

**SESTRAN PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**

**Dean of Guild Courtroom, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ**  
**Or via Microsoft Teams**  
**10:00am Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

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**09:30 TEA/COFFEE**  
**10:00 PARTNERSHIP BOARD**  
**11:30 BREAK**  
**11:45 PARTNERSHIP BOARD**  
**13:00 LUNCH**

**AGENDA**

**Page No's**

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

**AGENDA A – POINTS FOR DECISION**

- |            |   |                                     |
|------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>A1.</b> | <b>MINUTES</b><br><u>For Approval</u><br>(a) Partnership Board – Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023<br>(b) Performance and Audit Committee – Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2024  | <b>6</b><br><b>12</b>               |
| <b>A2.</b> | <b>FINANCE REPORTS</b> - Reports by Richard Lloyd-Bithell, Treasurer/Iain Shaw<br>(a) Revenue Budget 2024/25 and Indicative Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2026/27<br>(b) Annual Treasury Management Strategy<br>(c) Finance Officers Report | <b>17</b><br><b>27</b><br><b>29</b> |
| <b>A3.</b> | <b>PARTNERSHIP DIRECTOR'S REPORT</b> – Presentation by Brian Butler   |                                     |
| <b>A4.</b> | <b>GRANT STANDING ORDERS</b> – Report by Michael Melton   | <b>35</b>                           |
| <b>A5.</b> | <b>ACTIVE TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE – PEOPLE AND PLACE GRANT PROCESS</b> – Report and presentation by Michael Melton  | <b>44</b>                           |
| <b>A6.</b> | <b>GO-SESTRAN FUTURE APPROACH</b> – Report by Andrew Ferguson   | <b>69</b>                           |
| <b>A7.</b> | <b>DEVELOP TO DELIVER REPORT (Joint RTP Report on national transport governance)</b> – Report by Brian Butler   | <b>76</b>                           |

- A8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**  
The date of the next meeting is **10:00am on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024**

**AGENDA B – POINTS FOR NOTING**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>B1. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24</b> – Report by Christopher Gardner, External Auditor, Audit Scotland | <b>85</b>  |
| <b>B2. PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE</b> – Report by Keith Fiskien                                   | <b>101</b> |
| <b>B3. MINUTES</b><br>B3.1 Chief Officers’ Liaison Group Meeting – 14th February 2024                    | <b>124</b> |

Gavin King  
Secretary to SESTRAN  
Head of Democracy, Governance and Resilience  
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8 March 2024

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Agendas and papers for all SEStran meetings can be accessed on [www.sestran.gov.uk](http://www.sestran.gov.uk)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Regional Bus Strategy</li> <li>- The Regional EV Strategy</li> <li>- Travel to Healthcare</li> <li>- Sustainable Travel Hierarchy</li> </ul> <p>The Board is encouraged to discuss the updates, particularly around funding, organisational sustainability, and the emerging approach to supporting delivery of the government's climate change commitments and the sustainable travel hierarchy.</p>	
<u>A4</u>	<p><b><u>Grant Standing Orders</u></b></p> <p>New Grant Standing Orders are proposed to be added to SEStran's governance scheme to provide clear roles and responsibilities in the distribution of grants. The Grant Standing Orders are based on those used by City of Edinburgh Council, and have been reviewed by SEStran's solicitors.</p> <p>The Board should satisfy itself that the Standing Orders provide a robust governance framework to oversee the award of grants by SEStran, and will suitably support the delivery of the RTS.</p>	<u>FOR APPROVAL</u>
<u>A5</u>	<p><b><u>Active Travel Behaviour Change – People and Place Grant Process</u></b></p> <p>This first part of this paper presents the final People and Place Plan for delivering active travel behaviour change in the SEStran region for noting. This Plan represents a shift to devolve the decision making and accountability for the distribution of active travel behaviour change funds from Transport Scotland to a regional level. The Plan has been developed in consultation with each partner Local Authority, and has been noted by the Performance and Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Board may wish to focus on how the People and Place can support and drive behaviour change in the region, and any opportunities to enhance this work in future years. The Board will also want to be assured that the governance arrangements for the programme in 24/25 will provide it with adequate oversight of the significant investment that will be made by SEStran.</p> <p>The second part of this paper seeks approval for the eligibility and assessment criteria for the People and Place Grant Fund, which will be run to offer funding to third</p>	<p><u>FOR DISCUSSION AND NOTING</u></p> <p><u>FOR APPROVAL</u></p>

	<p>parties to deliver specific elements of the People and Place Plan.</p> <p>The Board should satisfy itself that the criteria are fair and robust to deliver the best possible outcomes for the region. They may also want to consider how the criteria will support the achievement of best value from the grant fund.</p>	
<u>A6</u>	<p><b><u>GoSEStran Future Approach</u></b></p> <p>The current licence with the tech company for the GoSEStran MaaS platform currently ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. The paper sets out the risks and opportunities involved in potential extension of the project using gap funding from Transport Scotland.</p> <p>There is a recommendation that the Board agree that SEStran officers, in partnership with Tactran, extend the current licence for 6 months to allow Transport Scotland to analyse the MIF pilots and decide long-term funding options. The paper sets out certain success criteria to be met in time for an update to the September Board meeting to decide the future after the 6-month extension.</p>	<u>FOR APPROVAL</u>
<u>A7</u>	<p><b><u>Develop to Deliver Report</u></b></p> <p>This report is a policy document prepared by Scotland's seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) on the opportunities to maximise the role of the partnerships in delivering strategic transport improvements, working with Transport Scotland and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The Board is asked to consider the strategic opportunities presented by this piece of work and to discuss potential focus areas in the short to medium term.</p>	<u>FOR DISCUSSION AND NOTING</u>



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## SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10.00am, Friday 1 December 2023

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, and Microsoft Teams

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Colin Davidson (Chair)	Fife Council
	Cllr Scott Arthur	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Dijkstra Downie	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Fiona Law	Clackmannanshire Council
	Cllr Derek Glen	Fife Council
	Cllr Robin Lawson	Fife Council
	Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Cllr Sally Pattle (A1 – A2d)	West Lothian Council
	Linda Bamford	Non-Councillor Member
	Alistair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Geoff Duke	Non-Councillor Member
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	Kate Sherry	Non-Councillor Member
	Paul White	Non-Councillor Member
<u>In Attendance</u>		
	Andrew Henderson (Clerk)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	David Kelly	Community Transport Association
	Christopher Cox	Falkirk Council
	Susan Keenlyside	Fife Council
	Andrew Stewart	NEStran
	Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
	Brian Butler	SEStran

Angela Chambers	SEStran
Cameron Duck	SEStran
Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
Keith Fisker	SEStran
Beth Harley-Jepson	SEStran
Hattie James	SEStran
Michael Melton	SEStran
Rachael Murphy	SEStran
Jonathan Inglis	Transport Scotland
Steven Dora	Transport Scotland
Kirsty MacCormick	Transport Scotland

**Apologies for  
Absence**

Cllr Danny Aston	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Denis Coyne	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr Jane Cox	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr John McMillan	East Lothian Council
Cllr Marie-Claire Munro	City of Edinburgh Council

**A1. Minutes**

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**Decision**

- 1) To agree the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 22 September 2023 as a correct record.
- 2) To note the draft minute of the SEStran Performance and Audit Committee of 17 November 2023.

**A2. Travel to Health Care**

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A presentation was submitted in relation to travel to health care with reference being made to the Draft Transport to Healthcare delivery plan, the potential role for Community Transport and examples of best practice.

**A2a) Introduction**

**Decision**

To note the verbal introduction.

**A2b) Draft Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan**

A presentation was provided on the Draft Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan.

## Decision

- 1) To agree that the Draft Plan and Presentation slides are circulated to board members; and
- 2) To note the Draft Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan Presentation.

### **A2c) The Potential Role of Community Transport**

A presentation was provided on the Potential Role of Community Transport with reference being made to the Community Transport Association, Locating Community Transport, Handicabs Lothian, Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service, Community Transport's Social Value, challenges, NHS Scotland Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy 2022-26, Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, the NHS Lanarkshire Transport Hub, the Grampian Health & Transport Action Plan and next steps.

## Decision

To note the Potential Role of Community Transport Presentation.

### **A2d) Best Practice Exemplar: NHS Grampian/Nestrans – Presentation by Nestrans**

A presentation on the Health and Transport Action Plan was provided with reference being made to its purpose, structure and lessons learnt.

## Decision

- 1) To agree that the STAR Conference paper and HTAP are circulated to members; and
- 2) To note the Best Practice Exemplar: NHS Grampian/Nestrans – Presentation by Nestrans.

(Reference – presentation by Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Community Transport associated and NEStrans)

### **A3a. Indicative Financial Plan 2024/25 and 2025/26**

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An update on the progress of financial planning for the 2024/25 revenue budget and an indicative plan for 2025/26 was presented.

