SEStran Annual Report and Business Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the draft Annual Report which outlines the activity undertaken by the partnership in the year to end March 2024 and the Business Plan for the year April 2024 to March 2025.

1.2 The Annual Report provides an overview of SEStran's project portfolio. It highlights the contributions that SEStran has made to transport in the region over the last year, in line with the agreed objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and SEStran's Business Plan.

1.3 It also updates the Partnership Board on the Business Plan for 2024 -2025 and advises on the new structures for displaying the plan and its subsequent reporting which was reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 7th June 2024.

1.4 The previous 3-year business plan format has been adjusted to a 1-year plan to accommodate the new People and Place planning and future funding mechanisms.

2. NEW BUSINESS PLAN BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 The P&A Committee set up a short-life working group in 2023 with the remit of reviewing the approach to business planning and reporting. P&A members on the group were Cllr Sally Pattle, and non-Councillor members Simon Hindshaw and Doreen Steele.

2.2 The focus of the working group was to align strategy, activity and reporting more closely to improve future planning and operational effectiveness. It was also anticipated that this would encourage end-to-end ownership of the project and strategy lifecycle by Committee members.

2.3 Officers accordingly restructured the plan itself and its subsequent reporting, in accordance with the working group's feedback. Notable changes are aligning delivery to RTS actions where appropriate, improved quarterly reporting format (see item B1.) and improved budget tracking.

3. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR 2024/25

3.1 The draft Business Plan for the current year from March 2024 to March 2025 is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 The plan has been divided into separate sections:
   ▪ Strategy – including RTS development and monitoring

- Projects
- People & Place Plan
- Communications
- Groups – includes forums and working groups (e.g. rail)

3.3 The draft budget for the plan period is outlined in the Business Plan for the Partnership Board to approve.

3.4 Any underspend that is approved in the final accounts for 2023/24 will be added to the budget for 2024/25 and can be used to deliver Business Plan activity.

3.5 The Business Plan was reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee at the meeting on the 7th of June. Officers will incorporate feedback to refine the plan.

3.6 The Business Plan will be monitored by the quarterly Projects and Strategy Performance report which will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee with any issues brought to the attention of the Partnership Board for review and action.

4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WORK AND FUNDING

4.1 The Business Plan includes project proposals which have been submitted to potential funders and are awaiting a response. If successful, these will be added to the reporting and monitoring plan. These are detailed in Appendix 1.

4.2 The Partnership will continue to explore opportunities for new projects that support the delivery of the RTS.

5. COMBINED PUBLICATION

5.1 The Partnership has in the past published the Annual Report and Business Plan as separate documents at different times of the year.

5.2 Publishing both documents at the same time and as one document will deliver a better narrative for stakeholders, a greater understanding of the activity delivered and planned and how the two elements link together.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the Partnership Board:

(a) Note the contents of the draft document and any comments on the draft document are welcomed for discussion
(b) Note the Draft Annual Report and Business Plan shown in Appendix 1 and approve the combined document approach
(c) Approve the 2024/25 Budget
(d) Approve the Partnership Director to amend the draft considering any comments and finalise for publication and circulation

Keith Fisken
Senior Partnership Manager
21st June 2024

Appendix 1: Draft Annual Report 2023 – 2024 and Business Plan 2024 - 2025

Policy Implications	The Annual Report and Business Plan will align with SEStran's established and emerging policies and the Regional Transport Strategy.
Financial Implications	The Business Plan will be subject to formal Board approval of proposed budgets in year 2024 – 25 and subsequent years. Cost for publication can be met from within existing budget.
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 the project level.

2023-24 Annual Report.

Contents

Foreword

<mark>To be completed.</mark>

Cllr Colin Davidson, Partnership Chair

Cllr Colin Davidson
Chair SEStran

Who we are

SEStran is the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership. We are one of seven statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. SEStran is a statutory Regional Transport Partnership covering the council areas of City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

SEStran's Vision

A South-East of Scotland fully integrated transport system that will be efficient, connected, and safe; create inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable places to live, work and visit; be affordable and accessible to all, enabling people to be healthier; and delivering the region's contribution to net zero emissions targets.

(INSERT INFOGRAPHICS OF THE REGION AS A SNAPSHOT) To be developed at publication.

SEStran's Team

SEStran has a staff of 9 as of March 2024:

Partnership Director – Brian Butler

Senior Partnership Manager – Keith Fisken

Strategy Manager – Rachael Murphy

Programme Manager – Michael Melton

Project Officer – Beth Harley Jepson

Communication and Marketing Officer – Cameron Duck

Business Manager – Angela Chambers

Business Support Officer – Cheryl Fergie

Business Support Assistant – Nikki Boath

SEStran's Board

The Partnership Board consists of 20 elected members from the partnership local authorities and 9 appointed non-councillor members, meeting quarterly.

Cllr Colin Davidson (Chair) Cllr Robin Lawson (Deputy Chair) Cllr Sally Pattle (Deputy Chair) Cllr Russell Imrie (Chair of Performance and Audit Committee and Deputy Chair of The Board) Cllr Margaret Anslow Cllr Jenny Linehan Cllr Jane Cox Cllr Paul Garner Cllr Tom Conn Cllr Colin Cassidy Cllr Sanne Dijkstra-Downie Cllr Marie-Clair Munro Cllr Danny Aston Cllr Fiona Law Cllr Derek Glen Cllr Ruaridh Bennett Cllr John McMillan Cllr Denis Coyne Cllr Scott Arthur Cllr Jule

Bandel Alastair Couper Dr Doreen Steele Kate Sherry Linda Bamford Paul White Simon Hindshaw Callum Hay Geoff Duke John Scott

Local Authority Partners

SEStran consists of 8 local authorities:
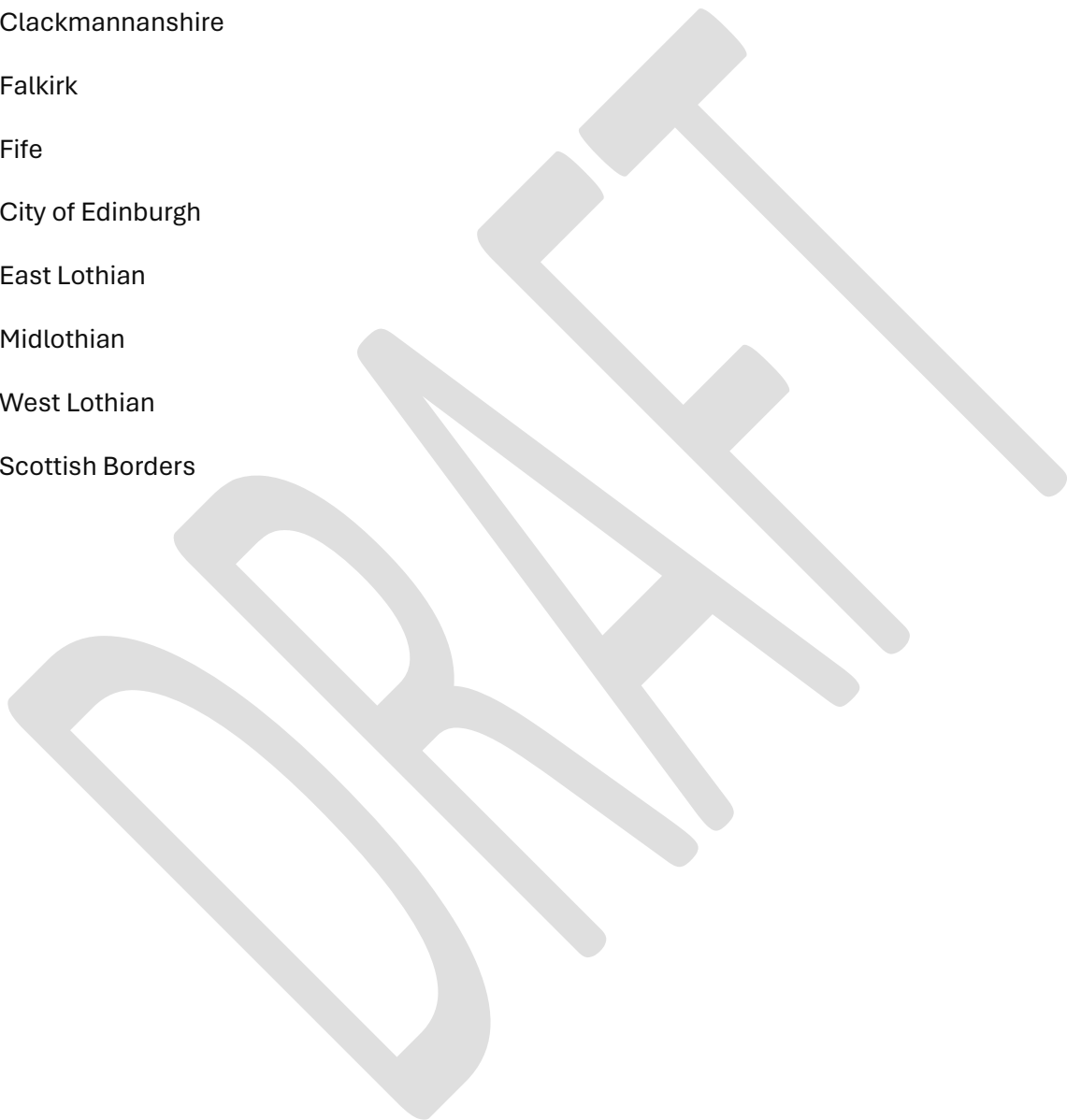
Clackmannanshire

