

**Remote Chief Officer Liaison Group Meeting  
14:00 Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Brian Butler	SEStran
Rachael Murphy	SEStran
Michael Melton	SEStran
Beth Harley-Jepson	SEStran
Angela Chambers	SEStran
Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
Christopher Cox	Falkirk Council
Iain Shaw	Edinburgh Council
Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
John Mitchell	Fife Council
Derek Oliver	Midlothian Council
Robbie Beattie	Midlothian Council
Rory Wilkinson	Department for Transport
Lauren Gelling	Department for Transport
Jamie Robertson	Edinburgh Council
Peter Forsyth	East Lothian Council
Robbie Beattie	Midlothian Council

**Apologies:**

Lesley Deans	Clackmannanshire Council
Ian Lennock	East Lothian Council
Jenni Craig	Scottish Borders Council
Keith Fiskin	SEStran
Anna Herriman	Midlothian Council
Kevin Anderson	Midlothian Council

Ref.		Actions
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</b>	
	The Chair welcomed the Officers to the meeting, Introductions were completed and apologies noted as above.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	
	The minutes from Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 were agreed as a correct record.	

<b>3.</b>	<b>Financial Report</b>	
	<p>Iain Shaw provided an update on the Financial Reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a forecast of £37,000 underspend in the current financial year budget on core expenditure, this will be carried forward</li> <li>• The projects budget is in line with what was reported to Partnership Board in December</li> <li>• Next year's budget includes the Scottish Government Grant of £782,000 &amp; Council Requisitions of £190,000</li> <li>• The budget plan presented to the PB in Dec has been updated where required with no changes anticipated</li> <li>• The budget plan won't include Active Travel Behaviour Change Funding, which is likely to move from Transport Scotland to RTPs until this has been confirmed.</li> </ul>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Active Travel Behaviour Change</b>	
	<p>Michael Melton &amp; Beth Harley-Jepson presented slides in relation to Active Travel Behaviour Change, the below topics were included and discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Model</li> <li>• Regional Funding Context</li> <li>• TS Proposed changes</li> <li>• New Funding Model</li> <li>• Progress to Date</li> <li>• Purpose of the Regional Plan</li> <li>• The Regional Plan</li> <li>• Next Steps</li> </ul> <p>MM noted there is a final workshop with LA partners taking place tomorrow, with final plan being submitted on Friday. Third party providers will be contacted and TS officials will sign off the agreement by 28th February. The awards should be going out to third parties by mid April 24.</p> <p>BB stated detailed discussions with each LA are ongoing. This is a huge step for SEStran and it shows Government commitment to taking a regional approach.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>DFT in Scotland</b>	
	<p>Rory Wilkison presented on DFT in Scotland, the presentation included the items below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfT's UK-wide priorities</li> <li>• Who are the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland division</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Travel England</li> <li>• Office for Zero Emission Vehicles</li> <li>• Zero Emission Buses</li> </ul> <p>There was discussion relating to the above topics and the main points were as follows.</p> <p>BB said this was an interesting presentation and has had great progress within a couple of months working with Rory and Lauren from DfT. He raised the Importance to keep dialogue open and discuss things openly with DfT as they can offer additional funding.</p> <p>LG noted the presentation topics were aligned with COs agenda items but will be happy to have introduction discussions with each LA to go into detail for each area. DfT held a Transport Conference last November in Edinburgh with the next one possibly being in Cardiff. This was a good opportunity to share best practice. LG will circulate dates of any future events.</p> <p>PF asked if he could be updated on the UK connectivity review that Sir Peter Henry completed in 2021. LG said there was a response issued last year and is happy to take offline for discussions. JR and GJ would also like to be involved. PF will facilitate.</p> <p>JR would like an opportunity to discuss funding for trams, workplace parking levy, BPF and net zero with DfT. LG has been in email communication with Paul Lawrence and will bring JR into the discussion.</p>	<p><b>LG</b></p> <p><b>PF</b></p> <p><b>LG</b></p>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy</b>	
	<p>BB provided a high-level overview of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. The below points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior steering group agreed to establish governance with membership for each LA, 3 or 4 names still needed</li> <li>• EV Strategy will be a standing item on CRD Directors' agenda</li> <li>• Recommendation of a short life working group to draft a Programme Initiation Document that will be presented back to CRD Directors, Clacks, Falkirk and Dumfries and Galloway for approval</li> <li>• EV Forum to remain in place for support</li> <li>• Additional support from consultants could be used to fill gaps</li> <li>• SFT and SBC have developed tight but achievable timelines</li> <li>• Council endorsement agreement for a fully collaborative approach needed by July</li> <li>• Procurement documentation by September</li> <li>• Go to market by October</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from charge point operators - there is strategic value in pulling authorities together</li> <li>• Successful CPO to start mobilising in July 2025</li> <li>• EV Task Force to provide ongoing management, future strategies and monitor changes in technology</li> <li>• Possible extension on 2026 deadline for funding applications</li> <li>• EV forum on 27th February will provide more detail and opportunity for questions</li> </ul> <p>BB is attending a meeting between Glasgow CRD PMO and TS to discuss the possible extension to the timescales for dissolving ChargePlace Scotland.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Bus Strategy</b>	<b>BB</b>
	<p>Rachael Murphy provided an update on the regional bus strategy.</p> <p>RM ran through the context, risk and opportunity and the below points are noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 work packages over 14 months to complete in April 25</li> <li>• Systra and Stantec have been appointed as consultants</li> <li>• Working on an inception report and stakeholder engagement strategy</li> <li>• Unclear legislation from TS</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul> <p>RM will circulate the engagement strategy when its ready.</p> <p>JR raised the points below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parts of the strategy working well but some need more input</li> <li>• Bus Partnership Funding has been paused, need to seek assurance that it will re-open</li> <li>• The way the previous fund was administered was not beneficial</li> <li>• Need a resource in TS to process applications</li> <li>• Background work continues although funding has been paused</li> <li>• Only £29m been drawn from a £500m fund</li> <li>• The need for multiyear funding</li> <li>• TRO processes</li> <li>• Everything to be ready for April 25 as not to delay things further</li> <li>• Vulnerability of the bus sector</li> </ul>	<b>RM</b>