## Decision

- 1) To note the financial planning assumptions for the period 2024/25 to 2025/26;
- 2) To note that financial planning for 2024/25 to 2025/26 will continue to be developed for approval of a revenue budget by the Partnership at its meeting in March 2024; and
- 3) To note that the proposed budget is subject to a number of risks.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

### **A3b. Finance Officer's Report**

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The second update on the financial performance of the Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2023/24, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership was presented with an analysis of financial performance to the end of October 2023.

It was highlighted that the Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2023/24 were approved by the Partnership on 17th March 2023.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To note the forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £11,000; and
- 2) To note the forecast underspend on the Projects budget of £38,000.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

#### **A4. Partnership Directors Update**

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The Partnership Director provided an update on SEStran activities, referring to good working dynamic within the team, the Programme Investment Plan and RTS. Reference was also made to an upcoming meeting with the Transport Minister, and it was acknowledged that work is being done on the promotion and awareness of SEStran and the RTS in particular.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To note the Partnership Director's Update.

(Reference – presentation by Partnership Director)

#### **A5. Projects and Strategy Performance Report**

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An update on performance within the Partnership's various strategy and project workstreams over the last quarter.

It was proposed that this stream of reporting is passed back to the Performance and Audit Committee for future reports and that a report is taken to the subsequent Partnership Boards on issues discussed with recommendation for commencement in the first quarter of 2024.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To agree to move scrutiny of future Projects Update Reports to the Performance & Audit Committee; and
- 2) To note progress recorded in the past quarter, summarised in the attached Appendix.

(Reference – presentation by the Senior Partnership Manager)

#### **A6. Appointments to Succession Planning Committee**

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The board were asked to appoint a new representative to the Succession Planning Committee.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To agree to nominate Paul White as the new representative to the Succession planning Committee, and;
- 2) To note the membership of the Succession Planning Committee

(Reference – presentation by the Business Manager, submitted.)

## A7. GoSEStran MaaS and DDRT

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The report provided an update to the partnership following the report submitted to the SEStran board of the 17th March, regarding GoSEStran. This report provided an update on progress on the pilot project to trial Mobility as a Service and Digital Demand Responsive Transport. The board agreed to note progress made on the project to date, receive updates on the project as appropriate and to note the extension of the Fuse licence agreement at no cost to SEStran.

The report also provided an update following the decision of the SEStran board of 16th June 2023, at which it was agreed to note the intention to enter into a 9-month Licence agreement with Fuse Mobility Ltd in connection with the GoSEStran project, and delegate to officers to enter into further agreements with public sector bodies as part of the next phase of project.

### Decision

- 1) To note the progress made since the last meeting;
- 2) To agree to receive updates on the project as appropriate; and
- 3) To agree to SEStran participating in a procurement exercise in partnership with Tactran and other IMPs partners, and entering into such licence and other agreements as are necessary to secure the continuation of the GoSEStran and other IMPs partners apps, subject always to appropriate levels of funding being secured

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

## A7. Programme of Meetings

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The proposed dates for the Partnership Board meetings in 2024, along with the full schedule of SEStran meetings were presented.

The schedule was drafted in line with previous meeting cycles and complies with audit reporting requirements.

### Decision

- 1) To agree the proposed programme of meetings for 2024;
- 2) To agree to trialling an in person meeting of the March 2024 Partnership Board; and
- 3) To note the hosting arrangements for the future meetings.

(Reference – report by the Business Manager, submitted.)

## A8. Date of Next Meeting

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### Decision

To note the date of the next meeting was scheduled for 10:00am on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

## B1. Human Rights Bill Consultation Response

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The response to the Human Rights Bill Consultation was presented. The draft response was considered by the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum at its meeting on 28th September 2023.

### **Decision**

To note Human Rights Bill Consultation Response.

(Reference – report by the SEStran Consultant, submitted.)

## **B2. Risk Register**

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The six monthly update on SEStran’s risk register was presented, The draft Risk Register was presented to the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 17th November 2023.

### **Decision**

To note the Risk Register.

(References - report by the Business Manager, submitted.)

## **B3. Climate Change Duties Report**

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The report provided details regarding SEStran’s responsibilities, as a public body, in relation to the Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009 and updated members on progress.

### **Decision**

To note the Climate Change Duties Report

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

## **B4. Minutes**

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### **B4.1 Minutes – Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

#### **Decision**

To Note the minutes of the Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum of Tuesday 28th September 2023.

### **B4.2 Minutes – Integrated Mobility Forum Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

#### **Decision**

To Note the minutes of the Integrated Mobility Forum of Thursday 5th October 2023

### **B4.3 Minutes – Chief Officer Liaison Group Meeting Wednesday 8th November 2023**

#### **Decision**

To Note the minutes of the Chief Officer Liaison Group Meeting of Wednesday 8th November 2023

### **B4.4 Minutes – Logistics & Freight Forum Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023**

To Note the minutes of the Logistics & Freight Forum Meeting of Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

**PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ  
and via Microsoft Teams  
on Friday 1 March 2024  
1.00pm**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor Imrie (Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Councillor Glen	Fife Council
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	Councillor Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	Councillor McMillan	East Lothian Council

<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Cameron Duck	SEStran
	Keith Fisker	SEStran
	Daniel Baigrie	City of Edinburgh Council
	Rachel Murphy	SEStran
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Michael Melton	SEStran
	Tarryn Wilson-Jones	SEStran
	Lucy Telling	SEStran
	Nikki Boath	SEStran
	Callum Hay	SEStran

**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 Fiona Law  
(Clackmannanshire Council)

**A3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

#### **A4. MINUTES**

To approve the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of 17 November 2023 as a correct record.

#### **A5. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023-24**

Officers presented the Annual External Audit Plan for the 2023/24 period. It was noted that this was a low-risk audit and where risks were identified there are mitigations in place.

##### **Decision**

- 1) To note the External Audit Plan
- 2) To refer the External Audit Plan to the Partnership Board meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

#### **A6. FINANCE REPORTS**

##### **a) REVENUE BUDGET AND INDICATIVE FINANCIAL PLAN**

Officers presented an update on the development of a revenue budget for 2024/25 and an indicative financial plan for 2025/26. There was an assumption that the core funding of £0.782m from Scottish Government will remain unchanged.

It was noted that the 2023 Actuarial Valuation for Lothian Pension Fund recommended a reduction of 6.3% in employer contribution rates resulting in a £33,000 cost reduction for the Partnership.

A revenue budget with a standstill council requisition of £190,000 had been prepared in consultation with officers of the Partnership and the Partnership's Chief Officers Group.

##### **Decision**

- 1) To note the financial planning assumptions for the Partnership's proposed revenue budget for 2024/25
- 2) To note that the revenue budget is likely to change significantly when Transport Scotland confirms plans for the People and Place Programme.
- 3) To note the financial planning for 2025/26 and future years will be developed throughout 2024 for consideration by the



## Partnership in December 2024

- 4) To note that the proposed budget is subject to a number of risks. All income and expenditure of the Partnership will continue to be monitored closely with updates reported to each Partnership meeting.
- 5) To note that the revenue budget for 2024/25 will be presented at the Partnership Board on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

### **b) ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25**

Officers presented a report to propose the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25. It was recommended that the Partnership maintains its current banking arrangements with the City of Edinburgh Council's group of bank accounts.

It was noted that arrangements were put in place given the existing administration arrangement with the City of Edinburgh Council and the relatively small investment balances the Partnership had. Although any investment return would be small, the Partnership would gain security from its counterparty exposure being to the City of Edinburgh Council.

#### **Decision**

To refer the Strategy to the Partnership Board to approve the continuation of the current arrangement as outlined in the report.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

### **A7. PEOPLE AND PLACE PLAN**

Officers provided a report regarding the People and Place Plan which summarised work carried out to date, future plans and the management of grant award funding in 2024/25. A proposal to use Transport Scotland Funding allocation would focus on the following key themes: schools and young people, workplaces, accessibility and inclusion, capacity and capability building.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To note the content of the report and appendices.
- 2) To note that this report will be presented at the Partnership

Board on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

- 3) To agree that a Sub-Committee of the Performance and Audit Committee would meet to scrutinise this project.

(Reference – report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

## **A8. PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE**

Officers presented the report which gave an overview of the performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams over the previous quarter.

Officers highlighted progressing in relation to new Brompton Go E-Bikes which will be sited at Queen Margaret University and stored securely.

Officers noted the challenges associated with real-time bus trackers across the area and that work with bus operators to resolve issues is ongoing.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the progress recorded in the past quarter, summarised in the report appendices.
- 2) To agree on the new timeline for an integrated Business Plan and monitoring approach.
- 3) To note that the Grant Standing Orders will be considered by the Partnership's Board.
- 4) To note that the Eligibility and Assessment Process will also be considered by the Partnership's Board.