Falkirk

Fife

City of Edinburgh

East Lothian

Midlothian

West Lothian

Scottish Borders

What we do

Regional Transport Strategy - 2035

What is the Regional Transport Strategy – 2035?

Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) provides a comprehensive framework and direction for transportation in the southeast of Scotland area. The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. mandates the production of a statutory RTS, serving as a strategic framework for transport management and investment within the Partnership area.

The RTS, initiated in November 2020 is progressing on track. It aims to provide a regional framework for managing future travel demand, behaviour, and developing the region's transport system, aligning with the National Transport Strategy 2, National Planning Framework 4, Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019, and other relevant spatial and economic strategies.

RTS's milestones achieved include the completion of draft work on the Programmed Investment Plan (PIP) by consultants S82, publication of the RTS and its accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the SEStran website, and approval by the Scottish Ministers and SEStran Partnership Board.

Recent activities include engagement with the ESECRD grouping to align with transport delivery plan workstream, and refining PIP work by integrating case studies with consultants S82.

Planned activities include the development of an action plan matrix, integration into the SEStran Business Plan for 2024 to 2027, mapping baseline and Gap analysis, setting up a working group, and determining criteria for 'Regional' and 'Cross-boundary' projects. Additionally, there's a focus on gathering ideas on funding models for projects.

However, there are risks related to funding availability for specific actions within the plan, which need to be addressed. Nonetheless, the project remains on track towards achieving its objectives, ensuring a robust and sustainable transport system for the region.

Active Travel

Actions delivered against:

Progress the delivery of the SEStran Strategic Network and broader cross boundary networks with partners. Develop further phases of this network to ensure a long-term pipeline of investment

Promotional and communication campaigns to highlight the benefits of active travel across the region and encourage people to adopt it where possible

Strategic Network + Traffic Monitoring Cameras

First developed in 2019, the SEStran Strategic Network presents a framework for coordinated development of cross boundary active travel routes connecting cities, towns, neighbourhoods, settlements and public transport hubs in the SEStran region.

In summer 2023 Arup was appointed to undertake a revised Multi Criteria Assessment (MCA) exercise for the SEStran Strategic Network, to inform an updated prioritisation and phasing of active travel routes within the network.

The MCA update was undertaken to reflect changes across the SEStran region since the original publication of the strategic network. This included changes in travel patterns due to the covid-19 pandemic, changes to national and local transport policy and conclusions drawn from newly available data. The MCA update has utilised new data sources available including, the Sustrans Network Planning Tool (2023), SIMD (2020) and up to date DfT STATS19 collision data. The refresh of the network was completed in December following consultation with all Local Authority partners.

Go E-bike/Do The Ride Thing

SEStran has been delivering the Go e-bike project since 2017. The project increases access to and awareness of the benefits of using e-bikes across the region. In 2023 SEStran was successful in securing funding from the Paths for All – Active Nation Funding for the delivery of a promotional campaign, employer trial and event support. Employer trials were delivered from February to April 2024 by West Lothian Bike Library, who have been involved with Go e-bike since the project started.

Do The Ride Thing was a promotional behaviour change campaign, which ran between March – April 2024. The aim of the campaign was to encourage the target audience to increase their consideration of e-bikes and choose them over cars for short daily trips

such as a commute. The campaign would achieve this aim by raising awareness of e-bikes, their benefits, and emphasise the available support. The campaign was based on the insight that 26% of car journeys in 2022 were under 1km (Transport Scotland, 2024). The campaign aimed to limit this car dependency by advocating an active travel alternative.

Employing a phased communication approach—Awareness, Consideration, Action—across a wide range of appropriate channels, the campaign targeted adults, particularly women aged 40-60 with cycling experience and an interest in e-bikes, while also acknowledging first-time and returning cyclists.

(INSERT EXAMPLE OF DO THE RIDE THING CREATIVE)

The campaign's creative featured a landscape featuring e-bikes, building upon a previous Do The Ride Thing campaign's creative. The campaign website underwent significant redevelopment in content, copy, and technological updates to improve its performance and accessibility. Field events were hosted at workplaces to promote e-bikes, offer e-bike trial runs, and address individual barriers. A paid for media campaign ran across social, digital, audio and radio. In addition, the campaign engaged in a media partnership with Bauer Media to amplify the messages of the campaign.

The campaign gained support from stakeholders such as the Scottish Government, Energy Saving Trust, Cycling Scotland, and Wheels for Wellbeing, which was facilitated through outreach efforts and the provision of resources through the Stakeholder Toolkit. Field events generated positive results. Prior to attending 56% of event attendees typically travelled to work by car. However, after attending an event 97% of event attendees expressed willingness to consider hiring e-bike from a Do The Ride Thing hub in the future. Indicating the success of persuading car drivers to switch their choice of transport for the commute. The website also resonated well with the audience with good levels of visits and engagement across pages. Finally, paid for media reached 85.7% of the target audience across the region at least once. Contributing to the achievement of the campaign objectives of increasing awareness of e-bikes and persuading users to switch to e-bikes.

People and Place Plan Development

In December 2023, Transport Scotland invited Regional Transport Partnerships to apply for People and Place funding. The funding is intended to enable the delivery of behavioural change projects which would increase rates of active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling).

The funding largely replaces that previously provided by Transport Scotland to the Active Travel Delivery Partners (Cycling UK, Cycling Scotland, Living Streets, Paths for All, Scottish Cycling and Sustrans) to achieve similar outcomes, and is accompanied by

further direct funding for related projects to be awarded by Transport Scotland directly to Local Authorities. From December 2023 to March 2024, SEStran, in close consultation with Local Authority partners, developed a plan for the distribution of these funds.

The plan will work in all of the region's eight Local Authority areas to provide a balanced package, based on the regional priorities, targeted at each of the four themes which Transport Scotland has suggested should form part of People and Place plan:

- Schools and young people
- Workplaces
- Developing accessible and inclusive communities
- Capacity and capability building within the public sector and community-based organisations

The plan includes both capital and revenue elements. It has been developed mindful of the need to deliver investment of the full grant award within the 2024/25 year and achieve best value.