	<p>JR stated that CEC will be writing to the Minister to raise some of the concerns above. There is a need to seek assurance from the Minister that the fund will be returning.</p> <p>BB had a meeting with the Minister in Haddington regarding DRT and is currently writing a follow up letter. BB agreed to add a paragraph about the need for multiyear funding and to stress the need to make sure everything ready to go in April 2025. JR also asked BB to mention P&amp;R.</p> <p>BB agreed to look at the P&amp;R strategy, he will discuss this with RM and KF and feed back to JR.</p> <p>RB noted Midlothian are a small authority. There is frustration as lots of work has already happened, but it's hard to keep going with limited resources. There is difficulty prioritising workload with lack of funding and weighing up costings.</p>	<p><b>BB</b></p> <p><b>BB</b></p>
<b>8.</b>	<b>RTS Delivery Plan</b>	
	<p>Rachael Murphy updated the COs on the RTS Delivery Plan and covered the following points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESESCRD Mobility + Regional Prosperity Framework + RTS + MCA</li> <li>• Creating a single document for easier prioritisation of interventions</li> <li>• Cross referencing RTS actions with local plans</li> <li>• Short-life working group with support from LAs to agree definitions/ scoring etc</li> </ul> <p>PF said Individual LAs have their own processes to be followed. He is keen for everyone to have these signed off at Board level. PF also asked about timelines, RM will share a draft of timelines from Ewan Doyle.</p> <p>BB noted LA transport strategies have to align with the RTS. Workshops will provide support for local priorities and help prioritise actions from the strategy.</p>	<p><b>RM</b></p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Draft partnership Board Agenda</b>	
	<p>BB Provided an update on the draft partnership Board Agenda for the next meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>JM suggested the Develop to Deliver report could go out as a discussion paper, BB agreed to share the document.</p>	<p><b>BB</b></p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
	<p>The proposed date of the next meeting is scheduled for 2:00pm on 22nd May 2024.</p>	