

PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ
and via Microsoft Teams
on Friday 8 September 2023
1.00pm**

PRESENT:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor Imrie (Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Councillor Arthur	City of Edinburgh Council
	Councillor Pattle	West Lothian Council
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
	Keith Fiskin	SEStran
	Lesley Birrell	City of Edinburgh Council
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Christopher Gardner	Audit Scotland

Action by

A1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

A2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Derek Glen (Fife Council), Simon Hindshaw (Non-Councillor Member), Councillor Fiona Law (Clackmannanshire Council), Councillor Jenny Linehan (Scottish Borders Council), Councillor John McMillan (East Lothian Council), John Scott (Non-Councillor Member) and Gavin King (City of Edinburgh Council).

A3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

A4. MINUTES

To approve the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 2 June 2023 as a correct record.

A5

EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

The external auditor advised Members that the audit was substantially complete but that two issues required to be addressed in the accounts before a final opinion could be formed.

The two issues raised in the accounts related to pension asset and liability and debtor entries on ERDF Funding.

The Principal Accountant acknowledged the tight timelines and advised that officers were working as quickly as possible to respond to the queries which had been raised by the external auditor. Work was also being undertaken with the actuary and partnership officers to address the debtor entries in the accounts.

Members agreed it was important that the external audit report and the accounts should be submitted to the Performance and Audit Committee for detailed scrutiny in advance of being presented to the Partnership Board for approval.

Decision

- 1) To note the verbal update from the external auditor.
- 2) To agree that a special meeting of the Performance and Audit Committee would be arranged to consider the external auditor's report and the audited annual accounts, on a date and time to be agreed, in advance of the full Board meeting scheduled to be held on 22 September 2023.

A6.

BUSINESS PLANNING AND STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

The Senior Partnership Manager provided a verbal update on the working group which had been established to work on the Partnership's next iteration of its business plan.

The working group included Councillor Pattle, Doreen Steele and Simon Hindshaw and had already met on a couple of occasions. Meetings had been timetabled on a monthly basis on Monday mornings. The Senior Partnership Manager advised that any other members interested in participating in the Group would be welcome.

A positive start had been made and it was anticipated that the newly formatted business plan would be available to submit to the Board in March 2024.

Decision

To note the update.

(Reference – Performance and Audit Committee 2 June 2023 (item A6)

A7. CONCORDAT BETWEEN SESTRAN AND THE EDINBURGH AND SOUTHEAST SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL

An update was provided on the progress being made on discussions between SEStran and the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal towards:

- aligning their activities to ensure that regional plans could deliver shared outcomes through targeted transport interventions.
- defining how new transport interventions would progress from strategy to delivery through the appropriate governance structures depending on the activity.

A working group had been established comprising representatives from SEStran, each of the six local authorities covered by the City Region Deal and the City Region Deal Programme Management Office.

The working group had developed a draft concordat which had now been considered by each City Region Deal local authority. The draft concordat had also been shared with Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils for consideration.

As a non-binding operational document, the concordat had not required any formal approval and had been accepted by all parties at Director level with minimal amendments.

The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy had been expanded to cover Falkirk and Clackmannanshire and the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan (formerly Regional Transport Masterplan) now covered all eight local authorities.

Members requested that officers consider the equalities implications and impact assessments section in terms of future reporting.

The Partnership Director confirmed that equalities impact reporting had been discussed and that this would be a real focus going forward.

Decision

- 1) To note that the Concordat would be presented to the Partnership Board meeting on 22 September 2023.
- 2) To note that officers would consider the equalities impact assessment aspects of future reporting.

(Reference – report by the SEStran Partnership Director, submitted)

A8. DEVELOP TO DELIVER UPDATE

The Partnership Director provided a verbal update on national transport governance and specifically the Develop to Deliver Report on optimising the role of Regional Transport Partnerships in furthering improvements to transport in Scotland.

Between 2013 and the start of the pandemic a lot of work had been done on the Strategy. Work had been commissioned by Jacobs Consultants who had developed a range of options with the preferred option being that prominence should be given to a regional approach to transport governance, with Regional Transport Partnerships and Growth Deals working closely together to deliver transport improvements.

The 7 Regional Transport Partnerships had been working jointly to refresh the Develop to Deliver Report and good progress was being made across a number of key areas.

Decision

To note the verbal update and that a paper providing further details on the Develop to Delivery Strategy would be submitted to the next meeting of the Performance and Audit Committee on 17 November 2023.

A9. STAFFING UPDATE

An update was provided on the review of the organisational structure within the Partnership.

The review had been conducted in consultation with SEStran staff, SEStran's Human Resources Adviser and Financial Accountant and a specialist job evaluation consultant to devise a long-term and flexible solution for staffing to enable effective and efficient delivery of key priorities, tackled the challenges being faced by the organisation and to provide a structure to support the development of all staff.

The revised organisational structure was set out in appendix 1 of the report by the Business Manager. All staffing and resourcing activity had been carried out within agreed budgets and expenditure levels.

This included:

- The promotion of Keith Fiskin to Senior Partnership Manager
- The fulltime appointment of Beth Harley-Jepson to Projects

Officer (Beth was previously employed by Cycling Scotland but spent 50% of her time on SEStran project work)

- The appointment of a new Strategy Manager, who will join SEStran on 31 October
- The appointment of a new Communications and Marketing Officer, who will join SEStran on 23 October
- The appointment of a new Programme Manager, who will join SEStran on 20 November

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the SEStran Business Manager 1 September 2023, submitted)

A10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 17 November 2023 at 1pm.