The plan seeks to combine best practice and experience (to drive value for money) with innovation, recognising that the 2024/25 year is one of transition before what we hope will be a long-term plan in future years.

A total of £5.3M is available to SEStran for the 2024/25 financial year, of which 40% is funding for revenue expenditure and 60% for capital investment. A total of £2.56 million of the funding will be going directly to Local Authorities.

Public Transport

Real Time Passenger Information

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. Since 2021 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.

The system which has been implemented can receive and display information from all public transport operators (local bus, inter-city services, tram, rail, and air), which enables operator information to be displayed on the Bustracker screens. However, operators are responsible for their own real time data and are expected to maintain a high level of consistency and accuracy.

All 330 screens within Edinburgh have now been replaced. There are 15 operators using the new Travel Tracker System to show departure information across the SEStran region. 14 of the 15 operators using the system continue to show high levels of accuracy for their associated real-time departure information on screens across the region.

Local Authorities within the SEStran region are continuing to purchase and install screens across their local authority areas, through the Regional Framework contract so that travel information throughout the region provides very similar experiences for passengers throughout their journey.

Novus FX Authority System

Novus-FX (a propriety system owned by Trapeze) has been designed to assist Local Authorities manage bus information by streamlining the production of registration information, facilitating the transmission of accurate data to Traveline and Journey Planners, and integrating seamlessly with Trapeze's Novus-RT for the provision of real-time data. Novus-FX Publicity makes it easy to create modern and engaging printed information including roadside timetables, network maps and leaflets. The result is more accurate public transport data and better-informed passengers, leading to increased use of public transport.

This year SEStran has been working with Local Authorities on designing a new module for bus stop integration which will enhance the system and provide better standardisation of information across the region. Once design is finished this will be rolled out across the region in 2024.

As part of ongoing training, local authority officers from within the SEStran region participated in an online training course covering an introduction to the system facilitated by Trapeze, this included several new officers which will help increase capacity within this area for local authorities and increase the system resilience.

Newburgh Transport Appraisal

The Newburgh Train Station Group (NTSG), South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) and Fife Council, with the support of SYSTRA Ltd, are working together to develop proposals to improve sustainable transport to and from Newburgh.

The multi-model transport appraisal builds on work already undertaken by the NTSG and focuses on improving links to and from Perth, Edinburgh and Fife. It follows the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG).

The final stage of the report, the detailed options appraisal was completed and submitted to Transport Scotland for review in September 2023. The project team met with Transport Scotland in early 2024 to discuss further refinements to enhance the report. Due to the complexity of the appraisal process, and the number of revisions needed the project has taken a long time to reach this stage, however, it is anticipated that the final addendum will be submitted to Transport Scotland in May 2024 to inform the next stages of the project.

(INSERT NEWBURGH STATION IMAGE)

Technology

Actions Delivered Against:

Deliver a regional MaaS pilot scheme with a view towards establishing the long-term viability of MaaS in the region

Work with DRT and community transport operators to deliver more widespread and efficient usage of services in areas where traditional fixed-route bus services are inappropriate. Differing approaches may be required for urban and rural areas.

Go SEStran

Mobility as a Service, or MaaS, is a concept that places the traveller's needs at the heart of transport. Most commonly it is based on a digital app that allows the person making the journey to plan, book and pay for their journey in one place, irrespective of the type of transport or which transport operator(s) are involved.

SEStran were successful with a bid to Transport Scotland for the Maas Investment Fund, and received £212,440 in September 2021. This was a third of the original bid, which led to the innovative approach of sharing the MaaS platform licence with Tactran. The GoSEStran app launched in July 2022, powered by Fuse Mobility. The app includes integrations to various transport modes such as trains, buses, taxis, community transport and e-bikes. The GoSEStran app also has access to real time passenger information and a map to show the users location of park & ride, electric vehicle charging and journey hubs.

The pilot was initially focused on East Lothian, and currently has over ▦0 users on the app.

SEStran were successful with a joint bid with Tactran to Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) to fund the licence and continued work on the GoSEStran pilot up to March 2024. Prior to the year end, further funding of £42,000 was received from Transport Scotland as an extension to the MaaS Investment Fund pilot, in order that the platform licence be extended for 6 months until Transport Scotland's appraisal of all the MaaS pilots has been concluded and procurement of a longer term contract, subject to funding, can be carried out. A further award of £100,000 for the next financial year was also received in late March 2024 from SCSP.

Key to continuation of MaaS in Scotland is joint working between all of the public bodies interested in pursuing a digital solution to travellers' needs. For this reason, much of the work in the year to March 2024 involved working closely with other RTPs and local authorities in the Integrated Mobility Programme Scotland (IMPs) to share knowledge and pool funding.

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

One objective in SEStran's bid to the MaaS Investment Fund was to test how DRT and MaaS influence each other. After going out to procurement, SEStran awarded a contract to The Routing Company to work in partnership with Prentice Coaches to create a new DRT route in East Lothian which went live March 2023. This new DRT service was also integrated into the GoSEStran app.

The pilot faced a number of challenges, and it proved difficult to grow passenger numbers using the app as an additional incentive. A report on the outcome of the pilot can be read here [link]. A positive outcome of the pilot was that Prentice of Haddington and East Lothian Council have decided to proceed with a DRT bus service, not using digital technology, but instead relying on requests for service by phone and email. This was seen by them as a better service than the original fixed line route, and may well serve as a model for similar, low passenger number rural routes.

East Lothian have also pursued a separate tech-enabled DRT pilot with Eve Coaches, covering the Oldhamstocks to Dunbar area.

Thistle Assistance VoyagAR

Thistle Assistance VoyagAR is an end-to-end journey-planning and journey-tracking system to allow disabled people to utilise public transport in a safer, more convenient, and more enjoyable way. The system is designed to make disabled people feel more confident and comfortable when journeying on public transport services.

The traveller accesses the system through a smartphone app. Appropriately authorised carers or family members can assist with journey planning and track the traveller's progress using a companion website. During a journey, the traveller receives wayfinding guidance and support at key points, using a flexible combination of digital mapping, simple directional indicators, and Augmented Reality.

SEStran has received £300,000 funding from Scottish Enterprise to develop project through phase one proof of concept and phase two prototype development which after mini competition from the phase 1 work, Sentireal based in Northern Ireland was contracted to develop the phase 2 pilot.

The work on the phase 2 pilot was completed in March 2024 with the development of the system architecture and a working app and website tested.

The developer Sentireal took the decision to move their business in another direction and will not be able to support the launch of the system. In agreement with SEStran they have agreed to transfer all the assets including base code and intellectual property to SEStran.

Whilst this was a setback, SEStran will look to find another partner in 2024 to bring the system to the public.

The creative development for a promotional campaign has begun. Collaboration with key stakeholders to gather their feedback and lived experiences will be delivered in the future. This approach ensures that the creative content developed is accurate and resonates effectively with the target audience. By engaging stakeholders through feedback sessions, we will be able to refine the creative and highlight the most appealing features of the VoyagAR app. This collaborative effort will result in a promotional campaign that authentically represents the app's value proposition and effectively persuades potential users to engage with the app.

Accessibility

Thistle Assistance Programme

SEStran is working with the other regional transport partnerships to deliver the Thistle Assistance Programme. The aim is to make using public transport easier for older people and those with disabilities or illnesses.

Thistle Assistance is supported by a wide variety of voluntary organisations across Scotland and by most bus, train, tram, ferry, and airport operators. The card comes with a supply of peel-off stickers to tailor the communication of support that is required. The App which replicates the physical card and can be used on a mobile device to advise the driver or conductor of the passenger's mobility challenge or disability and the help they need in an easy-to-read format.