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

## **A9. DEVELOP TO DELIVER REPORT**

Officers presented the report to inform the Performance and Audit Committee of a policy document prepared by Scotland's seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) on the opportunities to maximise the role of the partnerships in delivering strategic transport improvements, working with others.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the Develop to Deliver 2023 Refresh report.
- 2) To note the report will be presented to the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Partnership Board to endorse the principles of collaboration, opportunities for regional coordination and the role of Regional Transport Partnerships in enabling liaison between national and local authorities.
- 3) To note that the report will then be shared with CoSLA, SCOTS and Transport Scotland and used as the basis for discussion about devolving some roles and responsibilities from Transport Scotland to the RTPs, in line with the principles enshrined in the Verity House agreement.

(Reference – report by the Partnership Director, submitted)

**A10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 7 June 2024

## Revenue Budget 2024/25 and Indicative Financial Plan 2025/26

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents a revenue budget for 2024/25 for approval and an indicative financial plan for 2025/26, for noting.
- 1.2 The proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 was reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 1st March 2024.

### 2. Main Report

#### Scottish Government Budget 2024-25

- 2.1 The Scottish Budget was approved by the Scottish Parliament on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024. At the time of writing, there has been no confirmation of the Partnership's revenue grant for 2024/25 received from Transport Scotland.
- 2.2 Financial planning remains based on no change in the revenue grant for 2024/25, with no re-distribution of grant among Regional Transport Partnerships (RTP's).
- 2.3 If further information is available by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024, a verbal update will be provided to the meeting of the Partnership Board.

#### Proposed Revenue Budget 2024-25

- 2.4 Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended by the Section 122 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the constituent councils of a Regional Transport Partnership to meet the estimated net expenses of the Partnership.
- 2.5 A financial planning report was considered by the Partnership on 1st December 2023. The Partnership noted the financial planning assumptions being progressed for 2024/25 to 2025/26.
- 2.6 Planning assumptions include no change from 2023/24 funding levels for constituent council requisitions and Scottish Government grant.
- 2.7 The budget includes the cost of the strategic realignment of the Partnership's organisation structure as [reported](#) to the Partnership Board on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023;
- 2.8 The cost of the 2023/24 Local Government pay award is included in the proposed budget and a pay award of 3% is included for 2024/25.

- 2.9** The 2023 Actuarial Valuation for Lothian Pension Fund recommended a reduction of 6.3% in employer contribution rates for 2024/25 from 33.1% to 26.8% - a cost reduction of £33,000.
- 2.10** The change in employer contribution rate has no impact on pension benefits paid or accrued by current and past employees or future retired employees of the Partnership.
- 2.11** A revenue budget with a standstill council requisition of £190,000 has been prepared in consultation with officers of the Partnership and the Partnership's Chief Officers Group.
- 2.12** An analysis of the proposed core budget for 2024/25 and indicative financial plans for 2025/26 is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.13** Proposed Project activity for 2024/25 is shown in Appendix 2(a). Indicative Project activity for 2025/26 is shown in Appendix 2(b)
- 2.14** A summary of the proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 and indicative plan for 2025/26 is presented in the table below.

	<b>2024/25</b> <b>£'000</b>	<b>2025/26</b> <b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Core	901	936
Projects	325	93
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,029</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Scottish Government grant	(782)	(782)
Council contribution	(190)	(190)
Other external income	(254)	(39)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(1,226)</b>	<b>(1,011)</b>
<b>Net shortfall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>

- 2.15** The proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 shows expenditure of £1.226m to be fully funded by income and grant funding.
- 2.16** At this stage, a net shortfall of £18,000 is forecast for 2025/26. It is anticipated that this forecast shortfall will be addressed by employee recharges. Updates will be presented to the Partnership Board throughout 2024/25, when developing the 2025/26 budget.
- 2.17** Appendix 3 shows all budgeted expenditure and income since 2018/19.

### **Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes**

- 2.18** In late 2023, Transport Scotland announced a change to the mechanism for allocating funding to support active travel behaviour change and access to bikes.

- 2.19** From April 2024, funding will be allocated directly to RTPs who will liaise with local authorities to agree priorities and with delivery partners to understand how they can support delivery of these priorities.
- 2.20** Subject to final approval by Transport Scotland’s Authorised Officer, funding of £20m will be allocated to RTPs for 2024/25, of which £5.7m will be allocated to the Partnership.
- 2.21** A separate update on work progressed to date on 2024/25 proposals will be presented to this meeting of the Partnership.
- 2.22** Pending further development of the Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes project, the Core and Project budget proposals in this report do not include proposals in respect of the project.
- 2.23** In recent years, the Projects budget has included over £400,000 of expenditure funded by the RTP Active Travel Fund. This has not been included in the Projects budget for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as the Fund will cease to exist as a consequence of the proposed Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes project.
- 2.24** As a result, the figures for Projects for 2024/25 and 2025/26 are currently understated. An update of the Projects budget will be reported to the Partnership, following confirmation of additional Scottish Government funding.

**Constituent Council Requisition**

- 2.25** The 2024/25 Council requisitions, based on the proposed budget are shown in the table below.

<b>Council</b>	<b>Requisition</b>
Clackmannanshire	£6,150
East Lothian	£13,332
Edinburgh	£60,869
Falkirk	£18,805
Fife	£43,974
Midlothian	£11,468
Scottish Borders	£13,878
West Lothian	£21,524
<b>Total</b>	<b>£190,000</b>

**Reserves**

- 2.26** In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated General Fund reserve of £49,000, based on 5% of the core revenue budget.
- 2.27** In the Finance Officer report on this agenda, the Partnership Board is advised of Project budget slippage of £82,000 forecast for 2023/24. Forecast project slippage for 2023/24 has reduced from slippage of £159,000 for the 2022/23

Projects budget, with project delivery improving. An earmarked balance will be created for projects which cannot be completed until 2025/26.

**2.28** Following confirmation of the 2023/24 outturn, an earmarked balance will be established to meet any slippage on project delivery from 2023/24 to 2024/25, in line with the Partnership's approved Reserves Policy.

**2.29** A risk assessment for 2024/25 is included at Appendix 4.

### **3 Next Steps**

**3.1** Following approval of the proposed budget by the Partnership, requisitions will be issued by the Treasurer to constituent councils.

**3.2** An update of the Projects budget, including slippage and projects to be funded from the Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes project will be reported to the Partnership Board. This will follow from confirmation of the final outturn for 2023/24 and after conclusion of the Annual External Audit.

### **4 Recommendation**

**4.1** It is recommended that the Partnership:

**4.1.1** approves the proposed Core budget for 2024/25 of £901,000, as detailed at Appendix 1;

**4.1.2** approves the proposed Projects budget for 2024/25, as detailed at Appendix 2(a);

**4.1.3** notes that financial planning for 2025/26 will be developed throughout 2024 for review by the Partnership in December 2024.

### **5 Background Reading/External References**

**5.1** [Indicative Financial Plan 2024-25 and 2025-26](#) – report to South East Scotland Transport Partnership 1st December 2023

**5.2** [Partnership Director's Report](#) – report to South East Scotland Transport Partnership 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Richard Lloyd-Bithell**

Treasurer

8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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

**Contact**     [iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Policy Implications	The proposed Core and Projects budget is aligned to the achievement of the Partnership’s policy objectives.
Financial Implications	The proposed Core and Projects budget is within the financial resources forecast to be available to the Partnership in 2024/25.
Equalities Implications	The proposed Core and Projects budget is aligned to the achievement of the Partnership’s Equalities objectives.
Climate Change Implications	The proposed Core and Projects budget is aligned to the achievement of the Partnership’s Climate Change objectives.



