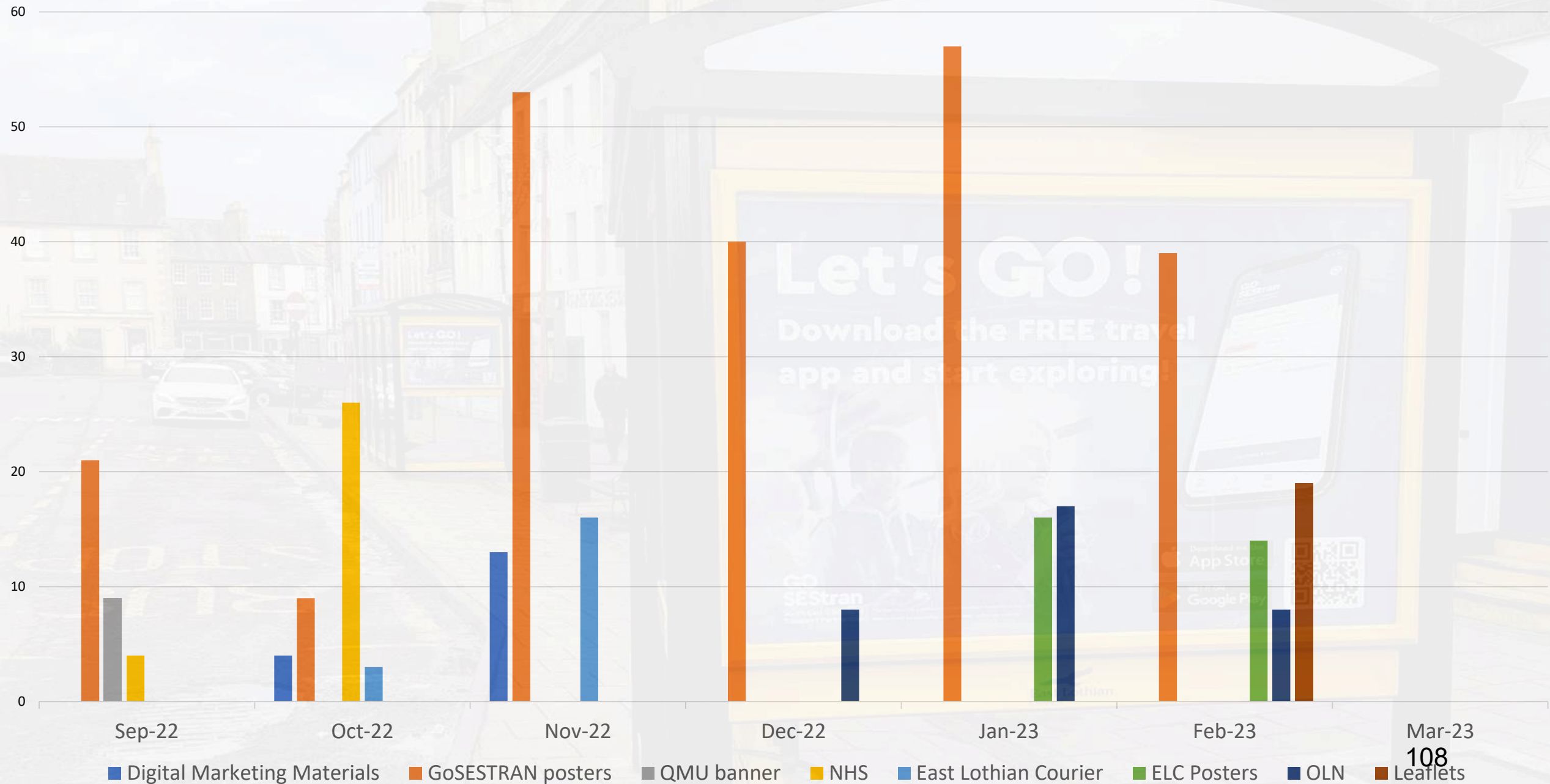
New users by First user default channel group



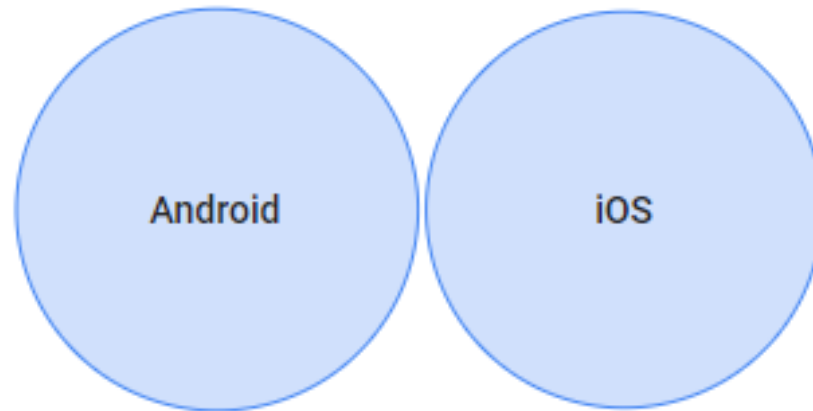
(Typing in 'GoSESTRAN' specifically or scanning a direct QR link)

(keyword search e.g. 'journey planner')

QR scans



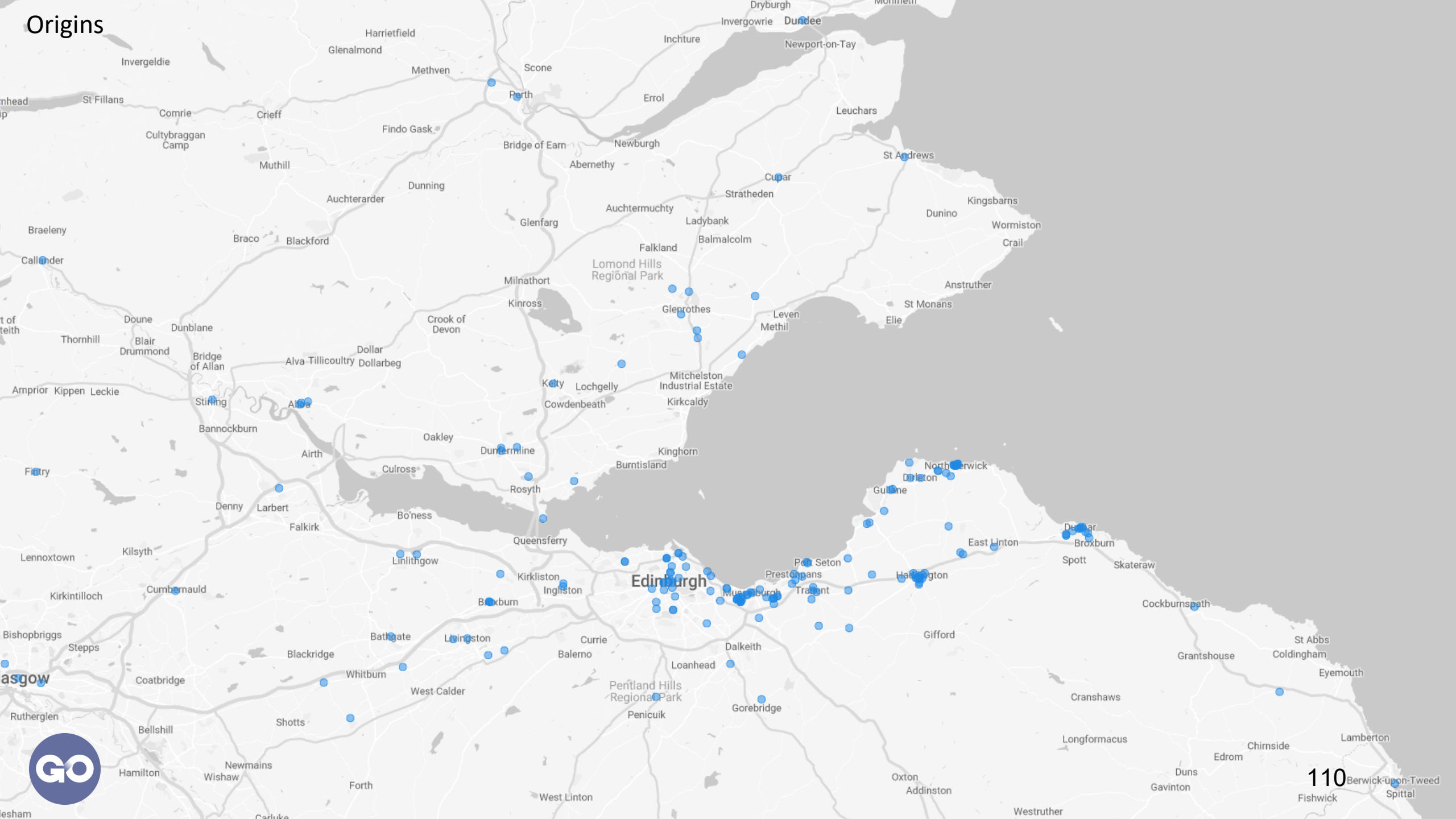
How are
users
accessing
the service?