Awareness about the programme is generated by a print media campaign using the 'A Little Help Goes a Long Way' marketing creative which is placed in specialist audience publications and by engaging with key stakeholders to understand how staff employees are being engaged and made aware of the campaign.

Strategy

Actions delivered against:

Work with the private sector and partners to develop a regional electric vehicle (and e-bike) investment and charging strategy, with associated technical guidance, including a spatial strategy across the area for long journey, rapid-charging facilities and for local area hub/community charging

Collate data/knowledge around green hydrogen/fuel cell technology, EV charging technology (e.g. on-street/at home/workplace/forecourt) and regularly monitor both emerging technology and trends

Electric Vehicle Strategy

Responding to the region's ambitions to grow the public electric vehicle charging network in line with national policy, SEStran brought together a regional EV Forum to discuss common challenges and potential solutions. As part of this work, a baselining and positioning statement was created with support of Urban Foresight to provide an overview of current electric vehicle (EV) uptake and charge point coverage throughout the region. A key conclusion of this report was that, to maintain delivery momentum and progress to sustainable and optimised EV charging infrastructure, there was a need to collaborate regionally in the development and delivery of a strategic EV charging infrastructure plan. To that end, SEStran has worked with partner local authorities and Dumfries and Galloway Council to develop regional consensus around a collaborative approach, with this outcome of this to be delivered in 24/25.

Regional Bus Strategy

Actions delivered against:

Undertake a Regional Bus Connectivity study for non-Edinburgh travel to identify settlement pairs where travel demand is high and bus services are poor, as a means to promoting new routes and connectivity (in partnership with other policies)

Undertake a Regional Bus Priority study which will identify regional, cross-boundary, quality bus corridors and key bus priority interventions to reduce bus journey times and improve bus journey time reliability where Edinburgh is likely to be a focus

Deliver the bus priority interventions funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund and subsequently identified by the Regional Bus Priority study

Review the bus powers detailed in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and identify if they could be implemented across all or parts of the region within an integrated strategy to enhance the bus network

In collaboration with bus operators, undertake analysis of regional and cross-boundary corridors where congestion is impacting on bus operations and identify locations where road space reallocation may be required

The Regional Transport Strategy seeks to 'transform and extend' the bus network in the region rather than accept a position of managed decline. As with the National Transport Strategy (NTS2), the RTS sees the bus network at the heart of the region's public transport system. Almost half (47%) of residents of the region used a bus service at least once a month in 2019 and patronage is building back. At the June Partnership Board Meeting, a paper titled Towards a World Class Bus Service was brought forward to begin the process of shaping a Regional Bus Strategy for the South East of Scotland.

Given the diverse range of issues currently impacting the bus sector, the Partnership Board considered that, following the mandate of the adopted RTS, it is the right time to develop a Regional Bus Strategy. Work in developing the new RTS has reaffirmed significant concerns in terms of the efficiency, performance, affordability and overall sustainability of the bus network across the SEStran region, both presently and in the future.

The scope and provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 are wide ranging and within it provides powers which offer an ambitious new model for bus services. While many of the provisions of the Act have yet to be supported by regulation or guidance, one aspect that has been enacted is the power for local authorities to run their own bus services. The SEStran region is fortunate, in that the only local authority-controlled bus service operating in the country is Lothian Buses which covers a large part of the regional network.

SEStran looked for consultancy support to develop a Regional Bus Strategy and to consider how best to utilise the competitive advantage of a local authority-controlled bus service.

In the final months of 23-24, we procured consultants to undertake the strategy with the following components:

- Work Package 1 Case for Change
- Work Package 2 Options Appraisal
- Work Package 3 Strategy Development
- Work Package 4 Finalise Strategy & Consultation

The successful bid was won by Systra and Stantec, working in collaboration, and began with an inception meeting in February 2024.

It is worth noting that the bus strategy is taking place during the pause on the £500million Bus Partnership Fund from Transport Scotland. This pause has drawn concern from local authorities, both that work undertaken already will wither on the vine, and that the pause represents a de-prioritisation of bus by Transport Scotland.

The Bus Partnership Fund, prior to pausing, has in the SEStran region achieved the following:

Midlothian: Bus Alliance

In May 2022 AECOM was commissioned by Midlothian Council, in partnership with SEStran, to conduct a study based on Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) for four bus corridors within Midlothian:

- Corridor 1: A6094 Whitecraig to A6094 Eskbank;
- Corridor 2: B6392 Eskbank to A772 Gilmerton Junction;
- Corridor 3: A7 Gorebridge to A7 Danderhall;
- Corridor 4: A6094 Eskbank to A701 Straiton

Following a process of option identification, development, review and appraisal, four Option Packages were taken forward for detailed appraisal against the study Transport Planning Objectives, STAG criteria and deliverability criteria. Overall, the assessment has identified that each of the four Option Packages would be anticipated to have positive impacts against the assessment criteria and address the study TPOs by delivering bus priority measures that would reduce bus journey times, and in turn reduce bus journey time variability, particularly during the peak morning and evening travel periods.

While several the bus priority measures within the Option Packages would be suitable for speedy delivery, such as traffic signal priority measures, it should be noted that further assessment is required to confirm the feasibility of specific measures. For example, for those measures which include road space reallocation, modelling would be required to understand their impact on wider traffic, road safety audits would be required to confirm the suitability of bus laybys for removal, while for measures to address on-street parking, these will require TROs and further consultation.

<mark>INSERT IMAGES OF CORRIDORS</mark>

Forth Valley Bus Alliance (FVBA)

The Forth Valley Bus Alliance (FVBA) identified corridors in the Falkirk, Clackmannanshire, and Stirling Council areas. The work was led by Falkirk Council as the lead local authority on behalf of the FVBA and will be supported by SEStran and consultancy partners ATKINS & Anturus.

Five corridors are considered in the appraisal:

- Stirling-Falkirk
- Glasgow Road
- Graham's Road
- A9-A872
- A908-B9096

<mark>INSERT IMAGES OF CORRIDORS</mark>

The key findings and recommendations from the study were:

Across all corridors - improve bus stop arrangement through infill of laybys or build out at parking to allow the bus to stop in the traffic and remove delays pulling in and out of

traffic – typically achieve a 3:1 benefit to cost for the investment and actively impact on car journey times as vehicles are given lower priority to buses. These are supplemented by the potential introduction of bus detection to provide priority at traffic signal-controlled junctions on the corridors. These interventions have the additional benefit that if patronage increases the benefits increase and only a marginal increase in patronage provides a significant improvement to the BCR.

Within Corridor 2 – Improvements at Greencornhills Roundabout to introduce signals for east/west bus priority incorporating AT route across the A91 which align with Stirling Council's Active Travel Strategy – identified for further consideration and investigation with a detailed business case.

Within Corridor 3 – Improvements on Glasgow Road at Camelon Station to allow buses to bypass congestion – this addresses a longstanding pinch point on the network which impacts all services in the town – road widening to allow a bus lane and active travel path to be provided delivers significant JT savings on the corridor but only to buses.

Within Corridor 6 –Improvements to Stirling Bus Station which can improve the flow of buses through the bus station with potential for significant time savings – this would include bus gates and improved AT connections which would remove general traffic from parts of Goosecroft Road. In addition, provision of P&R at South Stirling Gateway as a measure to improve bus patronage in the area which again would support the other direct measures which improve journey times on the corridor.

Within Corridor 7 reallocation of road space around Shillinghill roundabout to provide a bus lane on dual carriageway within the town centre, prioritising buses over general traffic.