Appendix 1

Core Budget 2024/25 and 2025/26

	Approved Budget 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25	Indicative Budget 2025/26
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Employee Costs</b>			
Salaries	428	498	522
National Insurance	49	59	63
Pension Fund	151	133	140
Recharges	(4)	0	0
Recharges – Cycling Officer	(20)	0	0
Training & Conferences	10	10	10
Interviews & Advertising	2	2	2
	<b>616</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>737</b>
<b>Premises Costs</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Transport</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>			
Communications & Computing	48	48	48
Hosted ICT – Novus FX	44	44	44
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	7	7
Insurance	7	7	7
Equipment, Furniture, Materials, Miscellaneous	4	4	4
	<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Support Services</b>			
Finance	31	31	31
Legal Services / HR	7	7	7
	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Corporate &amp; Democratic</b>			
Clerks Fees	12	12	12
External Audit Fees	12	12	12
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	1
	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Interest</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>936</b>
<b>Funding</b>			
Scottish Government Grant	(625)	(711)	(746)
Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)	(190)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(815)</b>	<b>(901)</b>	<b>(936)</b>

Projects – Proposed Budget 2024-25

Appendix  
2(a)

	2023-24	2024-25			
Service	Approved Budget £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Activity
Regional Bus Strategy	0	115	(115)	0	
Sustainable Travel	28	6	0	6	
Urban Cycle Network	0	<i>Project is expected to become part of Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes Funding</i>			
Urban Cycling	21	0	0	0	
Active Travel Fund	0	<i>Project is expected to become part of Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes Funding</i>			
RTS Development	18	18	0	18	
GO e-BIKE	10	10	0	10	
Thistle Assistance	6	30	(24)	6	
Consultancy support	43	11	0	11	
Equalities Action Forum	10	10	0	10	
<b>EU – Funded Projects</b>					
HARPCAT Horizon	0	100	(100)	0	
Surflogh	3	0	0	0	Ended 2023/24
Bling	3	0	0	0	Ended 2023/24
Primaas	2	0	0	0	Ended 2023/24
Connect	3	0	0	0	Ended 2023/24
<b>Real-Time Passenger Information System (RTPI)</b>					
Maintenance	25	25	0	25	
Income – screens	(15)	0	(15)	(15)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>(254)</b>	<b>71</b>	

Projects - Indicative Activity 2025-26

Appendix  
2(b)

	2024/25	2025-26			
Service	Proposed Budget £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Activity
Regional Bus Strategy	0	0	0	0	
Sustainable Travel	6	0	0	0	
Urban Cycle Network	0	<i>Project is expected to become part of Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes Funding</i>			
Active Travel Fund	0	<i>Project is expected to become part of Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes Funding</i>			
RTS Development	18	18	0	18	
GO e-BIKE	10	10	0	10	
Thistle Assistance	6	30	(24)	6	
Consultancy support	11	0	0	0	
Equalities Action Forum	10	10	0	10	
<b>EU – Funded Projects</b>					
HARPCAT Horizon	0	0	0	0	
<b>Real-Time Passenger Information System (RTPI)</b>					
Maintenance	25	25	0	25	
Income – screens	(15)	0	(15)	(15)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>(39)</b>	<b>54</b>	

## Summary of Revenue Budget 2018/19 – 2025/26

	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Core	531	584	581	663	619	774	901	936
Projects	614	590	1,030	786	882	688	300	68
RTPI	108	100	50	23	25	25	25	25
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>1,274</b>	<b>1,661</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,029</b>
<b>External Funding</b>								
EU Grants	139	82	142	106	210	26	100	0
Other income	142	220	547	394	344	489	154	39
<b>Total External Funding</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>39</b>
Scottish Government	782	782	782	782	782	782	782	782
Council Requisition	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>1,274</b>	<b>1,661</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,011</b>
<b>Shortfall</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>18</b>

Risk Description	Existing Controls
<p><b>Pay awards</b> The proposed budget makes provision for a pay award of up to 3% in 2024/25. An uplift of 1% in pay award equates to an increase of £6,790.</p>	<p>Alignment with Local Government Pay Policy.</p>
<p><b>Inflation</b> There is a risk that the indicative budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.</p>	<p>Allowance made for specific known price inflation. Budgets adjusted in line with current cost forecasts.</p>
<p><b>Pension Fund Contributions</b> The value of the Partnership's pension fund was restricted to 'Nil' at 31 March 2023, following proper accounting practice.  The actual surplus may lead to a decrease in future employer's pension fund contributions.</p>	<p>Following Lothian Pension Fund's Triennial Actuarial Review in 2023, Partnership employer pension fund contribution rates are confirmed at 26.8% until 31 March 2027.</p>
<p><b>Funding Reductions</b> Reduction in funding from Transport Scotland and/or council requisitions.  There is a risk that current levels of staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.</p>	<p>Continue to seek to source external funding.  Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.</p>

## ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25.

### 2 Annual Treasury Management Strategy

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

### 3 Recommendations

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

**Richard Lloyd-Bithell**  
Treasurer

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**Appendix** Appendix 1 - Annual Treasury Management Strategy

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

## APPENDIX 1

### Annual Treasury Management Strategy

#### (a) Treasury Management Policy Statement

1. The Partnership defines its Treasury Management activities as:

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

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

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

#### (b) Permitted Investments

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

#### (c) Prudential Indicators

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

## **Finance Officer's Report**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** This report presents the third update on the financial performance of the Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2023/24, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. This report presents an analysis of financial performance to the end of January 2024.
- 1.2** The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2023/24 were approved by the Partnership on 17th March 2023.

### **2. Core Budget**

- 2.1** The Core budget provides for the day-to-day running costs of the Partnership and includes employee costs, premises costs and supplies and services. The approved Core budget is £815,000. Details of the Core budget is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2** Cumulative expenditure for the ten months to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 was £560,000. This is within the Core budget resources available for the period.
- 2.3** Estimates have been updated to reflect current expenditure commitments. The forecast includes the cost of the 2023/24 Local Government pay award.
- 2.4** It is projected expenditure for the year will be £68,000 less than budget. Forecast underspends include:
  - 2.4.1** delays in staff recruitment while the structure was reviewed in order to more closely align with organisational priorities (£85,000);
  - 2.4.2** a provision made for Pension Fund employer contribution salary strain costs of £29,000, not now required following confirmation by Lothian Pension Fund that there will be no salary strain contribution liability for 2023/24;
  - 2.4.3** other underspends include communications/ computing (£11,000), training/ conferences (£5,000), staff travel (£3,000) and general office supplies (£4,000).
- 2.5** These underspends are partly offset by:
  - 2.5.1** external consultancy expenditure of £51,000 to provide additional capacity due to vacant substantive posts;
  - 2.5.2** legal fees of £14,000, principally to update the Partnership's procurement processes and rules.



## Projects Budget

- 2.6** The approved Projects budget is detailed in Appendix 2.
- 2.7** The Partnership has an earmarked balance of £159,000, reflecting expenditure slippage on projects in 2022/23. The allocation of project slippage from 2022/23 is shown in Appendix 2.
- 2.8** The Revised Projects budget shown in Appendix 2 includes the budget re-alignment reported in the [Finance Officer's Report](#) to the Partnership Board on 22nd September 2023.
- 2.9** It is projected that net expenditure on projects in 2023/24 will be £82,000 less than budget. This forecast is based on a full spend of project slippage balances brought forward from 2022/23.
- 2.10** Expenditure on both the core and projects budgets will be subject of ongoing review for the remainder of 2023/24. The Partnership's Reserves Policy will be applied when reviewing the year-end outturn.

## Cash Flow

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

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

Date	Balance due to SEStran (+ve) /due by SEStran (-ve)
	£
30 April 2023	-397,370
31 May 2023	+139,961
30 June 2023	+ 207,372
31 July 2023	+ 165,696
31 August 2023	+ 227,503
30 September 2023	+ 341,471
31 October 2023	+ 329,745
30 November 2023	+ 356,966
31 December 2023	+ 146,080
31 January 2024	+ 87,735

- 2.12** Interest is charged/paid on the monthly indebtedness between the Council and the Partnership. Interest will be calculated in March 2024.

- 2.13** The positive cash balance throughout 2023/24 is attributable to funding received from Scottish Government grant and Council requisitions.

**Reserves**

- 2.14** The Board’s Reserves Policy recommends establishment of an unallocated General Fund Reserve based on a minimum value of 5% (£41,000) of the Partnership’s core revenue budget. At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the Partnership has an unallocated General Fund Reserve of £49,000.
- 2.15** The Reserves Policy recommends that where slippage occurs on approved revenue projects, the balance of slippage is retained as an earmarked balance. £159,000 of project slippage has been carried forward from 2022/23 and is included in the Projects budget presented in Appendix 2.
- 2.16** An update of Financial Risks for 2023/24 is included at Appendix 3.

**3 Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Partnership:

- 3.1** notes the forecast underspend on the Core revenue budget of £68,000;
- 3.2** notes the forecast underspend on the Projects budget of £82,000.