ANDROID
50.7%

IOS
49.3%

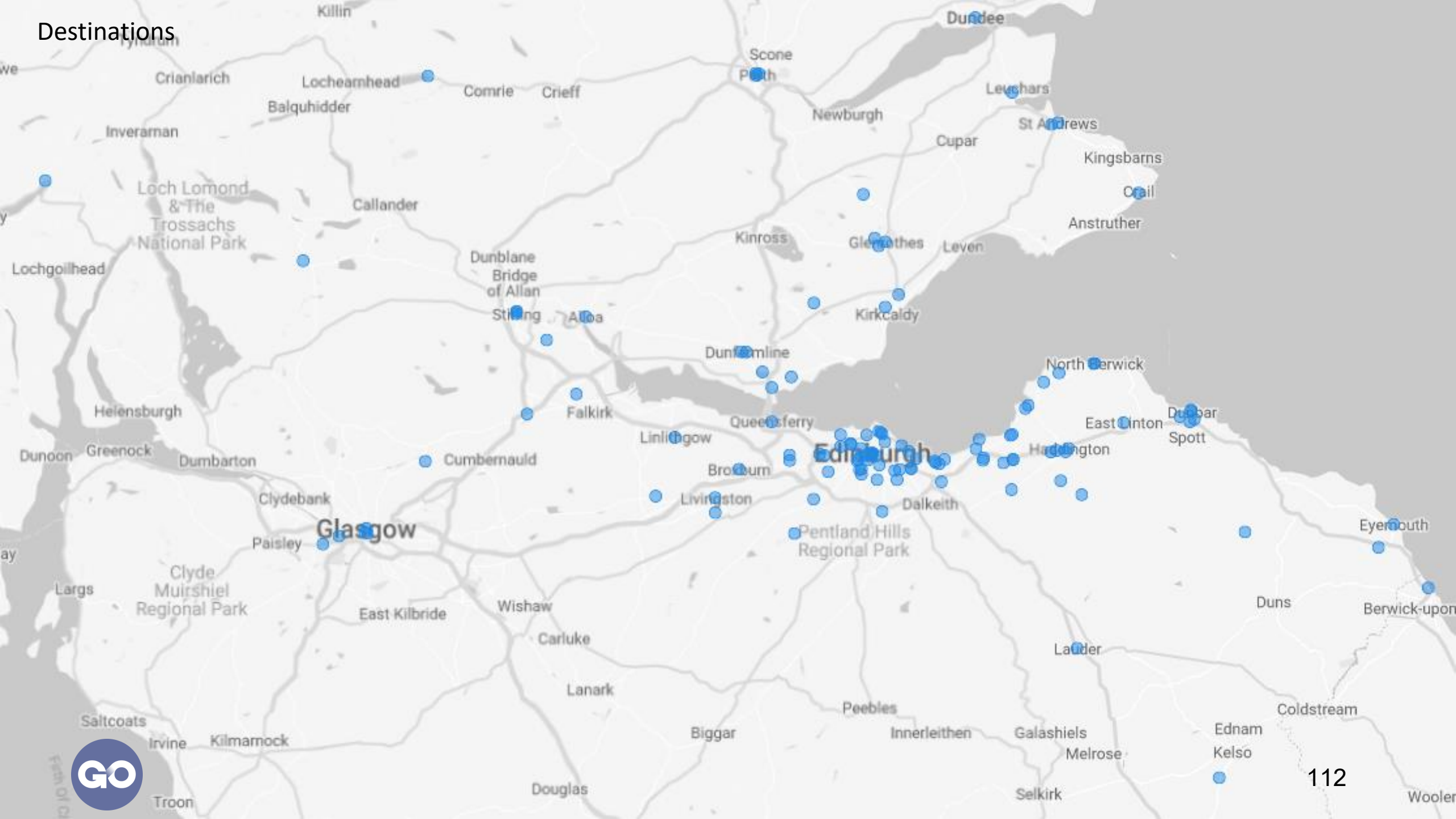
Origins



Most popular origins

Popular Origins	Count
Haddington	20
Dunbar	14
Broxburn	13
Musselburgh	11
Edinburgh	10

Destinations



Most popular destinations

Popular Destinations	Count
Edinburgh	58
North Berwick	36
Dunbar	24
Haddington	21

Projects Performance Report

1 INTRODUCTION






- 1.1 This report and its appendix update the Board on performance within SEStran's various workstreams and projects over the last quarter, for noting, and outlines to the Board on proposed approach to streamlining project performance reporting, for agreement.
- 1.2 As part of this, the report summarises the details around a contract to be issued to Bewegen, for provision and operation of hire e-Bikes, and outlines the next steps in relation to development of GO SEStran, the digital MaaS app pilot.

2 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- 2.1 For funded projects, programmes and workstreams, progress against agreed outputs and/or Business Plan milestones is indicated in the attached report template. For each, a high level 'RAG' (Red-Amber-Green) status is used, with 'Blue' for completed projects. Once reported as complete, these projects are removed from future updates. Where required, a note explaining progress is provided.

RAG Status	Meaning:
BLUE	Complete
GREEN	Progressing to plan
AMBER	Some issues or delays encountered
RED	Severe issues or delays

- 2.2 The alignment of project work to SEStran's Strategic Objectives is indicated using the following symbols.

	Economy
	Accessibility
	Environment
	Safety and health
	Corporate

3 NOTICE OF INTENTION FROM BEWEGEN TECHNOLOGIES LTD. FOR GO E-BIKE

- 3.1 On 24th January 2023, SEStran were issued with a notice of intention from Bewegen stating a period of transition would be required to cover unsustainable maintenance operation costs.
- 3.2 On 2nd February 2023, SEStran received a further notice of Bewegen's intention to file for bankruptcy. This was accompanied by an independent document from an insolvency agent listing a notice to creditors for a potential proposal. SEStran are currently listed on the basis of the procurement of wayfinding panels totalling £15,000.
- 3.2 Anderson Strathern were engaged and having reviewed the relevant notices and contractual documents, have summarised that they are in no position to act any further, suggesting that legal support could be sought through Canadian firms in the wider grouping.
- 3.3 Until a final proposal is received from Bewegen to creditors, it is unclear what further action can be taken at this time.
- 3.4 SEStran have been engaging with other schemes in Scotland operated by Bewegen to establish the likelihood for a localised maintenance programme on the basis that IT support is still available, but this is also dependent on 3.3.
- 3.5 SEStran have agreement from Transport Scotland that the £186,000 previously allocated to Bewegen can be utilised in the support of e-bike development at a community level in this financial year.

4 GO SESTRAN MAAS, DRT AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Progress within the GO SEStran MaaS and DRT pilot and Tactran pilot is the subject of a separate report on this agenda. The report, at Item A8, notes that funding bids have been successful in extending the current GO SEStran pilot to June, as well as funding the associated DRT pilot to March 2024.
- 4.2 Additionally, there is a need to integrate any new DRT and consolidate DRT and other digital solutions being developed by partners to streamline journey apps for people in the region and beyond. This work is under way, with particular close joint working with Tactran and ongoing discussions with Clackmannanshire, City of Edinburgh Council, Fife and Borders Councils.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Board is asked to:
- a) note progress recorded in the past quarter, summarised in the attached Appendix 1,
 - b) note the ongoing process with a Notice of Intention on behalf of Bewegen, as outlined in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5,
 - c) agree that officers pursue work to extend DRT and related activities in the region, with available funds, as outlined in paragraph 4.2,

Brian Butler
Partnership Director
10 March 2023

Appendix

Projects Performance Report September 2022






Policy Implications	Outlined project work contributes to the objectives identified within SEStran Regional Transport Strategy.
Financial Implications	All project work is delivered from within confirmed budgets.
Equalities Implications	There are no adverse equalities implications arising from SEStran projects. A number of projects actively work to reduce inequalities.
Climate Change Implications	There are no negative climate change implications arising from SEStran projects. A number of projects actively work to tackle climate change through creation of, or support for more sustainable transport options.

SEStran Performance March 2023





Table of Contents

1. STRATEGY	5
1.1 Regional Transport Strategy	5
2. STRATEGIC ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS.....	5
2.1 GO e-Bike.....	5
2.2 Regional Cycle Network Grant Scheme	6
2.3 Regional Active Travel Development Fund – Transport Scotland.....	7
2.4 Cycle Training and Development – Cycling Scotland	8
3. STRATEGIC PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROJECTS.....	9
3.1 Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)	9
3.2 Thistle Assistance Programme.....	10
3.3 Newburgh Train Station Study.....	11
3.4 Bus Service Improvement Partnerships.....	11
3.5 The GO SEStran project	12
4. FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS PROJECTS	13
4.1 Forth Freight Study.....	13
5. EUROPEAN-FUNDED PROJECTS	14
5.1 SHARE-North	14
5.2 SURFLOGH	15
5.3 BLING.....	16
5.4 PriMaaS	16
5.5 CONNECT.....	17
5.6 REGIO-Mob.....	18
6. SESTRAN FORUMS AND UPCOMING EVENTS	18
6.1 SEStran Forum Meetings	19

1. Strategy

1.1 Regional Transport Strategy		    
Start date: November 2020		
Initial completion date: March 2022		
Expected completion date: September 2022		
Overall project progress:		On track
Brief description: A new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) to cover the period up to 2035, to provide a regional framework for potential for managing future travel demand, behaviour and developing the region's transport system.		
New RTS aligns to the National Transport Strategy 2, National Planning Framework 4, Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019, as well as spatial and economic strategies under development across the SEStran area. A new monitoring framework, the 'Programmed Investment Plan' will track transport investment and delivery of RTS priorities. SEStran's current RTS runs until 2025. As reported previously, in March 2022, the expected completion date was revised to allow further consideration of rural issues with Scottish Borders Council. The RTS remains on target.		
Milestones from last quarter		On track
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Completed draft RTS was submitted to the Minister for Transport for approval on 7 March 2023Tender evaluations completed for Programmed Investment Plan to track transport investment and delivery of RTS priorities		
Overall Stages Achieved		On track
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Main Issues Report published May 2020Development stages of SEStran RTS 2035 completed with input from partners March 2022Statutory assessments completed with input from partners March 2022Board approval of draft RTS September 2022		
Next Steps		On track
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Report Ministers' approval to Partnership Board (timescale unknown)Develop PIP		

2. Strategic Active Travel Projects

2.1 GO e-Bike		   
Start date: April 2018		
Initial completion date: ongoing programme		
Expected completion date: ongoing programme subject to funding		
Overall project progress:		In progress

Project description: GO e-Bike is a regional bike-sharing programme that aims to increase the visibility of e-bikes and increase access to e-bike use. The first (completed) phase funded through SHARE-North provided shared e-bikes in four community hubs – two in Fife and one each in West Lothian and Falkirk. In the second phase Low Carbon Travel and Transport (LCTT) Fund and Transport Scotland (TS) funding for GO e-Bikes in to two further locations. In addition, a public e-bike hire scheme operated by Bewegen delivered 40 e-bikes across 4 station sites in East Lothian and Midlothian, was launched in April 2021. This phase remains ongoing beyond the LCTT funding period. In 2021, with funds from Transport Scotland, SEStran supported the development of the Cargo Bike Movement hub in Edinburgh, to promote cargo bikes as a fairer, healthier, and carbon-free vehicles for delivery of goods and for individuals and families. Go e-Bike added two e-cargo bikes to the project.