Fife Bus Alliance

WSP was commissioned by Fife Council to undertake bus corridor appraisals across five key bus corridors in Fife as part of the Bus Partnership Fund (BPF), managed by Transport Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government.

Freight Strategy

In March 2024 SEStran working with consultants AECOM completed the final report on the regional freight study, the Detailed Options Appraisal, assessing the potential impact of the three freight related interventions, in the region: freight on trams and converted electric passenger trains and a multi-user freight train operating out of Grangemouth. By following the STAG appraisal guidance, the costs, benefits and feasibility of the options have been investigated and where possible, quantified.

Throughout the study, over 4 years, from the Case for Change through to the Detailed Options Appraisal each of the options has been refined, assessed and discussed in detail with key stakeholders.

All three options have demonstrated they align strongly with the aspirations of UK, Scotland, SEStran and local authorities. All three options have also been subject to strong support from stakeholders, demonstrating not only viability, but a real desire to see these services introduced.

Critically, all options have performed well in relation to costs and benefits. For a relatively modest capital investment and resource requirement to set up and maintain services, benefits equal to millions per year can be realised.

It is anticipated that in future years, this can be achieved with no subsidy and are likely to be revenue earners.

The options are not mutually exclusive and there may be benefits and synergies to linking options. For example, parcels could be brought to the freight tram from the heavy rail network. Regardless, all three options perform well in isolation.

But perhaps the most powerful aspect of each option is the opportunity for South East Scotland to act as an exemplar for sustainable freight and modal shift to rail freight. By proving the case for sustainable freight, volumes can grow and other areas can learn from these interventions.

The Freight Tram is a clear example of an intervention that could be high profile and a good news story for the network with likely strong public support. With the tram network already affording a direct route into Edinburgh, and much of the network traffic-free, the scope for a more reliable, quicker supply chain network is significant.

With infrastructure requirements likely to be modest and the 'last/final mile' being undertaken by cycle logistics the benefits of this intervention are clear.

Ex-passenger trains for freight coming directly into the city centre has the potential to raise the profile of rail freight given the high footfall of passengers at stations such as Waverley. With collections from the platform by cycle logistics or small electric vans, the potential for a seamless and emission free logistics supply chain is significant.

The benefits of this intervention will also be felt outside of South East Scotland, with the potential for services to Yorkshire and other locations. This is turn will help create a more robust network for associated services as well as metrics such as carbon emissions, which affect the global climate.

Whilst traditional rail freight is well established, exacting targets for increasing modal shift mean supporting new services is vital. A multi-user train linking the central belt with

North East Scotland and the Highlands would help alleviate traffic from key routes such as the A9 and the A90. Carbon savings would be significant, and the service would take advantage of growth in potential volumes associated with the Green Freeport initiative and other proposed infrastructure improvements, further enhancing the business case for those initiatives.

Overall, all three measures justify further investigation and ultimately the development of a Full Business Case to set out revenue and costs in more detail, SEStran will be exploring this with partners further in 2024.

Communications and Marketing

In October 2023, SEStran welcomed the appointment of a dedicated Communication and Marketing Officer, marking a step towards improving the awareness of SEStran's profile and improving stakeholder engagement. Since then, significant milestones have been achieved, underscoring SEStran's commitment to effective communication.

One of the key activities undertaken was the "Do The Ride Thing" campaign, an integrated marketing campaign which aimed at promoting e-bikes, their benefits and the support available. The campaign used paid media, field events, and stakeholder engagement activities to maximise reach and drive impact. The campaign gained over 17,000,000 impressions reaching an estimated 85% of the target audience in the region at least one. This success raised awareness about e-bikes and amplified the awareness of SEStran.

SEStran has initiated the development of a comprehensive communication strategy, aiming to establish clear objectives and stakeholder identification and engagement approaches. This strategic framework will serve as a roadmap for future communication activities, ensuring alignment with Regional Transport Strategy and facilitating meaningful interactions with stakeholders.

SEStran's digital platforms have been key in amplifying messages and engaging with audiences. SEStran has developed a presence across Linked and X (formerly Twitter). LinkedIn emerged as a strong performer, recording 14,064 impressions with an average engagement rate of 4.65%. Furthermore, the account received a substantial increase in 163 followers which is notably for purely organic activity.

While the X platform experienced more modest performance, with 3,326 impressions and an average engagement rate of 4%, however it remains a key platform to the social media mix, offering valuable opportunities for targeted outreach and engagement to the wider public.

Appendix:

Governance

Decision Making Structure

SEStran's main policy and budgetary decisions are taken by the Partnership Board, which consists of 20 Councillor and nine Non-Councillor members. Operational decisions are taken by the Partnership Director and other officers in accordance with the List of Officer Powers which forms part of SEStran's Governance Scheme. The Scheme is reviewed regularly and was last updated in March 2024.20234. The Partnership Board delegates some decisions to Committees in accordance with the [Governance Scheme](). The Performance and Audit Committee remit covers scrutiny of performance, staffing, standards and audit. It comprises a Councillor member from each constituent authority, and four non-Councillor members. It is currently chaired by Councillor Russell Imrie. The Succession Planning Committee remit covers matters related to succession planning and Board appointments. Its membership consists of the Partnership Chair, two Board members, the Partnership Director, the Partnership Secretary and a Human Resources adviser.

Equalities Duty

SEStran is a listed public body under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations, and as such have a duty to publish a biennial Equalities Mainstreaming Report and a set of [Equality Outcomes]() to enable the organisation to better perform the equality duty. SEStran published a new set of Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 in April 2021 and a progress report in April 2023. A new set of Equalities Outcomes will be published in April 2025.

Cyber Security

To comply with the Scottish Government's Public Sector Cyber Security Action Plan, SEStran carried out a robust review of its IT provision. Under the scheme, an independent cyber security consultant was appointed in 2018 and audited the partnership's IT environment. The outcome of this audit was SEStran being awarded Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation. SEStran have been re-audited annually and continue to retain the award.

Partnership Board

Formal Partnership Meetings and Forums

Partnership Board

The Partnership Board met four times during the reporting period. At its meetings, in addition to dealing with standard business, the Board considers relevant topics, with in-depth presentations and discussion. Topics in this period included Bus Strategy, collaboration with stakeholders and partners, Travel to Healthcare and the People and Place Programme These topics generated considerable insight which was shared in SEStran forum groups described below. SEStran's quarterly Performance and Audit Committee meets two weeks before each board meeting to scutinise the running of the Partnership and to suggest improvements.

Succession Planning Committee

The Succession Planning Committee meets biennially. The last meeting took place in May 2024, where the Committee approved to revisions being made to the the Board Diversity Succession Plan and appointing Observers to increase the diversity of the Board make up.

Performance and Audit Committee

SEStran's quarterly Performance and Audit Committee meets two weeks before each board meeting to scutinise the running of the Partnership and to suggest improvements.### Chief Officers' Liaison Group

The remit of the group is to provide a forum for discussion of transport matters between officers of the constituent councils and officers of SEStran.

Integrated Mobility Forum (IMF):

aims to develop a better understanding of the opportunities to improve implementation and understanding of integrated mobility in the region such as maximising the use of public transport through discussions between stakeholders.

Logistics and Freight Forum:

aims to support economic growth and resilience across the region by developing and implementing sustainable business and distribution solutions.

Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum:

aims to deliver our Equality Outcomes and legislative requirement to consult Health Boards and those who represent those with or who share a protected characteristic. The forum covers how equality issues should be considered in future transport strategy development.

Annual Accounts and Reports

Annual Accounts

Note: SEStran's Annual Accounts will be published sperately

Climate Change Report (REPORT LINK TO BE INSERTED)

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places duties on public bodies to act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets, to help deliver any statutory climate change adaptation programme, and in a way that they consider is most sustainable.