**4 Background Reading/External References**

- 4.1** [Finance Officer’s Report](#)– report to South East Scotland Transport Partnership 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023

**Richard Lloyd-Bithell**

Treasurer  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Appendix**            Appendix 1 – Core Budget Statement at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024  
                             Appendix 2 – Projects Budget as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

**Contact**            [iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk)

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

	Annual Budget £'000	Period Budget £'000	Period Actual £'000	Annual Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
<b>Employee Costs</b>					
Salaries	428	356	307	387	(41)
National Insurance	49	41	34	43	(6)
Pension Fund	151	126	67	92	(59)
Recharges	(24)	(4)	(17)	(25)	(1)
Training & Conferences	10	8	1	5	(5)
Interviews & Advertising	2	2	0	0	(2)
	<b>616</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>(114)</b>
<b>Premises Costs</b>					
Office Accommodation	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>Transport</b>					
Staff Travel	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>					
Communications & Computing	48	40	32	37	(11)
Hosted Service - Novus FX	44	44	44	44	0
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	6	2	3	(4)
Insurance	7	7	7	7	0
Equipment, Furniture & Materials, Miscellaneous	4	3	3	4	0
	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>(15)</b>
<b>Support Services</b>					
Finance	31	0	1	31	0
Legal Services / HR	7	0	3	21	14
External Consultants	0	0	51	51	51
	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Corporate &amp; Democratic</b>					
Clerks Fees	12	0	0	12	0
External Audit Fees	12	0	4	12	0
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	0	1	0
	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>(68)</b>
<b>Funding:</b>					
Scottish Government Grant	(625)	(540)	(540)	(625)	0
Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)	(190)	(190)	0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(815)</b>	<b>(730)</b>	<b>(730)</b>	<b>(815)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Expenditure/ (Income)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(76)</b>	<b>(170)</b>	<b>(68)</b>	<b>(68)</b>

Projects Budget 2023/24 - as at 31st January 2024

Appendix 2

	Revised Budget (stated after realignment)	Slippage from 2022/23	EU /Other Grant	Net Expenditure Budget	Annual Forecast	Forecast Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>EU Projects</b>						
Surflogh	23	(3)	(8)	12	13	1
Bling	19	(3)	(16)	0	0	0
Primaas	(3)	4	1	2	4	2
Connect	(7)	7	(13)	(13)	(13)	0
Regio-Mob	(11)	11	1	1	1	0
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>(35)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
RTPI	2	23	(15)	10	(7)	(17)
Active Travel Fund	350		(350)	0	0	0
Regional Transport Strategy	(62)	74		12	25	13
Sustainable Travel	39	41		80	40	(40)
GO e-Bike	114	1	(53)	62	47	(15)
Urban Cycle Networks	6	2		8	8	0
Projects Consultancy Support	45	(7)		38	38	0
Equalities Action Forum	(1)	11		10	0	(10)
Thistle Assistance	83	(13)	(64)	6	6	0
Mobility as a Service	260	(3)	(238)	19	19	0
Bus Strategy Development	26	14	(12)	28	(12)	(40)
EV Strategy	40			40	50	10
Leith Docks/ Newburgh	0			0	14	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>(767)</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>(82)</b>

Risk Description	Mitigation and Controls
<p><b>Pay awards</b> The revenue budget made provision for a pay award of up to 3% in 2023/24. The agreed Local Government pay award is greater than the budget provision.</p>	<p>The financial impact of the agreed Local Government pay award is included in the forecast.</p>
<p><b>Inflation</b> There is a risk that the approved budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2023/24.</p>
<p><b>Delays in payment of grant by the EU -</b> results in additional short-term borrowing costs.</p>	<p>EU projects are now largely concluded, with grant claims settled.</p>
<p><b>Pension Fund Contributions</b> The value of the Partnership's pension fund was restricted to 'Nil' at 31 March 2023, following proper accounting practice.  The actual surplus may lead to a decrease in future employer's pension fund contributions.</p>	<p>Following Lothian Pension Fund's Triennial Actuarial Review in 2023, Partnership employer pension fund contribution rates are confirmed at 26.8% until 31 March 2027. .</p>
<p><b>Funding Reductions</b> Reduction in funding from Scottish Government and/or council requisitions.  There is a risk that current levels of staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.</p>	<p>Scottish Government grant and Council contributions are confirmed for 2023/24.  Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.</p>

## **GRANT STANDING ORDERS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board new Grant Standing Orders to be incorporated into SEStran's governance arrangements.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As part of the work on the People and Place Plan presented elsewhere on this agenda, a need has been identified for SEStran to put in place Grant Standing Orders (GSOs) to set out the governance processes that can underpin the award of grants by the Partnership.
- 2.2 Currently, the provision of grants under the 2005 Act by SEStran is governed by the Financial Rules, which state that:

*58 The Partnership Director is responsible for ensuring that each grant award complies with the corporate criteria and is subject to any such conditions as the Partnership deems appropriate to the particular award.*

*59 The Partnership Director is responsible for project evaluation and the monitoring and evaluation procedures adopted in each case.*

*60 The Partnership Director is required to contain total grants paid within budget provisions for the current year.*

*61 The arrangements for processing grant payments will be in accordance with procedures adopted by the City of Edinburgh Council.*

- 2.3 This follows the legal power of SEStran to offer grants as set out under Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005:

*(5) A Transport Partnership may give grants or loans to any person for any purposes that, in its opinion, contribute to the implementation of the Partnership's transport strategy.*

*(6) Such grants or loans may be given subject to such conditions (including conditions requiring repayment in specified circumstances) as the Transport Partnership decides.*

- 2.4 The proposed GSOs will build on the 2005 Act and Financial Rules by defining what is meant by a grant and setting out clearly how grant funds and awards will be approved and by whom.

### **3. MAIN REPORT**

- 3.1 This report provides Members with a copy of the GSOs for approval (see Appendix 1).
- 3.2 The GSOs have been developed based on those approved by City of Edinburgh Council in February 2024 and have been refined following discussions with SEStran’s solicitors and City of Edinburgh Council.
- 3.3 A draft version of the GSOs was presented to the Performance and Audit Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The Committee noted the GSOs and was content for them to be submitted to the Partnership Board for final approval.
- 3.4 Since then, some further amendments have been made following discussions with SEStran’s solicitors:
- General clarifications to wording and formatting to ensure that this is consistent throughout
  - Raising the limit on grant funds that do not need Board approval of assessment and eligibility criteria from £25,000 to £50,000 to align with proposed changes to the Contract Standing Orders
  - Inclusion of a new section to incorporate the award of grants to Local Authorities which focuses on partnership working and therefore has a higher level of delegation than for grants to third parties
- 3.5 The grant award governance framework is constituted by the GSOs and SEStran’s existing Financial Rules. The purpose of the GSOs is to set out clearly the requirements and responsibilities around the distribution of grant funds.
- 3.6 Once approved, the GSOs will form part of SEStran’s Governance Scheme, and will be available on the website to potential grant recipients when they make applications.
- 3.7 The approvals and delegations contained within the GSOs are summarised in the below tables:

For grants to non-Local Authorities:

<b>Grant Funding Pot Value</b>	<b>Individual Grant Value</b>	<b>Open/ Closed round</b>	<b>Eligibility Criteria Approval</b>	<b>Assessment Process Approval</b>	<b>Award of grant Approval</b>
<b>Under £50k</b>	<b>Under £50k</b>	Either	Partnership Director	Partnership Director	Partnership Director
<b>Any</b>	<b>Up to £100k</b>	Open	Board	Board	Partnership Director
<b>Any</b>	<b>£100k-£1mil</b>	Open	Board	Board	Partnership Director (on advice of a Panel)
<b>Any</b>	<b>£1mil-£3mil</b>	Open	Board	Board	P&A (on advice of a Panel)
<b>Any</b>	<b>£3mil+</b>	Open	Board	Board	Board (on advice of a Panel)

For grants to Local Authorities:

Grant Funding Pot Value	Individual Grant Value	Open/ Closed round	Eligibility Criteria Approval	Assessment Process Approval	Award of grant Approval
Any	Up to £1mil	Closed	Partnership Director	Partnership Director	Partnership Director
Any	£1mil-£3mil	Closed	Board	Board	P&A
Any	£3mil+	Closed	Board	Board	Board

3.8 As the GSOs include a provision for the Board and Performance and Audit Committee to approve grants over certain value thresholds, upon approval of these GSOs updates will be required to SEStran’s Governance Scheme to explicitly state this updated role.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Partnership Board is asked to:

- Approve the Grant Standing Orders as presented at Appendix 1
- Approve subsequent changes to SEStran’s Governance Scheme committee remit sections for the Board and Performance and Audit Committee to state their roles in the approval of grants in line with the Grant Standing Orders.

Michael Melton  
**Programme Manager**  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### Appendix 1: Grant Standing Orders

Policy Implications	Approval of the GSOs will underpin the award of grants that will contribute to achieving our policy objectives
Financial Implications	None, the new grant standing orders put in place a robust governance framework to ensure grant funds are suitable dispersed in line with agree budget
Equalities Implications	Approval of the GSOs will underpin the award of grants that will contribute to achieving our equality objectives
Climate Change Implications	Approval of the GSOs will underpin the award of grants that will contribute to achieving our climate change objectives



## SEStran Grant Standing Orders

### Introduction

These Grant Standing Orders (GSOs) of the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (“SEStran”) apply from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and apply (with certain exceptions outlined below) to all grants made by or on behalf of SEStran.