Project Development:

- **Last quarter** *Severe Issues*
 - Notice of Bankruptcy filed by **Bewegen Technologies Ltd** under Canadian Bankruptcy law and passed to SEStran on **27th January 2023**.
 - Officers notified **Anderson Strathern** upon receipt of notices and are working to gain a greater understanding of procedures.
 - Discussion with other Bewegen operations in Scotland has taken place since notices were issued.
 - **Transport Scotland** have been appraised of the situation and are keen to see a solution that allows schemes to continue to operate.
 - Until a creditor proposal is issued by bankruptcy agents on behalf of Bewegen, the future of the scheme is uncertain.
 - The immediate requirement is to establish a maintenance operation that can keep existing bikes in operation, which is being discussed at a national level to cover all schemes affected.
- **Stages achieved** *Delayed*
 - Transport Scotland notified of risk to fund expenditure.
- **Next steps** *In progress*
 - Identifying opportunities to use funding to support existing community e-bike hubs to expand and supplement current work, with approval from Transport Scotland.
 - Cargobike Movement, Socialbite Village, Walkerburn CDT, CLEAR Buckhaven, will be in receipt of support in a range of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes, storage, and tracking devices, complemented with cycling training sessions through the partnership with Cycling Scotland.

2.2 Regional Cycle Network Grant Scheme

Start date: April 2014

Initial completion date: ongoing programme

Expected completion date: ongoing programme subject to funding



Overall project progress:

In progress

Project description: Provided through a partnership between Sustrans Scotland and SEStran, the Regional Cycle Network Grant Scheme delivers an annually agreed set of improvements to the cross-boundary utility routes.

This project fund will end at the close of FY 2022/23 with the equivalent awards being moved into the wider Transport Scotland fund for Active Travel Projects.

Project Development:

▪ Edinburgh BioQuarter

Delayed

- Route has been reviewed for future transit opportunities, this has resulted in some design changes from previous design elements.
- Sweco have had fruitful discussions around signals along the route and with Lothian Buses.
- Once 3D designs are completed after discussions the project will move to the stage of cost estimation.
- This project is still projected for completion at this stage within 2023.

2.3 Regional Active Travel Development Fund – Transport Scotland



Start date: Financial year 2022/23

Initial completion date: March 2023

Expected completion date: March 2023

Overall project progress:

In Progress

Project description: The Regional Active Travel Development Fund was established between Transport Scotland and the Regional Transport Partnerships in 2018/19 and allows for an annual award for delivery of agreed project work. SEStran's proposal for projects in 2022/23 to Transport Scotland has been awarded up to £597,000 for this fifth year of funding. Projects from 2020/21 carried forward with agreement of Transport Scotland, are now completed as reported below.

Funding for 2023/24: The application for funding for next year has been brought forward to align with other Active Travel Delivery Partners, with draft proposals submitted to Transport Scotland at the end of October. Officers are awaiting feedback, with a final submission due for completion on 16th December 2022.

Draft proposals include the continued development of the Strategic Network, with further work to be undertaken on existing routes and the initial stages of development for new routes in some additional areas. Additionally, a further request for expansion to the GO e-Bike bike share system has been made to the level of previous years.

Once feedback is received and an understanding of Transport Scotland's view of the current submission is known, a further update will be provided to the Partnership Board.

Project Development:

- **Project: Attitudinal Survey** Complete
 - **Next steps:**
 - A final publication will be compiled by officers for publication taking insights from the two years of results.

- **Project: SEStran Strategic Network** In progress
 - **Last quarter:**
 - **ARUP** have been collating the utilities and topographical surveys into packages for the individual routes and are ready to be passed to next stages with local partners.
 - All survey work complete by start of March.
 - **ARUP** have started a small exercise to review the multi criteria assessment used for the formation of the SSN, this will include a test of newly available data against the prioritisation of projects.
 - All work is on track for completion in March.
 - **VIVACITY** have undertaken a number of site surveys for the installation of multi-modal monitoring sensors in **Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and West Lothian**.
 - **Stages achieved:**
 - Survey work undertaken with final collation ongoing.
 - Sites identified for installation of monitoring sensors.
 - **Next steps:**
 - All projects updated on SSN dashboard.
 - Sensors installed and operational.

- **Project: GO e-Bike** In progress
 - **Last quarter:**
 - £186,000 funding was secured for further development of GO e-bike as described in section 2.1.

2.4 Cycle Training and Development – Cycling Scotland



Start date: core workstream

Initial completion date: ongoing

Expected completion date: ongoing

Overall progress:

In Progress

Project description: This workstream is made possible through a partnership arrangement with Cycling Scotland and supports the delivery of Bikeability Scotland National Standard cycle training delivered by local authority Bikeability Scotland coordinators. It promotes, encourages, and develops cycle training opportunities across SEStran projects.

Project Development:

- **Bikeability Scotland** In progress
 - **Last quarter:**
 - Delivery of Bikeability Scotland across the region for 2022-23 mostly on track to meet or exceed 2021-22 delivery.
 - Continued to work with LAs to increase delivery rates.
 - Support set up of two CPD days in the region.
 - Mid-year review meetings held with Local Authority Bikeability Scotland Coordinators.
 - **Next steps:**
 - Support will continue with particular focus on areas currently struggling to meet targets, to increase awareness of the programme and availability of trained school staff or third-party delivery.

- **Adult and Family Cycle Training** In progress
 - **Last quarter:** Grant funding awarded to cycle training providers and organisations who would like to start running cycle training activities and increase capacity.
 - Cargo bike training is being supported in partnership with Sustrans Scotland and other organisations.
 - **Next steps:**
 - Continue to identify opportunities to improve access to cycle training through engagement with partners.

3. Strategic Public Transport Projects

3.1 Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)



Start date: 2010

Initial completion date: ongoing workstream

Expected completion date: ongoing workstream

Overall progress:

In Progress

Project description: SEStran began implementing a region wide network of RTPI screens, providing bus timetable information to make bus travel more predictable and reliable in 2010. SEStran has worked with partners to build up a comprehensive network of over 200 maintained screens in travel hubs such as railway stations, park and choose / ride sites, hospitals, colleges, universities, shopping centres and large employer hubs. More recently SEStran has worked with the City of Edinburgh Council to develop a new, Regional RTPI System that will improve the information provided in the public facing regional screen network incorporating Lothian Buses information.

Project Development:

- **Last quarter:** In progress
 - PC replacement for the old system has 92% of the PCs delivered now 'live'.
 - New installations of standalone screens purchased via the framework continue to be utilised by Local Authorities.
 - Integration of Lothian Buses data – work almost complete with final testing due in March 2023.
 - Weekly meetings held with Local Authority partners and projects team.
- **Stages achieved:** Complete
 - System testing was completed, and the system accepted in November 2021.
 - The system is live with bus operator data being integrated into the live system.
 - Training on new content management system completed with local authority representatives.
 - Integration of McGill's operations from First Bus East after takeover complete.
 - The purchasing framework is being utilised by SEStran and Local Authorities to provide additional Real Time infrastructure for the region.
- **Next steps:** In progress
 - Roll out of new PCs will continue, 175 have been distributed to date from the total of 200.
 - The new regional real time system is being updated with real time data from bus operators. Data integration has significantly improved.
 - Moffat & Williamson to be integrated.
 - Installation of new signs purchased via framework to continue.
- **NOVUS FX** In progress
 - First round of training complete, additional training will be provided based on future requirements.

3.2 Thistle Assistance Programme



Start date: 2005

Initial completion date: ongoing workstream

Expected completion date: ongoing workstream

Overall project progress:

In Progress

Project description: SEStran has developed the (national) Thistle Assistance Scheme to make using public transport easier for older people and those with disabilities, illness or mobility issues. SEStran is leading on the development of a new journey planning aspect of the scheme.

Project Development:

- **Last quarter:** In progress
 - Thistle Assistance was promoted in key publications, Enable, Inspire and Possibility magazine with editorial highlighting the new journey planning project.
 - Development continues on VoyagAR platform the journey planning and wayfinding tool. Due to be completed by end March 2023.
- **Stages achieved:** Complete

- Journey planning project prototype ready for testing.
- Rebranding of Thistle Assistance including development of promotional material.
- Development of standalone website – www.thistleassistance.com
- Development of transport operator guide.

▪ **Next steps:**

In progress

- Further public testing of VoyagAR, public recruitment of testers to take place in March, aiming to recruit 20 to 30 testers.
- Develop an awareness survey to gauge engagement and usage.
- Discussion with local authority in England about use.
- Discussions with Lothian Community Transport about use and promotion.

3.3 Newburgh Train Station Study



Start date: December 2019

Initial completion date: March 2020

Expected completion date: March 2022

Overall project progress:

Complete

Project description: SEStran procured Systra to carry out a transport options study for Newburgh, on behalf of SEStran. The study is funded by the [Local Rail Development Fund](#) that was introduced by the Scottish Government in February 2018, with the aim of providing funding to develop community led options to improve local rail connections.

Project Development:

▪ **Last quarter:**

In progress

- Received feedback and comments from Transport Scotland, currently reviewing.

• **Stages achieved:**

Complete

- Case for Change, Initial Options Appraisal and Detailed Options Appraisal.

• **Next steps:**

In progress

- Arrange workshop with Transport Scotland to discuss comments and define next steps.

3.4 Bus Service Improvement Partnerships



Start date: May 2020

Initial completion date: ongoing area of work

Expected completion date: March 2026

Overall project progress:

In progress

Project description: The Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) is a £500m Transport Scotland capital fund for the delivery of infrastructure to tackle the impacts of congestion on bus priority and reliability. Bids can be made by partnerships working towards a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) status. BSIPs must be collaborative, involving bus operators that provide services in a local authority or BSIP area, and other relevant partners. SEStran has supported five bus alliance groupings to become established and supported the development of bids in the region, namely Forth Valley, Fife, Midlothian, West Lothian and Edinburgh. Funding contributions have been made to bid development costs in four partnerships. Across the region, all bids submitted have now received funding to progress some or all of their proposals. SEStran is now also contributing by providing project management services to Midlothian and Forth Valley Bus Alliance bids.

Project Development:

- **Last Quarter:** In Progress
SEStran remains involved in and supportive of all the Alliances as they work through the STAG appraisal process, supported by consultants. Current activities include development of the Case for Change for each alliance, and consultation on the proposals as they develop.
- **Stages achieved:** In Progress
 - Forth Valley Bus Alliance set up and working with STAG appraisal work funding received from Transport Scotland.
 - Midlothian Bus Alliance set up and working with STAG appraisal work funding received from Transport Scotland.
- **Next steps:** In Progress
 - SEStran will continue to work with all Partnerships on proposed governance structures, plans, and schemes, pending the emerging Guidance and regulations from Scottish Government.
 - Engage with Transport Scotland on issues relevant to the emerging BSIPs in the region, including governance arrangements and efficient application of STAG Appraisals.
 - Continue to convene regular region-wide meetings of Alliance project managers, including Tayside Bus Alliance, to discuss matters of common interest, ensuring a consistent approach to the development of bids and sharing best practice.
 - Continue to provide project management services (funded from the Bus Partnership Fund awards for Midlothian and Forth Valley Bus Alliances).