Public Services Reform Act (REPORT LINK TO BE INSERTED)

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (Sections 31 and 32) imposes duties on Scottish public bodies to publish financial information as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year. This statement can be accessed online here:

Community Empowerment Act

SEStran is a listed public authority under the Community Empowerment Act and one of our duties under the Act is to consider requests from the community. Participation Requests can help groups from the local community to liaise with SEStran on improving issues. We welcome requests from groups that can aid SEStran in delivering its strategic functions. To gain more information on how to place a request, please follow the link

Public Records Act

SEStran is required under the terms of Section 1 of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 to produce a Records Management Plan, setting out proper arrangements for the management of its records and to submit this to the Keeper of the Records for approval. SEStran submitted its RMP in January 2011. Records Management Plan (PDF document)

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Business Plan Activity Update
April 2024 to March 2025

SEStran is the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership, one of seven statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. SEStran encompasses eight local authorities, City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian

SEStran's Vision

A South-East of Scotland fully integrated transport system that will be efficient, connected, and safe; create inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable places to live, work and visit; be affordable and accessible to all, enabling people to be healthier; and delivering the region's contribution to net zero emissions targets.

Regional Transport Strategy

The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), was adopted in March 2023 . The RTS aims to provide a regional framework for managing future travel demand, behaviour, and developing the region's transport system, aligning with the National Transport Strategy 2, National Planning Framework 4, Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019, and other relevant spatial and economic strategies.

The 2024/25 Business Plan outlines how the partnership will be progressing the aims of the RTS at the tactical and operational level for one 12 month period.

Regional Transport Strategy Objectives

Strategy Objective 1: Transitioning to a sustainable, post-carbon transport system
Strategy Objective 2: Facilitating healthier travel options
Strategy Objective 3: Transforming public transport connectivity and access across the region
Strategy Objective 4: Supporting safe, sustainable and efficient movement of people and freight across the region

Regional Bus Strategy

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Budget line
The RTS sees the bus network at the heart of the region's public transport system, Almost half (47%) of residents across the South East of Scotland used a bus service at least once a month in 2019 and patronage is increasing again following a significant reduction caused by the pandemic. Given the diverse range of issues currently impacting the bus sector, the Partnership Board agreed that it is the right time to develop a new Regional Bus Strategy. Through the development of the RTS, significant opportunities were identified to improve the efficiency, performance, affordability and overall sustainability of the bus network across the region.	Undertake a Regional Bus Connectivity study for non-Edinburgh travel to identify settlement pairs where travel demand is high and bus services are poor, as a means to promoting new routes and connectivity (in partnership with other policies)	1,3,4	Understand the perspective of and engage with relevant stakeholders; authorities, operators principally	Working with Systra/ Stantec, we will complete: •Work Package 1 Case for Change •Work Package 2 Options Appraisal •Work Package 3 Strategy Development •Work Package 4 Finalise Strategy & Consultation	We have a clear and well constructed strategy from which to direct our future activity on bus.	92087
	Undertake a Regional Bus Priority study which will identify regional, cross-boundary, quality bus corridors and key bus priority interventions to reduce bus journey times and improve bus journey time reliability where Edinburgh is likely to be a focus		Build understanding of challenges and opportunities of current scenario, as well as identifying key options to pursue.			
	Deliver the bus priority interventions funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund and subsequently identified by the Regional Bus Priority study		Build support for the SEStran RBS by clearly setting out the challenges for bus in the region and involving stakeholders in developing solutions to these challenges whilst recognising that some stakeholders may not agree with the final Strategy proposals.			
	Review the bus powers detailed in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and identify if they could be implemented across all or parts of the region within an integrated strategy to enhance the bus network		Engage proactively to ensure that the development of the SEStran RBS is informed by a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, to produce documents that recognise the needs of workers, residents, businesses, and visitors across the region.			

Transport to Health Strategy

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Budget line
Transport to health is a key service, connecting Scots with healthcare, from day-to-day appointments at the GP to hospital care. In 2019, the Mobility and Access Committee, working with Transport Scotland, produced MACS Report: Transport to Health and Social Care. This was strengthened by implementation last autumn of parts of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which dealt specifically with Transport to Health .The Primary Health Directorate and Transport Scotland published their Transport to Health Delivery Plan draft. The draft puts an obligation on both health boards and regional transport partnerships to work together when considering transport to health.	Support the delivery of bus services and infrastructure measures which ensure access to healthcare for all	2	Build collaborative relationships with health boards	Quarterly meetings with health boards to identify opportunities to reduce/ reallocate spend on TtH, and reduce bed blocking	A clearer understanding of the options available, connections to appropriate stakeholders and a readiness to work with Primary Care Directorate and TS as their TtH plan develops.	92062
			Consider innovative solutions to TtH	Small working group with some LA officers on what is working well		
				Healthcare and Active Travel		
				Consider role of CTs across the region in delivery effective TtH		
			Highlight best practice in our region	Make TtH a theme of the current regional Bus Strategy work		
				Improve our data and understanding of what's happening currently		

RTS Delivery Plan (with ESESCRD)

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Budget line
Building on the ESESCRD and SEStran Concordat, this delivery plan will highlight projects Local Authorities want to develop that exemplify the themes and objectives of the RTS. By identifying these opportunities, we can make best use of CRD and SEStran efforts	Partner councils work with SEStran through the statutory planning processes to implement RTS policies with regards to major developments	ALL	Creating a single source of truth for easier prioritisation of interventions	Consultant Develop Priority Projects (STAG or other methodology)	All concordat partners have an agreed single source of truth, prioritised to allow focussed work from STAG specialist	92042
			Cross referencing RTS actions with local plans to improve SEStran's efficacy	Define delivery of Wider RTS Action Plan		

and actively pursue funding for these.						
			Short-life working group to agree definitions/ scoring etc	Draft Final Delivery Plan		

Regional Freight Strategy

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Budget line
Within the RTS SEStran supports, where appropriate, the development of new or enhanced rail freight services in the region. Opportunities for innovative passenger train forming which incorporates the ability to carry freight should be explored combined with innovation and automation to increase the efficiency of freight and logistics networks across the region. The regional should also support improved road freight services with better driver facilities and alternative fuel provision for HGV and LGV working with industry to transition from ICE power.	Work with partners to identify, through the further development of the SEStran Freight Strategy, locations where Freight Consolidation Centres could be located	1 & 4	Work with partners to progress development of the options outlined in the regional freight study (March 2024)	Engage with stakeholders via appropriate forums and groups.	EU Horizon Bids submitted in September 2024 - Projects would start in December 2024 Successful ACCESS for Goods bid unlocks funding to develop LA workshops	92080
	Work with partners to identify, through the further development of the SEStran Freight Strategy, locations where gauge clearances should be increased to enable new and enhanced rail freight services to operate in the region		Work with Green Free Port partners to enhance business case development to be submitted in June 2024.	Work with consortium partners on 2 EU Horizon project submission to support the development for trials within the SEStran region.		
	Identify opportunities to implement innovation and automation in the freight and logistics industry in the region, including the delivery of relevant pilot projects		Improve knowledge and skills within the public sector to enhance freight policy development.	Submit project funding proposal with the University of the West of England to develop a tool to enhance public sector planning.		
	Further develop proposals for new rail freight services, including a potential multi-user freight train running from Grangemouth and use of converted passenger trains for freight, as part of the development of the SEStran Freight Strategy					