#### 1. Explanatory Note – What are Grants?

1.1. Grants are financial contributions to a third party which contribute towards the Regional Transport Strategy.

1.2. Properly constituted grants will not normally be subject to the procurement rules. Further guidance can be found in the Scottish Public Finance Manual, however the following characteristics will help determine whether a grant is the suitable funding route or whether it should be treated as a Public Contract and be subject to normal procurement rules:

1.2.1. Grants are financial contributions to a third party and tend to be an offer to a third party of funds or a financial contribution for a discretionary project or objective which contribute towards the Regional Transport Strategy. The grant should not be for services which SEStran receives.

1.2.2. Grant funding will normally be given subject to desired outcomes being met but SEStran will not normally receive services itself.

1.2.3. SEStran is providing funding to support activities that will contribute towards the Regional Transport Strategy and where the grant recipient does not have sufficient resources to deliver those activities on a self-sustaining basis itself.

1.2.4. In contrast, Public Contracts are normally a request by SEStran for a specific requirement or service with no discretionary objective for which an agreed price is paid.

1.3. There is no financial threshold above which a grant becomes a contract but if the investment is significant this may reflect a significant need in which case greater control and/or a more defined specification may be advisable.

1.4. References to ‘Public Contract’ in this paragraph 1 means a contract which is subject to the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, the Utilities Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016, the Concessions Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016 or the Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016.

#### 2. General Principles and Application

2.1. Grants are subject to the requirements to secure Best Value (as defined in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003).

2.2. Grant funding is for objectives which contribute towards the Regional Transport Strategy.

- 2.3. SEStran is committed to ensuring grant funding is outcome driven, accessible and transparent, supporting projects that meet the needs of the region.
- 2.4. Subject to Board approval, SEStran may use arms-length bodies or other appropriate organisations or community networks to carry out grant disbursement activities on its behalf. SEStran should have an agreement in place with such bodies that sets out the nature of the relationship, the form of accountability, how the assessment panel will be constituted, how the organisation or network is funded or will be funded, and details of the activities they will engage in. Such bodies will be subject to the standards set out in these Grant Standing Orders unless expressly agreed by the Partnership Board.
- 2.5. All grant arrangements must comply with the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. At the outset of any grant process the relevant Partnership Director shall ensure that the Subsidy Control Act 2022 is considered and appropriate advice sought. The specific grant agreement must contain provisions ensuring both SEStran's and the recipient's compliance with the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 as applicable to the grant.
- 2.6. For each grant fund, the Partnership Director shall appoint a named officer to oversee the process, manage any issues with individual recipients and ensure outcomes are achieved and managed. The process and management required shall be proportionate to the amount of grant funding.
- 2.7. Prior to award, all grants paid should have specific grant agreements in place which should be suitable and proportionate to the level of funding and reflect the activities and outcomes to be delivered.
- 2.8. Sections 3 and 4 will not apply to grants to Local Authorities, which are covered under section 6.
3. Eligibility and Assessment Criteria for Grant Funds (for grants to non-Local Authorities)
  - 3.1. The overarching eligibility criteria and the overarching assessment criteria:
    - 3.1.1. For each grant fund under £50,000 shall be approved in advance by the Partnership Director
    - 3.1.2. For each grant fund in excess of £50,000 shall be developed by the Partnership Director and approved in advance by the Partnership Board.
  - 3.2. Changes to the eligibility or assessment criteria, process and the amount of the grant fund may be approved by the Partnership Director where the total annual fund or the amount by which the total annual fund is to change is less than or equal to £50,000. Any other changes to the eligibility criteria, process and the amount of the grant fund shall be approved by the Partnership Board.

- 3.3. Grant funds where the total annual fund value is less than or equal to £50,000 shall be either open or closed as determined by the Partnership Director.  
Grant funds where the total annual fund value exceeds £50,000 per annum shall be open to all eligible applicants (as agreed under 3.1.2).
  - 3.4. In certain circumstances, a restricted process i.e. restricted to existing grant recipients may be appropriate but must be agreed by the Board in advance.
  - 3.5. Notwithstanding 3.3-3.4, where grant funding is from a source other than SEStran (such as the Scottish Government) then this requirement to be open to all eligible applicants shall still apply but be subject to any requirements of the funding body or third party as appropriate that may stipulate restrictions on eligibility. The Partnership Director may approve any changes to the eligibility criteria, process or the amount of the fund to take account of these third party requirements, reporting back to the Board as appropriate.
4. Assessment Process and Award of Grants (for grants to non-Local Authorities)
- 4.1. For grants where the total annual fund value is equal to or less than £50,000:
    - 4.1.1. Applications shall be assessed and evaluated against the agreed assessment criteria
    - 4.1.2. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Partnership Director for approval (within the agreed annual budget) based on the outcome of this assessment and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting
  - 4.2. For grants where the total annual fund value is greater than £50,000 and the individual grant value does not exceed £100,000:
    - 4.2.1. Applications shall be assessed and evaluated by at least 2 SEStran officers against the agreed assessment criteria
    - 4.2.2. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Partnership Director for approval (within the agreed annual budget) based on the outcome of this assessment and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting
  - 4.3. For grants of £100,000 up to £1million:
    - 4.3.1. Applications shall be assessed and evaluated by at least 2 SEStran officers against the agreed assessment criteria
    - 4.3.2. A panel will be formed, chaired by the Partnership Director, to review the assessments in line with the agreed criteria
    - 4.3.3. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Partnership Director for approval (within the agreed annual budget) based on the advice of the panel and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting

- 4.4. For grants of £1million up to £3million:
  - 4.4.1. Applications shall be assessed and evaluated by at least 2 SEStran officers against the agreed assessment criteria
  - 4.4.2. A panel will be formed, chaired by the Partnership Director, to review the assessments in line with the agreed criteria
  - 4.4.3. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Performance and Audit Committee) for approval (within the agreed annual budget) based on the advice of the panel and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting
  
- 4.5. For grants over £3million:
  - 4.5.1. Applications shall be assessed and evaluated by at least 2 SEStran officers against the agreed assessment criteria
  - 4.5.2. A panel will be formed, chaired by the Partnership Director, to review the assessments in line with the agreed criteria
  - 4.5.3. Grant awards shall be shall be reported to the Partnership Board for approval based on the advice of the panel
  
- 4.6. If an agreed grant varies such as it passes one of the above thresholds, approval must be sought in line with the relevant thresholds above prior to issuing any grant variation.

## 5. Funding and Sustainability

- 5.1. SEStran will not normally provide grant funding of more than 95% of an organisation's turnover in the year the grant is given
  
- 5.2. Prior to any award of a grant exceeding £25,000 the financial sustainability of the applicant organisation shall be assessed.

## 6. Grants to Local Authorities

- 6.1. SEStran will work in partnership with Local Authorities with respect to grant awards to them.
  
- 6.2. Grant funds designated for Local Authorities will be closed to all other applicants.
  
- 6.3. For grant funds to Local Authorities where awards will not exceed £1million:
  - 6.3.1. The overarching eligibility criteria and the overarching assessment criteria for such grant funds shall be approved by the Partnership Director having been developed in partnership with Local Authorities
  - 6.3.2. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Partnership Director for approval (within the agreed annual budget), and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting

- 6.4. For grant funds to Local Authorities where awards will range from £1million up to £3million:
- 6.4.1. The overarching eligibility criteria and the overarching assessment criteria for such grants shall be developed by the Partnership Director and approved in advance by the Partnership Board having been developed in partnership with Local Authorities
  - 6.4.2. Grant awards shall be delegated to the Performance and Audit Committee for approval (within the agreed annual budget), and reported to the Board for noting at its next meeting
- 6.5. For grant funds to Local Authorities where awards will exceed £3million:
- 6.5.1. The overarching eligibility criteria and the overarching assessment criteria for such grants shall be developed by the Partnership Director and approved in advance by the Partnership Board having been developed in partnership with Local Authorities
  - 6.5.2. Grant awards shall be reported to the Partnership Board for approval
- 6.6. If an agreed grant varies such as it passes one of the above thresholds, approval must be sought in line with 10.4.1 or 10.5.1 prior to issuing any grant variation.

## 7. Derogation from Process

- 7.1. In the event that a change is required to the eligibility criteria or assessment process set out above which cannot (for reasons of urgency) wait until the next meeting of the Partnership Board, the Partnership Director in consultation with the Chairperson may agree to approve the change.
- 7.2. With reference to delegations to the Partnership Director, where the prescribed authority is not available and approval is required urgently, the grant award may be approved by their nominated depute or other senior officer(s).
- 7.3. In such instances where paragraph 7.1. or 7.2 are relied upon, all decisions and approvals must be reported to the Board at its next meeting.