3.5 The GO SEStran project

Start date: March 2022

Planned completion date: March 2023

Expected completion date: as above.



Overall project progress:

In progress

Project description: SEStran has worked with a wide range of stakeholders across the South East of Scotland to develop the GO SEStran project, an innovative MaaS and DRT project proposal that was submitted to the Transport Scotland's MaaS Investment Fund Round 2 (MIF2). The GO SEStran project was awarded £212,440 for the development of MaaS, which integrates DRT pilots in the SEStran region over the course of a one-year period, which was due for completion in March 2023. The Go SEStran app was launched in early August and can be downloaded from Google Play and Apple app store.

GoSEStran is an app that can be consistently updated to integrate various localised modes, for example private bus operators in the area. The app will show you real time information for bus timetables and you can also filter the results to your preference, such as the cheapest option or the lowest emission. SEStran is delivering the project in partnership with three project partners; Fuse Mobility as MaaS providers, East Lothian Council and Tactran.

Project development:

- **Last Quarter:** In progress
 - Significant progress has been achieved, which will be discussed in more detail in the separate report on the agenda. The project has now been extended to end June 2023, with the DRT pilot funded till March 2024.
 - The app has achieved its initial target of 1000 downloads 6 weeks early. Marketing is key to the success of apps of this nature.
- **Stages achieved:** In progress
 - A number of integrations have been completed by Fuse, including local transport modes such as community transport, Bewegen e-bikes and Enterprise Car Club in East Lothian. Remaining integrations consist of Co-wheels, a car club provider, and the DRT operation.
 - A tendering process has been completed for the proposed digital demand responsive transport (DDRT) pilot in East Lothian, and an award made to The Routing Company. The DRT service is due to commence in early March.
- **Next steps:** In Progress
 - SEStran continues to work with Transport Scotland to report on progress on a monthly basis.
 - SEStran is working with all partners to maximise the marketing of the app, which has so far received very encouraging feedback.
 - Fuse are now carrying out a number of improvements to the app in response to feedback.
 - SEStran is working with East Lothian Council, Prentice of Haddington and the DRT tech provider with a view to enabling the launch of the DRT pilot early in March.
 - SEStran and Tactran are collaborating on a number of fronts to ensure funding of the app will continue past June 2023.
 - SEStran continue to have conversations with other local authorities include City Of Edinburgh Council to explore expanding GoSEStran further across the region.

4. Freight and Logistics Projects

4.1 Forth Freight Study



Start date: May 2020

Initial completion date: December 2021

Expected completion date: June 2022 (end date revised by funder, Transport Scotland)

Overall project progress:

In progress

Project description: [This study, delivered by SEStran](#) in partnership with Forth Ports, explores the potential in the region, particularly around the Forth, for developing sustainable, multimodal freight gateways. It aims to identify key locations for potential freight consolidation centres that would maximise the sustainable movement of freight at national, regional, and local levels. The study is being carried out for SEStran by appointed consultants Aecom. The study is funded by the [Local Rail Development Fund](#) that was introduced by the Scottish Government in February 2018.

Project Development:

▪ **Last Quarter:**

Delayed

- Updated the Scottish Freight & Logistics Group in Feb 2023.
- Awaiting feedback from Transport Scotland.

• **Stages achieved:**

Delayed

- Case for Change approved December 2021.
- Initial Options Appraisal work is complete.
- Submitted to Transport Scotland in August 2022 for comments.

• **Next steps:**

Delayed

- Begin work on Detailed Options Appraisal subject to Transport Scotland approval.

5. European-funded Projects

5.1 SHARE-North

Interreg North Sea Region, ERDF



Start date: January 2016

Initial completion date: December 2019

Expected completion date: June 2022 (following successful extension application and 6-month Covid-19 extension)


Overall project progress:

Complete

Project description: SHARE-North focuses on shared mobility and its potential to address sustainable transport challenges in the North Sea region. This includes developing, implementing, promoting and assessing car, bike and ride sharing and other forms of shared mobility in urban and rural areas and employment clusters. One example is the establishment of Mobility Hubs. A Mobility Hub seeks to raise the profile of shared mobility (car club, bike-sharing, carsharing), by integrating these modes of transport with existing public transport provision. Following the completion of the Mobility Hub Strategic Study in 2020 SEStran has been working with partners to identify potential opportunities to plan for Mobility Hubs.

Project Development:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Last Quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEStran hosted the final project meeting of the SHARE-North project in at the end of June 2022. The meeting reviewed partner highlights from the project across the partner countries. ▪ The final claim for EU grant funding has been prepared at submitted. The additional geofenced Bewegen e-bike hubs is complete and will be monitored. • Stages achieved: • Next steps: 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project completion and hosting of the final project event 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Share North project officially ended 30 June 2022. However, shared mobility policies are included in the draft Regional Transport Strategy which is due to be considered for approval by the Board in September 2022. How shared mobility is integrated and expanded into the transport network is a key focus of future work. 	Complete

<p>5.2 SURFLOGH</p> <p>Interreg North Sea Region, ERDF</p> <p>Start date: June 2017</p> <p>Initial completion date: October 2020</p> <p>Expected completion date: June 2023</p> <p>Overall project progress:</p> <p>Project description: SURFLOGH aims to enhance the role of sustainable logistics in urban logistics networks in the North Sea Region. SURFLOGH has created a trans-national network of ‘city hubs’ promoting innovation in city logistics. These hubs bring together different partners to exchange knowledge and work on innovative pilot projects and business models that can work in real world urban logistics systems. SEStran’s Edinburgh pilot operating near Haymarket has now been running successfully since 2018. The next stage of SURFLOGH will look at combining the first phase outputs based on the project pilots and research. The development site at Perth West will be used as a location for this work, stage one for Perth West includes a mobility hub unlocking an active travel programme, alongside mobility as a service options and a last mile delivery centre, all connected to a smart energy network. This will be Scotland’s 1st green, city ‘living lab’.</p> <p><u>Project Development:</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Last Quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further interviews with stakeholders to inform Perth West hub business case. ▪ Chapter on sustainable logistics accepted for the Routledge Handbook of Transport Economics. ▪ Stages achieved: ▪ Next steps: 	In progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of Edinburgh Pilot – ZEDIFY cycle logistics hub. ▪ Business model framework developed following extensive research with Edinburgh Napier University https://tinyurl.com/emxdd4ep. ▪ City hub case studies for each of the pilots developed. ▪ Infomercial launched to highlight the Edinburgh Zedify hub and the benefits of a sustainable approach to city logistics. 	On track
	In progress

- Ongoing engagement with partners in Tactran and Perth West development consultant.
- Present final work in March 2023 in Germany.

5.3 BLING

Interreg North Sea Region, ERDF

Start date: January 2019

Initial completion date: June 2022

Expected completion date: June 2023



Overall project progress:

In progress

Project description: Blockchain is a key enabling technology that will underpin efforts to deliver innovative services under the Digital Agenda for Europe. [The BLockchain IN Government](#) (BLING) project focuses on providing one of the first dedicated platforms to bring these tools and approaches into local and regional services. SEStran's role developed a logistic pilot with the University of Edinburgh, which will showcase innovative use of the technology in a transport environment and also to produce a snapshot report on Blockchain use cases and potential in Scotland.

Project Development:

▪ **Last Quarter:**

- Final report finished ready for presenting at final conference.

In progress

▪ **Stages achieved:**

- GeoPact pilot proof of concept delivered.
- Research paper written and shared.
- Project extension approved.

On track

▪ **Next steps:**

- Final BLING conference is scheduled for 26th April 2022 to be hosted by the Partners in the North Netherlands.

In Progress

5.4 PriMaaS

Interreg Europe, ERDF

Start date: August 2019

Initial completion date: January 2023

Expected completion date: July 2023 (following 6-month extension due to Covid-19 impacts)



Overall project progress:

In Progress

Project description: Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) is a concept that changes the way people travel and pay for mobility services. The main vision of PriMaaS is to promote MaaS and incorporate wider societal goals through interregional collaboration, sharing best practices, and policy development.

Project Development:

▪ **Last Quarter:**

- Completion of Phase One of the project which included the submission of the Action Plan and submission of the best practices; Go Borders DRT trial and Tactran ENABLE Platform

In Progress

▪ **Stages achieved:**

- The Action Plan and best practices have helped to ensure the success of the GoSEStran Platform and shaped the work put towards the set-up of the new DRT service in East Lothian.

On track

▪ **Next steps:**

- Continued monitoring of the Action plan over the next 12 months
- A final face to face event is planned in the Coimbra region of Portugal in May 2023.

In Progress

5.5 CONNECT

Interreg North Sea Region

Start date: October 2019

Initial completion date: March 2022

Expected completion date: December 2023



Overall project progress:

In Progress

Project description: [CONNECT's](https://northsearegion.eu/north-sea-connect) overall objective is to support the growth of 'smart inter-modality' in the North Sea Region, through smart efficiency enhancements within freight movement. It looks at connecting the North Sea Region's TEN-T nodes, focusing on implementing new smart processes and working tools (smart inter-modality) and development of strategies for smart efficiency enhancements (smart involvement). <https://northsearegion.eu/north-sea-connect>

Project Development:

▪ **Last Quarter:**

- Along with several partners visited Forth Ports Grangemouth to share and capture ideas.

In progress

▪ **Stages achieved:**

- Draft report on inland waterways complete.

In progress

▪ **Next steps:**

- SEStran team will visit Hamburg for a further project workshop in March 2023.

In Progress



5.6 REGIO-Mob

Interreg Europe, ERDF

Start date: April 2016

Initial completion date: March 2020

New start date: October 2021

New completion date: September 2022 (following approval of additional 1 year funding for project activities in relation to Covid-19 impacts)

Overall project progress:

In Progress

Project description: REGIO-Mob aims to promote “learning, sharing of knowledge and transferring best practices between the participating regional and local authorities to design and implement regional mobility plans (or Regional Transport Strategies)”.