Regional Rail Strategy

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Budget line
The rail network (comprising 'conventional' heavy rail and light rail/tram) plays a key role linking up the region, as well as providing connectivity to external locations. The region has benefitted from the construction of the Borders Railway which opened in September 2015. More of the region's towns and settlements could be connected to the existing rail network by the provision of new stations. This is particularly important where significant new developments are proposed, and opportunities should be sought to connect these to the rail network where appropriate.	Work with Transport Scotland and Network Rail to deliver new rail infrastructure in the region, where appraisal and business case development has demonstrated its merits	1,3 & 4	Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats.	Work with train operating companies (TOCs) to promote and improve information in and around stations.	Expansion of RTPI information screens in ScotRail stations. Participate in ECMA meetings and contribute to joint research projects. Regular quarterly meetings with stakeholders via the Regional Rail Quarterly and Bi-annual Integrated Mobility Forum. Additional work on Newburgh Station Appraisal submitted to Transport Scotland.	92047
	Undertake appraisal and business case development for an Edinburgh & South-East Scotland Mass Transit system, including BRT, new light rail and tram links within the region, in partnership with ongoing development of STPR2.		Improve rail infrastructure in the region.	Finalise appraisal work for Newburgh station business case.		
	Resist pressures to increase public transport fares and explore opportunities to provide more affordable public transport for those least able to pay for it		Work with TOCs to support reduces ticket prices and integrated ticketing.	Leverage meetings and forums.		
	Opportunities should be explored with partners to introduce new services, including more direct links across the region, national boundaries and cross-city connections		Work with ESESCRD partners and CEC to progress business case development for rail projects via the regional transport delivery plan.	Develop a list of projects with stakeholders that have regional impact.		

Thistle Assistance Programme

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS objectives	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcomes	Cost centre
The Thistle Assistance Programme provides helps to those that have difficulty in using and accessing public transport. SEStran aim to provide a national approach. The programme increases awareness of challenges faced by vulnerable transport users and reduces the cost for transport operators.	Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network	1,3 &4	Launch app-based door-to-door journey planner with the aim of making public transport more accessible to all.	Secure new partner and launch the VoyagAR App with support from original developer Sentireal	Key stakeholders engaged and participating.	92077 92078
			Engage with transport operators, third sector stakeholders and public.	Promote transport operator guide for Thistle Assistance.		
			Create awareness of the programme through use of branding, website and social media activity.	Continue to use marketing tool kit to promote.	Co-operation of transport operators. Increased awareness and use amongst transport operators and public.	
				Survey users and feedback into programme.		

Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objective	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcomes	Cost centre
The provision of real-time information contributes to tackling declining bus patronage in the SEStran region, helps makes public transport more accessible and reliable and increases confidence in public transport.	Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network	1,3 & 4	SEStran will be working with local authorities to expand and develop the new regional real time system.	Secure new locations for screen infrastructure across the region with request funding	Wider distribution and uptake/use of RTPI across the region.	92017 92019
				Work with operators and local authorities on data input, accuracy and management.	Improved operator data accuracy for system.	
	Introduce Real Time Passenger Information for public transport services through mobile applications, stations and stops and across all parts of the region		SEStran will continue to work with local authorities using the NOVUS FX system to manage local services and routes.	Link RTPI to other projects where appropriate.	Run 2 LA training workshops on NOVUS FX with Trapeze (owner).	
				Promote new system with key stakeholders.	3rd parties using system capabilities and API feed e.g. ScotRail	
				Increase use and application of NOVUS FX capabilities with LAs.		

Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) - GoSEStran

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS objective	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcomes	Cost centre
The GoSEStran MaaS app is a digital tool which promotes and enables sustainable travel as well as helping improve the viability of shared multi-modal transport opportunities.	Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network	1,3 & 4	Promote Sustainable Travel	Contribute and attend regional, national and international conferences around MaaS and related projects such as data sharing or smart ticketing to ensure the potential of MaaS is understood.	Attend relevant events and conferences as a guest or speaker.	92086
			Encourage behaviour and modal shifts for climate and air quality.			
			Promote active travel.	Continue the promotion and development of the GoSEStran app and IMPs partnership with RTP partners.	Assess the number of users and number of partners involved on the MaaS platform.	
	Deliver a regional MaaS pilot scheme with a view towards establishing the long-term viability of MaaS in the region		Encourage national leadership in MaaS, and continue to understand the role tech could play in achieving transport objectives.	Support National Initiatives: Contribute to MaaS Scotland, Smart Ticketing and Traveline projects to encourage Transport Scotland to take a national role in MaaS.	Attend regular meetings with other partners to discuss MaaS, including MaaS Scotland, Trapeze, Transport Scotland and other RTPs.	

| | | | Improve confidence for those with disabilities/ improve safety for women and girls. | Undertake a joint procurement with Tactran for further development for MaaS with partners and include VoyagAR so that both workstreams are integrated. | Share learnings and knowledge to all stakeholders | |

Strategic Cycle Network

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objective	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcome	Cost centre
A robust, revised strategic network can support local authorities to direct some of their resource to delivering sections of the network to support regional connections.

A high quality strategy with accompanying business case will be a strong supporting document for local authorities so source additional funding (on a competitive basis) to deliver elements of the network | Progress the delivery of the SEStran Strategic Network and broader cross boundary networks with partners. Develop further phases of this network to ensure a long-term pipeline of investment

Review destinations served by the active travel network to identify gaps and locations where cross-boundary schemes may be required to ensure an integrated, high-quality network exists | 1,2 & 4 | Build on the success of the Strategic Network to date, and ensure it is fully aligned with the new RTS and the People and Place Programme | Produce a revised strategic cycle network with a specific focus on how the network connects with and supports delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy | Increase in successful funding bids for active travel infrastructure development in the SEStran region. | 92076 |
| | | | Develop the network so that it can become a key tool for local authorities to support their development and funding of active travel routes | Create a GIS map layer of the cycle network that is currently in the design stage, differentiated by type of provision (e.g. off road, segregated, on road etc) and design stage (concept or developed). It is expected that some of this can be compiled from desktop research, but a meeting with each LA will be required. | SEStran and Local Authorities have a better knowledge and understanding of the network of active travel infrastructure in the region, including gaps, cross boundary routes and progress towards delivery. | |
| | | | Complete design work on 2 Falkirk routes on behalf of Falkirk Council to the point at which they are ready for construction. | Commission consultant and undertake client duties on behalf of Falkirk Council | Full tender package handed over to Falkirk Council by end September 2024 to allow them to progress a construction tender | |

EV Delivery

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objective	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcome	Cost centre
Supporting the development of a regional collaboration on public EV charging	Engage with Scottish Government for effective national strategy/guidance/specifications on fleet decarbonisation and rollout of appropriate and future-proofed supporting infrastructure. This should include legislation to manage on street charging provision and the provision of chargers in new developments.

Work with the private sector and partners to develop a regional electric vehicle (and e-bike) investment and charging strategy, with associated technical guidance, including a spatial strategy across the area for long journey, rapid-charging facilities and for local area hub/community charging | 1 & 4 | Deliver a regional collaboration to develop a common set of tender documents and a procurement strategy | Facilitate a governance structure to oversee the work with representation of all LAs | An agreed set of tender documents and procurement strategy ready for issue by LAs (in groups/individually) | 92088 |
| | | | | Support the procurement of consultants to support this work on behalf of the 9 LAs | Successful procurement of consultants within budget of the project term | |
| | | | Facilitate support for future procurements that emerge as a result of the procurement strategy, scope of this to be dependant on the outcome of the procurement strategy. | tbc dependant on outcome of the procurement strategy | tbc dependant on outcome of the procurement strategy | |