## 8. Review of Grant Standing Orders

- 8.1. These Grant Standing Orders shall be reviewed every 2 years.

## Appendix – Delegation Summaries

For grants to non-Local Authorities:

Grant Funding Pot Value	Individual Grant Value	Open/Closed round	Eligibility Criteria Approval	Assessment Process Approval	Award of grant Approval
Under £50k	Under £50k	Either	Partnership Director	Partnership Director	Partnership Director
Any	Up to £100k	Open	Board	Board	Partnership Director
Any	£100k-£1mil	Open	Board	Board	Partnership Director (on advice of a Panel)
Any	£1mil-£3mil	Open	Board	Board	P&A (on advice of a Panel)
Any	£3mil+	Open	Board	Board	Board (on advice of a Panel)

For grants to Local Authorities:

Grant Funding Pot Value	Individual Grant Value	Open/Closed round	Eligibility Criteria Approval	Assessment Process Approval	Award of grant Approval
Any	Up to £1mil	Closed	Partnership Director	Partnership Director	Partnership Director
Any	£1mil-£3mil	Closed	Board	Board	P&A
Any	£3mil+	Closed	Board	Board	Board

## **PEOPLE AND PLACE PLAN**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board an outline of the People and Place Plan, including work carried out to date, future plans, and the management of grant funds in 2024/25. Approval is also sought for the grant eligibility criteria and assessment process for the accompanying grant fund.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In December 2023, Transport Scotland (TS) communicated a new approach to active travel behaviour change and access to bikes funding ('People and Place') to RTPs. This new approach centred on a move away from the 6 Active Travel Delivery Partners (ATDPs – Cycling UK, Cycling Scotland, Living Streets, Paths for All, Scottish Cycling and Sustrans) receiving and distributing the funds at a national level, to the devolution of the funds to RTPs, who were then asked to work with their partner Local Authorities to develop a plan for their region.
- 2.2 Following further discussions and confirmation of objectives with TS at the end of 2023, work commenced in early January 2024 on developing a proposal to invest SEStran's share of the funding (£5.7million) in 2024/25, subject to sign off by Transport Scotland in March. This proposal was required to meet criteria set out by TS, and be formed around 4 key themes that they had identified:
- Schools and young people
  - Workplaces
  - Accessibility and inclusion
  - Capacity and capability building
- 2.3 The timescales set out by TS have been particularly challenging, but have at all times been met by SEStran. The first draft plan was submitted to TS as requested on 26<sup>th</sup> January, with the final version submitted to TS in advance of the final deadline of 21<sup>st</sup> February. To provide additional capacity to work to these compressed timescales, Jacobs were commissioned, with costs covered by TS, to work alongside the SEStran team.
- 2.4 Given the significant change to SEStran's budget (subject to TS approval) that this new funding will entail, work has been overseen by a Steering Group. Discussions have also been held with SEStran's internal and external auditors, solicitors and Secretary.

### **3. MAIN REPORT**

3.1 This report will provide Members with:

- A copy of the regional plan, and an explanation of how this has been developed in collaboration with our partner Local Authorities
- The grant eligibility and assessment criteria for the accompanying grant fund in line with the Grant Standing Orders.

#### **3.2.1 The Regional Plan**

A copy of the regional plan that has been submitted to TS for approval is attached at Appendix 1. In developing this plan, extensive discussions have been held with local authorities to ensure that the plan meets their local priorities, as well as aligning with the Regional Transport Strategy and national objectives set by TS. As part of this process:

- Each Local Authority was asked to submit a list of proposals that they would like to progress in 24/25
- To discuss this in detail, a meeting was held with each local authority, followed by various follow up discussions as required
- Three workshops were held with all 8 Local Authorities, to gather collective feedback and to provide opportunities for cross Local Authority collaboration

3.2.2 Alongside the Local Authority engagement, recognising that the majority of delivery in 2023/24 was led by third party organisations (including the ATDPs), the following was also carried out:

- Extensive background research to understand exactly what behavior change projects were being run across the region in 23/24
- Discussions were held with all 6 ATDPs, plus 3 larger community based organisations, to understand how they could support delivery of the 24/25 plan in line with the identified priorities

3.2.3 To supplement the above, background evidence on the previous success of measures within and outwith the region was undertaken, alongside ongoing discussion with the other RTPs.

3.2.4 The result of this engagement and research is a plan that has been developed in three consecutive phases, each building on the previous, to produce a robust, evidence based, and deliverable People and Place Plan for 24/25:

- Identification of high-level priorities for the Plan, and an accompanying high-level approach which fed through to, and reinforced, the subsequent stages.
- The intermediate level identification of a range of regional programmes that supported the high-level approach, and enabled the detailed projects to be focused on the overarching priorities
- The low-level identification of individual projects across the region, that will deliver on the above to form a coherent regional plan

Further detail on this approach and the content of each programme area will be provided in a presentation to the Board.



3.2.5 Following the development of this Plan, Transport Scotland advised on 8<sup>th</sup> March that, due to budget constraints, the funding available to RTPs would require to be reduced by 5% overall, and the proportion of revenue compared to capital amended from 60/40 to 40/60. This required reworking of the Plan to accommodate a £1.5million (or 44%) reduction in revenue funding, and mitigating the impact of this. A revised programme level cost breakdown is presented at Appendix 2 which should be viewed alongside the Plan at Appendix 1.

- 3.2.6 In reworking the Plan, we have stuck to the following principles:
- The original prioritisation and programme refinement that was carried out with Local Authority input remains sound and should be maintained
  - We have saved on programme management and development costs first, followed by project delivery costs
  - We have retained enough revenue funding in each programme to affect meaningful behaviour change
  - We have prioritised existing measures over new delivery areas given the last minute nature of this change
  - Funding for local authorities has been retained at the level of the previous plan, albeit with a revised revenue/capital split, but retaining as much revenue as possible (i.e. less than the 44% reduction overall)
  - We have mitigated as best we can the equality impact of the loss of revenue funding, by maintaining revenue funds in community projects that will reach seldom heard groups

### 3.3.1 **Distribution of funds**

Alongside the development of the Plan, significant work has been undertaken to identify appropriate governance arrangements around the distribution of the People and Place Plan funds in 2024/25.

3.3.2 Following discussions with SEStran's Secretary, legal advisors, and contacts within City of Edinburgh Council, Grant Standing Orders have been developed and are presented elsewhere on the Board agenda.

3.3.3 £2,517,593 of the People and Place funds are proposed to be granted to SEStran's 8 partner local authorities in line with section 10 of the Grant Standing Orders. For the distribution of grant funds to Local Authorities, the following robust criteria have been developed, shared with Local Authorities, and approved by the Partnership Director to assess each proposal:

- Measurable impact
- Deliverability within 2024/25
- Location (both ensuring a geographic spread and tie ins with existing infrastructure)
- Fit within the programme budgets

As it is anticipated that all grants will be less than £1million, the approval for individual grants will be carried out by the Partnership Director in line with the assessment process above. If any grants are proposed to be in excess of £1million, these will be escalated to the Performance or Audit Committee or Partnership Board for final approval as per the Grant Standing Orders.

3.3.4 £2,318,561 of the People and Place funds are proposed to be distributed to third parties via the People and Place Grant Fund. For the distribution of this fund, an open grant fund is proposed. In line with the Grant Standing Orders, as grants are expected to be in the range of up to £1million, the grant eligibility and assessment criteria is presented at Appendix 3 for approval. These set out:

- The types of projects that will be eligible for funding, in line with the People and Place Plan
- The types of organisations that can apply
- The assessment process to ensure best value

As it is anticipated that all grants will be less than £1million, the approval for individual grants will be carried out by the Partnership Director in line with the assessment process presented here. If any grants are proposed to be in excess of £1million, these will be escalated to the Performance or Audit Committee or Partnership Board for final approval as per the Grant Standing Orders.

3.3.5 The remaining £490,000 will fund regional measures, some of which will be delivered directly by SEStran, and some will cover elements of programme development that will be procured from consultants. This includes a £100,000 of programme management budget to cover the resource cost to SEStran of delivering the People and Place Plan in 24/25.

3.3.6 Given the late changes required to be made to the overall programme budgets, the figures given above in 3.3.3-3.3.5 are liable to some variation as the impact of this is fed down into individual projects, and a verbal update on these will be provided to the Board. As such and to allow a flexible approach to ensure the best projects are delivered in 24/25, delegated authority is also being sought to vary the total value of the People and Place Grant Fund (£2,318,561) by up to 10%, which would involve corresponding changes to the funding pots noted at 3.3.3 and 3.3.5 so the total cost remained within the allocation from Transport Scotland.