The additional REGIO-MOB activities, through a partnership made up of six partners from six European regions (Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Greece, UK), will allow for an exchange of experiences aimed at learning about the best solutions developed to deal with the Covid-19 crisis and to improve six policy instruments for public transport policies to meet the new needs of planning and guarantee a safer and sustainable mobility.

Project Development:

▪ **Last quarter:**

In Progress

- The Interregional exchange process took place in Edinburgh on 7th and 8th September where the best practices from SEStran and the Italian partners was presented and discussed which focused on the interventions and response to COVID-19.
- Brief summaries on the key learning were shared across participating regions.

• **Stages achieved**

In Progress

- Exchange of information between the project partners through the Interregional exchange process.

• **Next steps:**

In Progress

- Despite the Regio-Mob project now being complete, SEStran will continue to communicate with the other partners involved and use the knowledge shared to influence any further best practices to help implement the new Regional Transport Strategy.

6. SEStran forums and upcoming events



6.1 SEStran Forum Meetings

SEStran hosts three different forum groups, the Integrated Mobility Forum, the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum and the Logistics and Freight Forum. The aim of the forums is to provide a platform for interested parties to come together and to formulate a regional voice in various transport-related matters.

Latest Forum meetings:

- **Logistics and Freight Forum**
 - The next forum will take place on the 30th of May 2023 venue, agenda and format TBC.
- **Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum**
 - The next forum will take place on Wednesday 28th of September. The last forum took place on 31st January 2023.
- **Integrated Mobility Forum**
 - The next forum meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 2th of April 2023.

SEStran Business Plan 2021-22 to 2023-24

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the Business Plan activity for the year April 2023 to March 2024

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 In March 2021 the Partnership introduced a three-year business planning approach.
- 2.2 As part of the three-year plan activity is updated each year via the activity plan which details key projects, the focus areas and critical success factors.
- 2.3 As part of the three-year plan the budget is updated and is included in the Activity Plan.
- 2.4 The Activity Plan aligns with the Project Performance tracking report produced quarterly throughout the year which monitors performance of the plan.
- 2.5 The draft Activity Plan was presented to and reviewed by Performance and Audit at the meeting on the 3rd of March 2023.

3. ACTIVITY FOR YEAR 2023/24

- 3.1 The Activity Plan for the current year to date and up to end March 2024 is outlined in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The draft budget for the three-year plan period has been updated.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is accordingly recommended that the Board:
- (a) Note this report.
 - (b) Note the contents in Appendix 1 Activity Plan update.

Keith Fiskien
Programmes Manager
3rd March 2023


Appendix 1: Activity Update 23/24 Business Plan 2021-2024





Policy Implications	The Business Plan will align with SEStran's established and emerging policies
Financial Implications	The Business Plan will be subject to formal Board approval of proposed budgets in year 2021 – 22 and subsequent years.
Equalities Implications	No separate EQIA will be carried out as the Business Plan does not propose a change to SEStran's policies and procedures.
Climate Change Implications	The implications for Climate Change issues will be assessed at project level.



Business Plan Activity Update


April 2023 to March 2024

GO e-Bike				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
GO e-Bike will add to the region's active travel facilities, delivering more sustainable and healthier transport solutions for people.		Support GO e-Bike Community Hubs	Increase user numbers and monitor impact from hubs. Roll out GPS tracking to fleets to monitor usage and routes.	Cooperation from hub partners
		GO e-Bike Public Hire/ Bewegen system	<p>Work alongside other systems in Scotland to facilitate a sustainable solution to maintenance and marketing.</p> <p>Adapt to any changes as a result of market pressures on the supplier for goods or services, planning for sustainable future of scheme.</p> <p>Our main supplier has filed for bankruptcy protection to allow it to restructure so that it is better equipped to manage current economic pressures. We do not anticipate any major impacts on existing plans and are engaging with our solicitors, the supplier, other impacted RTPs, local authorities, customers and Transport Scotland to ensure a seamless transition to new arrangements.</p>	<p>Cooperation with HiTrans, ForthBike, availability of funding and resource.</p> <p>Cooperation with Midlothian, East Lothian</p>
		Development of all forms of e-bikes use across the region	Secure additional funding opportunities for further e-bike hubs	Availability of funding

Thistle Assistance Programme				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
<p>The Thistle Assistance Programme provides helps to those that have difficulty in using and accessing public transport.</p> <p>Provides a national approach.</p> <p>Increases awareness of challenges faced by vulnerable transport users.</p> <p>Reduces costs for transport operators.</p>	 	<p>Launch app-based door-to-door journey planner with the aim of making public transport more accessible to all.</p> <p>Engage with transport operators and public.</p> <p>Use new branding, website and social media</p>	<p>Launch the VoyagAR App with developer Sentireal & project team.</p> <p>Promote transport operator guide for Thistle Assistance.</p> <p>Link development of journey planner to GO SEStran MaaS app (see below)</p> <p>Continue to use marketing tool kit to promote.</p> <p>Survey users and feedback into programme.</p>	<p>Key stakeholders engaged and participating.</p> <p>Co-operation of transport operators. Increased awareness and use amongst transport operators and public.</p>
Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
<p>RTPI makes public transport more accessible and reliable.</p> <p>The provision of real-time information</p>	 	<p>SEStran will be working with City of Edinburgh Council to develop a new content management system that will improve the</p>	<p>Complete the updating of the SEStran legacy system.</p> <p>Continue to utilise framework for purchase of new screens for the region.</p>	<p>Wider distribution and uptake/use of RTPI across the region.</p> <p>Improve data accuracy for system.</p>



contributes to tackling declining bus patronage in the SEStran region. Increases confidence in public transport.		public facing regional screen network. SEStran works with local authorities using the NOVUS FX system to manage local services and routes.	Work with operators and local authorities on data input and management. Link RTPI to other projects where appropriate. Promote new system with key stakeholders. Increase use and application of NOVUS FX capabilities with Las.	Training on NOVUS FX with Trapeze (owner). Promote use of system capabilities and API feed with 3 rd parties.
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Active Travel Programmes

Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
The active travel programmes contribute to the development and delivery of a regional active travel network , with a particular focus on connecting people and places.		Coordinate future delivery priorities across the network.	Liaise with Local Partners to identify future projects and plan for development.	Successful partnerships with Local Authorities
		Maximise 100% Design funding.	Proposals made to Transport Scotland to progress routes through feasibility and developed design.	Collaboration with consultants, close working with LA partners on specific routes.
		Support sustainable cross boundary projects	Deliver project within budget	Collaboration with consultants
		Increase Active Travel reach	Explore funding opportunities to further promote active travel through innovative projects.	Availability of funding



Cycle Training and Development

Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
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The cycle training and development programme supports the Local Authority Bikeability Co-ordinators to increase the numbers of schools delivering Bikeability Scotland training and expands all ages cycle training opportunities including cargo bike training across the region. To help create and deliver opportunities to enable people in the region to cycle easily and safely.		Support the coordination of Bikeability Scotland Level 2 delivery.	Ensure cooperation and engagement from Bikeability Scotland Co-ordinators. Increase capacity of co-ordinators including through staff and volunteer training.	Cooperation and engagement with Bikeability Scotland Co-ordinators in each Local Authority.
		Develop and support pilots for new Bikeability Scotland delivery models.		
		Identify opportunities for delivering adult cycle training in conjunction with SEStran projects and partners. Develop and support opportunities for cycle training at any age across the region, including for cargo bike use and skills	Ensure delivery of training sessions through SEStran projects and partners.	Identification of opportunities to provide training courses and to effectively engage with a range of audiences. Increasing capacity for the delivery of cycle training.
SURFLOGH				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
SURFLOGH promotes sustainable solutions for urban freight logistics. The pilot with Zedify informs the		Increase awareness of sustainable logistics strategies and approaches.	Project end conference and final report due end March 2023.	Disseminate reports and learnings to targeted stakeholders.
		Develop sustainable logistics strategies	Integrate work with regional freight study and RTS implementation plan.	Stakeholder engagement.






development of a business case for e-cargo bike deliveries in Edinburgh.				Adoption of SURFLOGH approach.
Pathway to commercially successful business models.				
		Deliver final report	Contribute with partners to final report and submit last claim to close project.	Approved by Interreg North Sea JS


Blockchain IN GOvernment

Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
The BLING project will deliver a trial that explores opportunities for the integration of Blockchain in transport. Test bed for new technology.	 	Share and disseminate information about Blockchain technology in Transport.	Post project end explore further use cases for Blockchain technology. Finalise project and close.	Final report and claim complete.


PRIMAAS

Impact	Strategic Objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
The PriMaaS project will deliver greater understanding of best practice in	   	Work with project partners to share and disseminate information about MaaS and DRT tech solutions and	Extend the current trial of a working MaaS app for the region, linking to as many alternative transport modes to create a complete 'plan/book/pay' option	Cooperation from project partners, including

procurement, governance and implementation of mobility as a service and related digital solutions to transport issues in the region		how to apply them in the current context, learning from practice in other European countries and elsewhere.	<p>for implementation. Trial DRT as part of the MaaS pilot.</p> <p>Create a 'playbook' on optimal choices for procurement and governance of MaaS, DRT and related tech solutions for local authority and RTP partners.</p> <p>Conclude the PriMaaS implementation plan.</p> <p>Subject to funding extend MaaS and DRT pilots into 23/4 and beyond.</p>	<p>completion of relevant legal agreements.</p> <p>Successful funding bids to Smarter Choices Smarter Places, contributing councils and other bodies, and/or Transport Scotland.</p> <p>Successful procurement of partners for Year 2 onward of MaaS/DRT project.</p>
Forum & Liaison Groups				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
SEStran Forums facilitate discussion and provide a platform for interested parties to formulate a regional voice in transport-related matters	    	<p>Bring together interested parties and representative groups, across the following areas:</p> <p>Equalities and Access to Healthcare, Integrated Mobility (passenger), Freight and Logistics</p>	<p>Organise topical meetings for each forum events twice annually.</p> <p>Review membership of groups each year to ensure appropriate stakeholders and groups are able to influence and help address transport related issues in the region</p>	Involvement of key stakeholders
Regional Partnership working				
Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
Through active and engaged partnership working, SEStran is		Continue to be involved in pressing transport issues and present a regional	Continue to be involved in transport related policy developments and respond to relevant consultations	Resource availability


able to ensure strategic and regional transport issues are a primary consideration within the development of a wide range of complementary plans and strategies and the development of strategic projects.		voice in transport related matters in the South East of Scotland	Organise stakeholder meetings to address various transport related issues	Cooperation from stakeholders
		Continue to lead by example, delivering sustainability and climate change objectives as an organisation and sharing and contributing knowledge and expertise across regional partners. Maintain and support effective links to Transport Scotland and across all RTP partnerships in Scotland	Provide the Sustainable and Active Travel Fund to help organisations adopt sustainable transport solutions	Involvement of organisations