People and Place Programme						
Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objective	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcome	Cost centre
The People and Place plan presents an opportunity to enable and encourage more people to walk, wheel and cycle more often, which can contribute to many of the objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy.	Promotional and communication campaigns to highlight the benefits of active travel across the region and encourage people to adopt it where possible Deliver road safety measures that enable people to safely use active travel within the region Expand the provision of bike-sharing initiatives across the region	1,2 & 4	Deliver increases in walking, wheeling and cycling, by both enabling and encouraging people that don't make these choices to start to do so, and those that do so already to do more	Deliver the 24/25 programme by distributing funding to LAs and third party orgs	Funding allocation from TS is spent in full	92082
			Raise awareness of the benefits of active travel to many other people, making them more likely to change in future	Direct delivery of specific areas of the programme assigned to SEStran	Monitoring shows positive outcomes in line with national, regional and local expectations	
			Work in many of the region's communities, schools, and residential settings, plus build capacity and capability for further change	Monitoring of the programme and reporting to TS	The 25/26 programme is agreed by LAs and TS	
				Development of a 5 year programme in partnership with LAs		

Communications – External Stakeholder Partnership Enhancement

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project Objectives	Project goals	Project Actions	Project Outcomes	Evaluation	Cost Centre
Strengthened relationships with stakeholders contribute to a more favourable and widely recognised reputation. Improving the impact that SEStran can have in delivering outcomes. Strong relationships with external stakeholders reduces risks and improves information and resource sharing. ,	SEStran will engage with relevant bodies and stakeholders to develop and implement interventions which reassert public confidence in public transport services	1,2,3,4	By the end of 2024/2025, establish, develop, and execute a communication stakeholder relationship management approach aimed at delivering optimal results tailored to the distinct communication needs of all stakeholders involved within the RTS framework.	Develop a stakeholder engagement communications strategy that actively involves existing partners in ongoing discussions to identify and comprehend their concerns and requirements. This approach empowers them to shape our decision-making processes, ensuring that our outcomes align with their needs.	Establish a stakeholder communication platform to efficiently and regularly share updates with various stakeholder groups.	Establishment of stakeholder communication platform.	Increase in engagement rate among audience across social media platforms. As well as strong anecdotal support.	92079
				Initiate connections with new stakeholders that will assist in achieving RTS objectives. Discuss and action solutions for their concerns, facilitate the flow of information, and enable their input to influence decision-making. Achieve optimal results that cater to the unique requirements of all stakeholders.	Establish a stakeholder communication groups related to RTS/SEStran priority areas to facilitate information sharing and issue coordination in a regular and organised method.	Establishment of communications groups.	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.	Develop a written communications strategy that details how RTS priorities will be communicated efficiently and regularly.	Wide engagement and distribution of SEStran 2035.	

Communications – Internal Stakeholder Renewal

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Cost Centre	Cost Centre
Improved quality engagement of internal stakeholders is important to the accountability, sustainability and integrity of the organisation.	Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network	1,2,3,4	To enhance the quality of engagement with internal stakeholders and strengthen the accountability, sustainability, and integrity of the SEStran.	To reengage internal stakeholders, comprising both councillors and non-councillors, by identifying their perceptions and understanding of SEStran.	Conducting a consultation of Board member's preferences, and perception of SEStran's objectives, priorities, and overall purpose. Strategies may include surveys or interviews, to gather comprehensive feedback.	Completion of consultation	Increase in engagement rate among audience across social media platforms. As well as strong anecdotal support.	92079
	SEStran will engage with relevant bodies and stakeholders to develop and implement interventions which reassert public confidence in public transport services			To implement recommendations for the internal stakeholder engagement consultation.	Developing targeted communication strategies based on their recommendations and implementing measures to enhance engagement.	Delivery of consultation recommendations	Completion and making available the PIP to stakeholders.	
				To assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the internal communications approach and materials.	Review and improve existing communication materials by gathering feedback from internal stakeholders. Address gaps, inconsistencies, and implement systematic changes for enhanced effectiveness. Communicate updates to the internal audience and establish an evaluation system for ongoing refinement.	Review of materials and implementation of recommendation.	Wide engagement and distribution of SEStran 2035.	

Communications – Digital Presence

Justification	RTS Actions	RTS Objectives	Project Objectives	Project goals	Project actions	Project Outcomes	Cost Centre	Cost Centre
A robust presence on social and digital media channels is advantageous for improved brand recognition and fostering audience engagement. A strong social and digital media presence facilitates effective marketing and promotion, contributes to improved stakeholder relationships, and can play a pivotal role in talent and funding acquisition by showcasing organisational activity.	SEStran will engage with relevant bodies and stakeholders to develop and implement interventions which reassert public confidence in public transport services	1,2,3,4.	To grow, develop and maintain a robust presence on external channels.	To increase awareness of SEStran's purpose, vision, RTS and objectives through consistent, clear and engaging presence on digital platforms including social media.	To create and implement a social media and digital presence plan that is consistent, clear, and adaptable to the evolving landscape, effectively conveying SEStran's vision, objectives, and priorities.	Increase in engagement rate among audience across social media platforms. As well as strong anecdotal support.	Increase in engagement rate among audience across social media platforms. As well as strong anecdotal support.	92079
				To develop and maintain a permeant digital footprint from SEStran and related projects that is agile, authentic, effective and safe.	To conduct a comprehensive website audit and deliver on recommendations.	Completion and making available the PIP to stakeholders.	Completion and making available the PIP to stakeholders.	
				Develop marketing strategies and campaigns where appropriate to advertise projects and services through relevant marketing channels.	To identify opportunities for marketing campaigns where appropriate to advertise projects and services through relevant marketing channels.	Wide engagement and distribution of SEStran 2035.	Wide engagement and distribution of SEStran 2035.	
						Approval and implementation of a communications plan	Approval and implementation of a communications plan	

Forum & Liaison Groups

Justification	Goals	Actions	Outcome
SEStran Forums facilitate discussion and provide a platform for interested parties to formulate a regional voice in transport-related matters	Bring together interested parties and representative groups, across the following areas: Equalities and Access to Healthcare Integrated Mobility (passenger) Freight and Logistics	Organise topical meetings for each forum events twice annually. 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	Involvement of key stakeholders

Regional Partnership working

Justification	Goals	Actions	Outcome
Through active and engaged partnership working, SEStran is 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.	Continue to be involved in pressing transport issues and present a regional voice in transport related matters in the South East of Scotland	Continue to be involved in transport related policy developments and respond to relevant consultations	Resource availability
		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 al RTP partnerships in Scotland	Provide the Sustainable and Active Travel Fund to help organisations adopt sustainable transport solutions	Involvement of organisations

2024/25 High Level Budget Summary

(to be finalised)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revised Budget				
Core	663	619	815	862
People & Place	0	0	0	5,326
Projects	809	959	923	325
Expenditure	1,472	1,578	1,738	6,513

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	
Projects	500	606	766	254	
Scottish Government	782	782	782	743	Includes Scottish Govt 5% reduction for 24/25
People and Place	0	0	0	5,326	
Council Requisition	190	190	190	190	
Funding	1,472	1,578	1,738	6,513	

The existing reserves and any underspend carried forward from 23/24 are not budgeted for, hence are not showing in above table.
Core 23/24 budget underspend (per the unaudited accounts) is provisionally £81k

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
CT	Community Transport Organisation
CoMoUK	CoMoUK is the name of a Trust that promotes shared and integrated mobility
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.
ESESCRD	Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal
EU Horizon	https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en
ECMA	The Consortium of East Coast Main Line Authorities (Councils, Combined Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships) along the area served by the East Coast Main Rail Line
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
ICE	Internal Combustion Engine
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
LRDF	Local Rail Development Fund – funding provided by Transport Scotland
MACS	Mobility & Access Committee Scotland
MaaS	integrating journey options, planning,
NTS2	The second National Transport Strategy for Scotland, launched in February 2020
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
STAR	Scottish Transport Applications and Research Conference
STPR2	Second Strategic Transport Projects Review for Scotland, led by Transport Scotland
TOCs	Train Opperating Companies