Bus Partnership Development

Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
The Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) is a £500m Transport Scotland capital fund for the delivery of infrastructure to tackle the impacts of congestion on bus priority and reliability. Bids can be made by partnerships working towards a Bus		<p>BPF is intended to complement the powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which enables local authorities to leverage bus service improvements by working in partnership with bus operators towards a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP).</p> <p>In this context, this work will help develop evidence of</p>	<p>Finalise appraisal work for both partnerships and submit to Transport Scotland for gateway review.</p> <p>Subject to a positive review – develop options to detailed business case stage and design.</p> <p>Work with key stakeholders to progress Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIPs).</p>	<p>Final reports complete by end May 2023</p> <p>June 2023 submitted To Transport Scotland for gateway review.</p> <p>Approval from Transport Scotland to move to next stage with funding.</p>

Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) status.		<p>how bus services could be improved by addressing congestion and developing bus priority measures that may be part of a BSIP Partnership Scheme.</p> <p>STAG appraisals for Midlothian & Forth Valley bus alliances</p>		
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Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)

Impact	Strategic objective	Key focus areas	2023/ 24 Actions	Critical Success Factor
It is SEStran's statutory duty to create and maintain a Regional Transport Strategy. The strategy must be kept up to date to reflect the pace of the changes affecting the transport of people and goods. The RTS provides a regional framework for future developments and interventions.		<p>Following Approval of SEStran 2035 by Scottish Ministers, the promotion of the RTS with all stakeholders and engagement on how best to deliver the policies and actions will be the next key steps.</p> <p>Developing a list of activities and actions to deliver the priorities of the RTS.</p> <p>Create a costed delivery plan for 2023/24 based on the RTS and the</p>	Publish SEStran 2035.	Online publication of RTS
			Ongoing development of the Programmed Investment Plan. This will include 2023/24 budget updates.	Completion and making available the PIP to stakeholders.
			Development of a RTS Communications Plan linked to wider promotional and profile raising of SEStran and the RTS.	Wide engagement and distribution of SEStran 2035. Approval and implementation of a communications plan

		information from the Programmed Investment Plan.		
			Ongoing review of SEStran 2035 actions and policies and existing project commitments including a review of resources needed for delivery	Approval and implementation of a delivery plan for 2023/24

Glossary

SEStran aims to use clear and inclusive language in our publications and reports, but some project names or specific terms aren't commonly used, and many policies use acronyms or abbreviated titles. This glossary is a quick reference point for uncommon terms and abbreviations.

Term or abbreviation

Full title and meaning

BLING	<u>'Blockchain in Local Government'</u> is a project in which SEStran is a partner testing how blockchain can support the delivery and distribution of goods
Blockchain	A system of using coordinated data checks to verify online information exchange – it allows for very secure online transactions
CoMoUK	<u>CoMoUK</u> is the name of a Trust that promotes shared and integrated mobility
COP26	<u>The 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference</u> which is due to take place in Glasgow in November 2021
DRT	Demand Responsive Transport is generally used in the context of bus travel and indicates that the bus is responsive to where its passengers want to join and alight from the service. This has traditionally been the preserve of community transport providers, but is increasingly being used elsewhere by commercial bus operators to replace 'fixed-line' bus routes.
ECMA	The Consortium of <u>East Coast Main Line Authorities</u> (Councils, Combined Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships) along the area served by the East Coast Main Rail Line
Interreg	<u>Interreg North Sea Region</u> is a European Funding programme that helps regional and local governments deliver better policy.
LEZ	<u>Low Emission Zones</u> - being introduced in four of Scotland's cities following provisions for local authorities contained in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019
LRDF	<u>Local Rail Development Fund</u> – funding provided by Transport Scotland
MaaS	Mobility as a Service is a concept of integrating journey options, planning, ticketing and payment, allowing people to more freely choose between different modes of transport or operators
NTS2	The second <u>National Transport Strategy for Scotland</u> , launched in February 2020
PriMaaS	<u>PriMaaS</u> is a project in which SEStran is a partner, testing how Mobility as a Service can assist in delivering more accessible and sustainable regional transport
RTPI	Real Time Passenger Information

RTS	Regional Transport Strategy. SEStran's current RTS is on our website
RTP	Regional Transport Partnerships - there are seven established across Scotland
SEStran	SEStran is the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership
SHARE-North	SHARE-North is a project in which SEStran is a partner – the name reflects the ambition to achieve more use of shared mobility solutions
STAR	Scottish Transport Applications and Research Conference
STPR2	Second Strategic Transport Projects Review for Scotland , led by Transport Scotland
SURFLOGH	SURFLOGH is a project in which SEStran is a partner. The project aims to stimulate sustainable and efficient 'last mile' deliveries in urban areas. The name comes from 'Sustainable Urban Freight Logistics Hubs'



INTEGRATED MOBILITY FORUM
10:00AM THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2022

Present:

Cllr Sally Pattle
Chris Milne
Kevin Collins
Linda Bamford
Ben Ritchie
Doreen Steele
Madeleine Bell
Siobhan Eke
Rebecca Taylor
Cllr Margaret Anslow
Douglas Robertson
George Hazel
Jim Stewart
Cllr Tom Conn
Robina Barton
Carlos Soto
Niall Gardiner
John Geelan
Cllr John McMillan
Jane Findlay
Des Bradley
Jim Grieve
Cllr Russell Imrie
Cllr Ruaridh Bennett
Hattie James
Beth Harley-Jepson
Cllr Jenny Linehan
Nikki Boath

West Lothian Council
East Lothian Council
Falkirk Council
NCM
Lothian Buses
NCM
Midlothian Council
Mobility Ways
Scottish Government
Falkirk Council
Stagecoach Buses

SEStran
West Lothian Council
Zetrans
Sustrans
Tactran
Steer Group
East Lothian Council
Fife Council
Scotrail
SEStran
Midlothian Council
East Lothian Council
SEStran
SEStran
Scottish Borders Council
SEStran

Apologies:

Stuart Lowrie
Cllr Dianne Alexander
Cllr Jane Cox
Christopher Snelling
Victoria Barby
Cllr Jule Bandel
Jason Hedley

City of Edinburgh Council
Midlothian Council
Scottish Borders Council
AOA
Scottish Government
City of Edinburgh Council
Scottish Borders Council

Merry Smith
Cllr Colin Davidson
John Yellowlees
Scott Prentice
Paul White

Tactran
Fife Council

Scotrail
NCM

Ref.		Actions
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
	Councillor Pattle welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies were noted as above.	
2.	Minutes of IMF - 7th October 2021	
	JG updated the group on Item 5 of previous minutes in relation to RTPI. JG explained that there a lot more operators using the system. JG also said the system is almost fully upgraded. The minutes from the previous meeting were then approved.	
3.	Update/discussion on RTS along with STPR2, NPF4, and 20% reduction car km route map	
	<p>JS informed the Forum that the final version of the RTS has now been approved by SEStran Board. It has now been submitted to Scottish Government for approval which is the statutory process.</p> <p>JS conducted his RTS presentation. JS explained that following the statutory consultation, some of the Regional Mobility Theme titles were changed. These are shaded grey in the presentation.</p> <p>JS highlighted that one of the main areas of the RTS development process was Spatial Strategy which consisted of 2 strands. The first strand looked at better connectivity within communities affected by deprivation. The 2nd strand was related to reduction in car kilometres.</p> <p>JS highlighted that NPF4 was published in November 2021 and needed to be considered in relation to the development of the finalisation of the RTS.</p> <p>STPR2 was published in January 2022 which identified key potential transport themes.</p> <p>JS highlighted that one of the key factors that was highlighted within NPF4 and STPR2 was the role for Maas transit to improve urban accessibility within the South East of Scotland. JS highlighted that SEStran took account of these factors and they are now included with the final version of the RTS.</p>	

	<p>With regard to 20% reduction car km route map – JS explained that Scottish Government published a route map for achieving a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 in January 2022 which highlighted the importance of behaviour change. This map is reflected in SEStran policies and RTS.</p> <p>A discussion followed the presentation and the following questions were posed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the best way to drive behaviour change and awareness? – JS explained that SEStran is a Model 1 Regional Transport Partnership and the primary aim is to set the framework within which other transport partners can operate. JG highlighted that due to the pandemic more people are using their cars and a discussion is needed on the best way to encourage people to restart using the buses. - How do you get people back on the bus? JS explained that is about engagement with the operators to jointly encourage greater use and promote safe public transport is and option for people to use. JS said that SEStran would be happy to engage with both bus and rail operators. - DR explained that the government funding has been vital to preserve the current bus network. DR said there has been a strong bounce back in age group 22-60. DR highlighted that the biggest issue is 60+ age group are not using the bus facility. DR stated that a national message is necessary to convince the 60+ age group to return to using bus again following the pandemic. <p>Cllr Pattle congratulated SEStran for all the hard work in developing and submitting the new RTS.</p> <p>MA requested a copy of the presentation slides.</p>	<p>JS/NB</p>
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4.	RTPI/VoyagAR	
	<p>Regio-Mob is an EU project and has identified good practices undertaken during Covid-19 to encourage and sustain public transport use and these were explained. In particular JS conducted a presentation on Thistle Assistance and explained its links with Regio-Mob and VoyagAR.</p> <p>A discussion followed regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engagement with transport operators to improve disability awareness including hidden disabilities amongst front facing staff. - the best way to monitor Thistle Assistance qualitative data. <p>JG highlighted that disability awareness training for front facing transport staff is key. DR explained the training process undertaken by Stagecoach staff.</p> <p>JS & JG to have a discussion with Transport Scotland to determine how to gather information in the effectiveness of Thistle Assistance and how to monitor its qualitative data.</p> <p>JS gave a presentation on VoyagAR. JS gave an overview and explained that user testing was the next step in the process.</p> <p>With regard to RTPI, JG updated the group within Item 2 of this meeting.</p>	JG/JS
5.	GO SEStran (DRT MaaS)	
	<p>HJ gave a presentation on GO SEStran app. HJ explained that the app is now a live working app.</p> <p>HJ provided background and explained that the funding is provided by Transport Scotland MaaS investment fund. HJ explained the funding is only up to March 2023 and SEStran are currently looking for other funding options from end of March 2023.</p> <p>HJ explained the that the objective is to the test concept of MaaS and highlighted that the app is currently being piloted within East Lothian. SEStran are in discussions with other councils to expand the area.</p> <p>DRT is being investigated to include into the app also.</p> <p>A discussion followed and it was suggested adding Safe Places and Thistle Assistance onto the app. HJ highlighted that one of the best features of the app is that journeys can be</p>	

	booked and paid for and that it is specific to local transport providers.	
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6.	Bus Alliance	
	<p>JG provided an update on Bus Alliance explaining that the initiative is to increase bus patronage.</p> <p>JG explained this is a government initiative and bids were accepted from local authorities to develop infrastructure and technology.</p> <p>There are a number of bus partnerships across the SEStran area which are currently under development.</p> <p>JG highlighted that the bus operators are key players. JG mentioned that SEStran are project managing 2 of these projects – Forth Valley and Midlothian Alliances.</p> <p>JG explained that Forth Valley have developed a Case for Change which needs to go through a STAG process. The work is being undertaken by consultants on behalf of the alliances. JG explained that this is currently being reviewed by stakeholders who are developing a public focus group. JG explained that the Case for Change transport planning objectives will require further refining.</p> <p>Midlothian Bus Alliance are at a similar stage in the process as Forth Valley Bus Alliance.</p> <p>JG also explained that these projects are currently going through gateway assessments for Transport Scotland approval to progress to the next stage of the projects..</p> <p>MA requested FVBA information from JG. JG will get information for MA.</p>	JG
7.	GO E-Bike Presentation	
	<p>BHJ gave a presentation on GO E-Bike scheme. BHJ provided an overview of the scheme. BHJ highlighted that a public e-bike scheme was developed and there are currently 5 active stations. BHJ explained that the bikes are public electric hire bikes and an app is used to access these bikes.</p> <p>BHJ explained that ELC are looking to develop new sites in Musselburgh and Prestonpans. Midlothian are currently in the process of identifying 2-3 new stations for this scheme. SEStran are also working with Forth Environment Link which covers Clacks & Falkirk to determine 2 new sites within that region.</p>	

	<p>BHJ explained that SEStran are hoping to engage with local authorities to create a scheme that is interlinked.</p> <p>BHJ explained that at some of the expansion sites, an e-trike with a cargo element is hoping to be incorporated to enable access to people with mobility needs.</p> <p>A discussion followed the presentation. SE offered to provide BHJ with scoping maps to determine demand pockets. JS to pass SE details on to BHJ.</p> <p>A discussion followed the presentation and the following questions were posed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how many non-standard bikes will be available for hire? BHJ is still in discussions with provider regarding the number of bikes. LB will provide contact details for Wheels for Wellbeing to BHJ. - Is there information collated on user numbers at Eskbank and Musselburgh? BHJ explained that membership numbers are collected and an annual survey is sent out by the operator to users. 	<p>JS</p> <p>LB</p>
8.	AOCB	
	There was no AOCB. Cllr Pattle highlighted that topics/priorities for the next meeting can be emailed to NB for including in the next IMF Agenda. Cllr Pattle thanked JG & JS for all their work as they are due to retire at the end of the year.	
9.	Next Meeting	
a)	Topics/priorities for next meeting	
b)	Date of Next Meeting – TBC – April 2023	



**Remote Chief Officer Liaison Group Meeting
13:00 Monday 27th February 2023
Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Anna Herriman (AH)(Chair)

Cheryl Fergie (CF)
Jim Stewart (JS)
Peter Jackson (PJ)
Andrew Ferguson (AF)
Hattie James (HJ)
Peter Forsyth (PF)
Iain Shaw (IS)
John Mitchell (JM)
Chris Cox (CC)
Robbie Beattie (RB)
Graeme Johnstone (GJ)
Keith Luke (KL)
Nicola Gill (NG)
Jamie Robertson (JR)
Lesley Deans (LD)

SEStran

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City of Edinburgh Council
Fife Council
Falkirk Council
Midlothian Council
Scottish Borders Council
Midlothian Council
West Lothian Council
City of Edinburgh Council
Clackmannanshire Council

Apologies:

Brian Butler
Keith Fiskien
Gordon Brown
John Curry
Susan Keenlyside

SEStran
SEStran
West Lothian Council
Scottish Borders Council
Fife Council

Ref.		Actions
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	
	The Chair welcomed the Officers to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.	

2.	Minutes and Matters Arising	
	<p>The minutes from Wednesday 9th November were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>It was noted that Anna Herriman has raised the Rail Companion Scheme with ScotRail.</p>	
3.	Financial Report	
	<p>Iain Shaw gave a verbal update on the Revenue Budget. The main points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 2, The planned budget for coming year shows no change in council requisitions. • Page 6, Appendix 2a: Projects proposed activity 2023-24 undertaken with each council contributing, there is no change to contributions. • Activity notes have been added to the tables within the report: this was an action from the last meeting. <div data-bbox="349 709 402 772" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>2023 02 27 Item 3(a) Revenue Budget 2023</p> <p>AH flagged the shift away from EU funding for planned project activity. There will be more focus on core activities in the next 12 months.</p> <p>PJ noted there will no longer be a split between funding from Transport Scotland and Sustrans. The 100k will be amalgamated in the new financial year.</p> <p>This report will go to Performance and Audit Committee and then to The Partnership Board Meeting on 17th March.</p>	
4.	Active Travel Update	
	<p>Peter Jackson provided an update on Active Travel and the key points were noted:</p> <p>Strategic Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are routes in Falkirk, West Lothian, Clackmannanshire and Scottish Borders. • Utilities investigations are ongoing this year to take routes to the next stages. • A proposal has gone into Transport Scotland for funding for 2023-24, this has been approved. • SEStran have responded to Transport Scotland as part of the RTPs about future funding models, laying out a case for regional governance for extra funds. • There has been some allocation of budget for more upcoming routes on the strategic network. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritisations are being looked at to see if changes in data are making a difference. • Transport Scotland have stated there must be an active travel strategy in place to apply for funding. • SEStran are using strategic network as the strategy document to identify new routes. <p>Vivacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contract is in place to deliver monitoring units for routes that SEStran have been investigating. • It was agreed in January that a long term contract would be set up across 4 local authorities to gain implementation data. • SEStran are in the process of identifying installation requirements. • It has been noted that there may be an opportunity to tie in with a project in Fife Council, but all partners could engage in this and digital infrastructure could be shared. • There is a hope this information could be shared on the SEStran website and Cycling Scotland open data platform. 	
5.	Freight	
	<p>Peter Jackson updated the group on Freight in Keith Fiskien's absence. The below points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report from AECOM with preliminary options has been submitted to Transport Scotland. • The team at Transport Scotland are working through LRDF funds but do have a back log. • Transport Scotland are looking at St Andrews StARLink. • Business cases from SEStran EU projects will be fed into future freight work Findings will be shared and promoted. • SURFLOGH and CONNECT are winding down in coming months. • Developments with Forth Ports and Green Ports will be monitored closely. <p>PF asked if there will be an extension to the LRDF fund as the fund ends on 31st March. PJ thinks there will be a carry on, as staff have moved teams in Transport Scotland to help with the back log.</p> <p>RB stated there is a £20 Million UK grant for welfare facilities for HGV drivers, and this may be an opportunity for funding in Scotland particularly around the A720 corridor. He posted the below links into the chat facility.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hgv-parking-and-driver-welfare-grant-scheme-guidance-for-applicants/hgv-parking-and-driver-welfare-grant-scheme-guidance-and-application-form</p>	

	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/news/20-million-to-improve-roadside-facilities-for-hgv-drivers</p> <p>JS stated The Scottish Government are developing a delivery plan for HGV welfare through NTS2 and STPR2. AF said SEStran are keen to assist Local Authorities to join up bids for funding. There may be an opportunity for a regional approach.</p> <p>JR updated on the STPR2 delivery plan. Contents and timescales are not set in stone. Edinburgh Council have submitted a City Region Deal paper to Transport Scotland to request a meeting with the Minister. Discussions from this group could potentially be on the agenda in future meetings with the Minister. There are more discussions to be had on how to seek input and engagement in future meetings.</p> <p>AH requested that PJ and KF take the action to review potential options, share opportunities from Transport Scotland and Scottish Government for funding HGV driver welfare and facilities including EV charging and report back to this group.</p>	PJ & KF
6.	Regional Transport Strategy	
	<p>Jim Stewart updated the Chief Officers on the Programmed Investment Plan and The Regional Transport Strategy. The following points were raised and discussed:</p> <p>Programmed Investment Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim thanked everyone for helping the consultants pull together the information. • There are no budget commitments at the moment, this will be reflected in the investment plan. • Final part of the work is pulling tother the mapped database, to share files and work with local authorities directly. <p>Regional Transport Strategy</p> <p>SEStran have had feedback from Transport Scotland. Minor adjustments have been made to strengthen the document. Changes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting bus rapid transport in STPR2. • Walking and wheeling being an important part of the journey. • HGV hydrogen fuelling strategy across the region. • EV charging. • 20% car reduction, making it clear everyone has a part to play. <p>The Regional Transport Strategy has been submitted to the Minister and the hope is to take it to the March Partnership Board.</p> <p>JS will circulate a Draft report to the group before the Board to highlight the key changes.</p>	JS

	There was a discussion on how best to achieve 20% car reduction across the region. The conclusion was this may not be an achievable target, especially in rural areas, although CEC's more ambitious target for the city were noted.	
7.	GoSEStran	
	<p>Hattie James updated on GoSEStran and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The App was launched in August 2022 using the Transport Scotland MaaS Investment Fund that was previously to last only to 31st March but has now been extended. • There are fortnightly meetings taking place and there have been two open learning sessions to share knowledge and the latest updates and issues. • The licenses with Tactran and Fuse have been extended to end of June 2023. • The target of 1000 users has been reached. • SEStran have been working with Tactran and Fuse to explore other funding streams. • A bid will be going into Smarter Choices Smarter Places, this would potentially fund the license for a further 12 months. • A new procurement exercise for a tech provider will be happening soon and may include Aberdeen City Council. <p>An East Lothian DRT service running between Tranent and Humble goes live in early March. The operator is Prentice Coaches and this is a similar route to the 109 currently running in Haddington. There are fixed stops within the town and DRT service outside the town.</p> <p>AF said discussions with Borders Council were appreciated. Designing a DRT route is a complicated process. MaaS and DRT are part of the solution to 20% car reduction, but its effect on this metric is hard to measure.</p> <p>AH said people should come along to open learning network sessions as there is lots of information to share.</p>	
8.	Proposal for a Regional EV Strategy	
	<p>Anna Herriman talked about a regional coordinated approach to an EV Strategy. SEStran is looking to find out which councils are comfortable sharing a procurement approach. It was discussed that the centralisation of agreement would need a signatory and perhaps could follow a similar approach to the RTPI and Thistle Assistance provisions.</p> <p>AH is looking forward to the second instalment of the Scottish Futures Trust grant, collaborative working and pulling together something to procure the infrastructure.</p> <p>AF will circulate a report on a regional approach in the HITRANS region.</p>	AF

9.	AOCB	
	<p>Jim Stewart is retiring at the end of March, this will be his last Chief Officers meeting. AH thanked him for his commitment to working on the Regional Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Anna Herriman is also leaving SEStran to work with Midlothian Council. Members wished them both well for the future.</p>	
10.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The proposed date of the next meeting is scheduled for 2:00pm on Wednesday 24 th May 2023.	

EQUALITIES AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FORUM
10:00am Tuesday 28th February 2023

Present:

Doreen Steele (Chair) (DS)

Cheryl Fergie (Minute Taker) (CF)

Brian Butler (BB)

Andrew Ferguson (AF)

Peter Jackson (PJ)

Keith Fiskien (KF)

Jim Stewart (JS)

Hattie James (HJ)

Angela Chambers (AC)

Peter Jackson (PJ)

Anna Herriman (AH)

Cllr Jule Bandel (JB)

Cllr Margaret Anslow (MA)

Cllr Russell Imrie (RI)

Cllr Derek Glen (DG)

Cllr Paul Garner (PG)

Linda Bamford (LB)

Jonathan Padmore (JP)

Mike Harrison (MH)

Anne Cowan (ACo)

Fakhriya Abdulkadir (FA)

Ghanima Abdulkarim (GA)

Kirstie Henderson (KH)

Non-Councillor Member

SEStran

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Falkirk Council &

SEStran Board Member

Midlothian Council &

SEStran Board

Member

Fife Council & SEStran

Board Member

Falkirk Council &

SEStran Board

Member

Non-Councillor Member

Tactran

Midlothian Disability Accessibility Panel

Fife Council

The Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundation

RNIB Scotland

Apologies:

Cllr Jane Cox	West Lothian Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Sally Pattle	West Lothian Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Colin Davidson	Fife Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Fiona Law	Clackmannanshire Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Dianne Alexander	Midlothian Council & SEStran Board Member
Cllr Tom Conn	West Lothian Council & SEStran Board Member
Catriona Burness	RNIB Scotland
Tony McRae	Fife Council
Ken Reid	East Lothian Access Panel
Gillian Hallard	RNIB Scotland
Iain Sneddon	NHS Lothian
Lucy Logan	Transport Scotland
Rhianne Forrest	Children's Health Scotland
Allan Lindsay	Young Scot

Ref.		Actions
1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Doreen Steele welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.	
2.	MINUTES FROM WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2022- AND ACTIONS ARISING	
	<p>The minutes of the last meeting were approved.</p> <p>It was noted that Cheryl Fergie will circulate the information from the Action: BHJ to find out revenue, the cost of the scheme, number of users and level of subsidy and feed this information back to Cllr Lawson.</p>	CF
3.	ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL FRAMEWORK ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Lucy Logan from Transport Scotland submitted her apologies, so this item was not covered.	
4.	GO SESTRAN PROJECT, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE USING DRT & MAAS	
	<p>Andrew Ferguson & Jonathan Padmore presented slides on GO SEStran and Go NHS TAYSIDE. The following points were raised, a discussion took place.</p> <div data-bbox="323 947 383 1010" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>2023 02 28 SestransEqualitiesAccr</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships between Health Boards and Transport Partnerships. • The challenges of bringing transport planning into appointment setting stage. • RTPi has been linked with the GO SEStran app. • Linked to concessionary travel. • Keeping the app simple with less adverts. • The benefit of sending texts to patients with a link to the app along with an appointment letter. • Time pressures on people that are setting appointments. • The financial benefit to the NHS if people can attend appointments. • Journey planning with confidence helps reduce anxiety. • The Monitoring and Evaluation Report will include a section on protected characteristics. • The suggestion of including if people need any assistance to the app. • The need to let people who will use the services get involved at the design stage. <p>Linda Bamford said the Ambulance Service is updating their patient needs assessment. It's important to signpost to alternative transport</p>	

	<p>modes and makes sense to think about this. Transport needs to be an integral part of the care pathway.</p> <p>Jonathan Padmore noted he will continue to look at protected characteristics, how best to engage people and try to pull together the right people to map out transport planning and journeys into the process. He is involved in ongoing conversations with Tayside NHS.</p> <p>Doreen Steele said this app has great potential and additional funding will help. She noted that the entire clinic system needs to be looked at as there are millions of missed appointments per annum. She questioned how this forum can influence joined up thinking and stated there is lots of work to be done.</p>	
5.	THISTLE ASSISTANCE	
	<p>Keith Fiskien gave a brief verbal update: The Thistle Assistance Programme is going through an internal audit process, this has enabled SEStran to make improvements to the mailout systems. The survey design has been delayed due to the audit process. There are posters and leaflets being distributed to transport providers to create more awareness. The VoyagAR app is progressing, there will be more apps integrated with this in the future. There is still work to be done on final testing and adjustments.</p> <p>Linda Bamford stated the work on the survey is integral to help measure equalities outcomes as the number of cards sent out does not measure this. Keith Fiskien agreed.</p>	
6.	REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY	
	<p>Jim Stewart gave a brief verbal update: The draft RTS has been submitted to Transport Scotland and as far as Jim is aware the report is now with the Minister. He is hopeful the final RTS report will be brought to the March Board meeting for approval.</p> <p>Doreen Steele thanked Jim for all his work on the RTS and wished him well in his retirement.</p>	
7.	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	
	<p>The Draft Update 2023: Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025 & Mainstreaming Report was circulated prior to the meeting. Angela Chambers presented the report to the forum for feedback & comment. There was discussion and comments made as below:</p> <div data-bbox="329 1682 383 1745" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>2023 02 28 Item 7 Draft Update Report I</p> <p>Linda Bamford thinks the report was an easy read. There was a good refresh of public sector equality duties A,B & C. Feedback was given on</p>	

	<p>organisations Linda Bamford has mentioned.</p> <p>Cllr Bandel said it was an interesting read and gave a few suggestions for the Increasing Diversity section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking into ways of making working habits more inclusive for disabled people, set standards for disabilities. • Measuring gender balance, including nonbinary to make the process more inclusive. • Gender pay gap analysis. • Look at occupational differences between genders. <p>Brian Butler will pick this up to include suggestions if possible.</p> <p>Angela Chambers said the information SEStran collects will be more detailed than what is published, information will go to the succession planning committee in May to improve diversity.</p> <p>Doreen Steele suggested bringing a report by Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) (Transport to Health and Social Care December 2019) to the next Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum for discussion.</p>	<p>BB</p> <p>DS</p>
8.	LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND, THE STATE OF HEALTH AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN SCOTLAND	
	<p>The Health Foundation had been invited to this forum to discuss Leave no one behind, The state of health and health inequalities in Scotland report. There was no response. Doreen Steele would like to comment back to them that there wasn't enough detail in the report about transport related issues.</p> <p>Linda Bamford suggested linking up with Just Transition Commission as they have raised transport in some of their publications. She thought it would be a good idea to try and get both organisations along to one of the next forums. Doreen agreed, this will be picked up as an action.</p>	DS BB CF
9.	AOCB	
	There was no other business to report.	
10.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	28 th September 2023	

Action Status Report

EQUALITIES & ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FORUM

Meeting Date: 28 February 2023

Minute/Date	Agenda Item	Action	Person	Date Initiated	Due Date	Current Status	Date Completed
31/03/22	LOOKING AHEAD – EARLY ENGAGEMENT WITH NHS ON FUTURE PLANS AFFECTING TRANSPORT	Flag up that NHS Lothian need to link up with RTPs and members of this group regarding movement of services.	IS	31/03/22		Outstanding, Iain Sneddon did not attend on 12th October 2022. Iain Sneddon did not attend on 28th February 2023.	
12/10/22	GO EBIKE	To feedback information to Cllr Lawson regarding revenue, cost of the scheme, number of users and level of subsidy.	BHJ	12/10/22		Cheryl Fergie circulated a response to this action to all Equalities and Access to Healthcare members.	02/03/23
12/10/22	ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL FRAMEWORK ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN	This item to be kept on future agendas for progress and updates.	CF	12/10/22		No TS representative attended the forum, Unable to discuss this item.	
28/02/23	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	Angela Chambers will make amendments to the report to reflect Linda Bamford's comments on "assess the impact of equality and the hate crime charter".	AC	28/02/23			
28/02/23	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	Linda Bamford will circulate information to assist with Go e-Bike funding and procurement to SEStran.	LB	28/02/23		Information sent to SEStran to follow up	28/02/23

Minute/Date	Agenda Item	Action	Person	Date Initiated	Due Date	Current Status	Date Completed
28/02/23	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	Brian Butler will bring a report to the next EAH forum with regards to what SEStran are doing with Go e-Bike funding and procurement, including speaking to the organisations Linda Bamford has mentioned.	BB	28/02/23	28/09/23		
28/02/23	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	Brian Butler will include Cllr Bandel's suggestions to the Increasing Diversity section of the report if possible.	BB	28/02/23			
28/02/23	DRAFT UPDATE 2023: EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2021-2025 & MAINSTREAMING REPORT	Doreen Steele suggested bringing a report by Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) (Transport to Health and Social Care) to the next forum for discussion.	DS	28/02/23		Doreen emailed the Transport to Health and Social Care Report to Cheryl Fergie.	28/02/23
28/02/23	LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND, THE STATE OF HEALTH AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN SCOTLAND	Doreen Steele would like to comment back to The Health Foundation that there wasn't enough detail in the report about transport related issues. SEStran will try to coordinate both The Health Foundation and Just Transition Commission to a future forum for discussion on transport related issues.	DS BB CF	28/02/23			