#### 3.4 **Ongoing Monitoring**

Given the scale of the People and Place Plan, to ensure that the Board has suitable oversight of the delivery phase it is proposed that a detailed quarterly report is provided to the Performance and Audit Committee

### 4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 The Partnership Board is asked to:

- Note and discuss the content of this report and the People and Place Plan at Appendix 1, with revised programme budgets in Appendix 2

- Approve the eligibility criteria and assessment process for the £2,318,561 People and Place Grant Fund at Appendix 3 in line with the Grant Standing Orders, and delegate authority to the Partnership Director to vary the total value of the People and Place Grant Fund by up to 10% in line with the 24/25 budget and the total People and Place Plan budget.

Michael Melton  
**Programme Manager**  
 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Appendix 1:** SEStran 2024/25 People and Place Plan

**Appendix 2:** SEStran 2024/25 People and Place Plan – Updated programme budgets

**Appendix 3:** SEStran People and Places Grant Fund – Eligibility and Assessment Process

Policy Implications	The People and Place Plan aligns with the objectives of the RTS and therefore will help deliver on SEStrans’ policy objectives
Financial Implications	Project management costs for 2024/25 have been included in the overall Plan budget, so there is no anticipated financial impact.
Equalities Implications	In supporting people to travel actively, this Plan should have a positive impact on equalities. Specific elements of the Plan have been designed to further support the accessibility of active travel, including a focus on the provision of adaptive bikes and a programme focused on physical barrier removal on pavements. An EqIA is to be undertaken on the Plan and any recommendation from this will be incorporated where possible.
Climate Change Implications	In promoting behaviour change from private cars to active travel, the People and Place Plan will support the transition to net zero.

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

### Introduction

Transport Scotland have 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 currently 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 expected accompanied by some further direct funding for related projects to be awarded by Transport Scotland directly to Local Authorities.

A total of nearly £5.7M is available to SEStran for the 2024/25 financial year, of which 60% is funding for revenue expenditure and 40% for capital investment.

This note:

- Outlines the approach to the development of the People and Place Plan for South East Scotland
- Describes the Plan for 2024/25
- Summarises the benefits that the Plan will deliver
- Lists the key risks which SEStran has identified and is mitigating

### Approach to plan development

In order to develop a delivery plan for 2024/25 that details individual projects, SEStran has taken a robust strategic approach that meets Transport Scotland's objectives, as well as those of the Regional Transport Strategy and Local Authorities' plans, and carried out extensive background research on current delivery of active travel behaviour change in the region.

SEStran's guiding principle is that we want to work collaboratively with our Local Authority partners and others to develop and implement a plan that benefits the region and each Local Authority, and the communities that we serve, rather than acting purely as a grant funder. We do not simply wish to run the same projects in the region as have been run previously and defining the most effective and best value new projects, along with the right delivery agent for them, is a significant task. Much work on this has been completed during the development of this plan, including many helpful discussions with all eight of our Local Authorities, the six Active Travel Delivery Partners, as well as a small number of larger community based organisations, and it will continue as we move into the delivery phase.

By so doing, we will realise a collaborative approach between SEStran and our regional People and Place plan, the local behaviour change projects led by Local Authorities and other partners, and other transport projects that promoting active travel through behaviour change could complement.

### Summary of proposed investment

SEStran's People and Place plan will deliver measures that encourage and enable more people to walk, wheel and cycle more often. It will enable a significant contribution to be made to the region's transport priorities, including the Regional Transport Strategy's actions to deliver safe active travel which include (section 7.3, page 62):

- "Promotional and communication campaigns to highlight the benefits of active travel across the region and encourage people to adopt it where possible"
- "Expand the provision of bike-sharing initiatives across the region"

and policies to reduce car kilometres which include (section 15.2, page 107):

- “Support behaviour change and the use of more sustainable modes of transport by a combination of enhanced infrastructure, information provision, innovation and measures to discourage car use”
- “The RTS will support the national, regional and local behaviour change and demand management Route Map interventions to encourage a long-term, sustainable change to daily public transport/active travel habits”

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.

Our plan has been formed based on a comprehensive review of all types of investments that might offer good value, and collaboration with our partners, and is based on a prioritisation process of potential measures which combines:

- Guidance provided by national, regional and local policies and strategies
- A review of extant and planned behaviour change activities in the region, seeking to ensure that the regional plan complements them
- A review of evidence of what works to support a change in behaviour towards active travel, in order that better value measures can be identified

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.

SEStran and our Local Authority partners are receptive of the changes to the investment mechanisms for delivering active travel behaviour change interventions and are looking to progress new pathways in order to increase the efficiency of delivery of relevant outcomes.

### **Affordability and value for money**

SEStran understands the imperative of driving increased value from investment in active travel behaviour change. Additional value for money will be achieved through growing and utilising community capacity to deliver change, and also by SEStran facilitating exchange of knowledge between our Local Authority partners and with other Regional Transport Partnerships. We will also explore the opportunity to achieve greater value by working across RTPs following finalisation of each region’s plan.

We are seeking, within the 2024/25 transition year, to get the right balance of projects which bring proven high value with the aspiration to give the opportunity for some new approaches to be trialled where they are likely to support regional objectives.

We have learned the lessons from delivery of active travel behaviour change projects to date, which suggests that better value is achieved if:

- Local stakeholders are actively supportive of projects
- Interventions are targeted towards specific audiences (and not spreading investment too thinly)
- Project messages and the tools used are closely aligned to objectives and specifically relevant to target audiences

- Projects provide cohesive packages of measures that both encourage and enable changes in behaviour
- Interventions are focussed on life events that can influence travel choices (such as starting or changing school or job) or that complement existing active travel infrastructure
- The target audience(s) perceive the projects to be delivered to high quality
- The projects are of sufficient scale to achieve value
- Sufficient time is available to for a project to become embedded within its target community, not least as people are at different stages of change at any given time
- Monitoring and evaluation processes are of appropriate scale and in-built from the outset

We will seek to ensure that all these factors are incorporated into the planning and delivery of every aspect of our People and Place plan.

We will ensure that financial spend is fully completed within the financial year, with the required split of capital and revenue investment.

### **SEStran People and Place Plan 2024/25**

SEStran's funding proposals are outlined in the table below. They are the outcome of the detailed strategic work undertaken as described above, which has guided the distribution of investment between the different proposals in the following ways:

- We seek to invest in robust project management and monitoring & evaluation in the plan's transition year of 2024/25. This will ensure that the programmes are properly embedded, working well alongside complementary projects and programmes, that lessons are learned and that there is a good basis for future years' work
- Investment in activities for school pupils and young people emerged from our research and engagement as a high priority, as they have been demonstrated to be able to offer good value and are supported by all Local Authority partners. This therefore forms the largest focus of our plan, noting that Transport Scotland's guidance suggests that capital measures outwith schools but which could encourage active travel to them should be included in the accessibility and inclusion theme; and similar with providing access to bikes for young people.
- The workplace theme forms a relatively modest component of our 2024/25 plan. This is because recent (post-covid) experience suggests to us and our partners that workplaces are less keen to engage in active travel promotion than they had been previously, so we are unable to ensure best value is delivered in those settings in the coming year. However, we are keen to retain the opportunity for some investment as we identify signs that employers may be becoming more enthusiastic, which will enable us to pilot focused measures with a small number of high trip volume workplaces (such as universities and NHS sites) that can be used to support a further development of work in future years

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

<b>Investment Proposal</b> (Project Name)	<b>Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)</b>	<b>Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<p><b>Active Ways to School</b> This proposal will provide a programme of intensive support, delivered using embedded officers, for eight secondary schools and all of their associated feeder primary schools (a total of around 50 schools across the region). It will deliver tailored support packages depending on schools' needs and circumstances, and will include provision of bikes and associated equipment to pupils, improved cycle/scooter storage and signage/information, as well as walking/wheeling/cycling training (depending on needs and across a wide range of age groups), campaigns, challenges and events, and support with travel planning to encourage and enable pupils and other members of the schools' communities to travel actively more often.</p>	Third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarded accordingly	£820000 RDEL £290000 CDEL	Schools and Young People
<p><b>Encouraging Active Travel: Young People</b> This proposal will support more young people to travel actively in settings apart from the school environments referenced above by delivering tailored support packages to nurseries, youth groups and schools which are outwith the eight clusters of the Active Journeys to School project. It will deliver tailored support packages for facilities which are likely to include provision of bikes and associated equipment for young people, improved cycle/scooter parking, as well as walking/wheeling/cycling training, campaigns, challenges and events.</p>	Local Authority	£424270 RDEL £121960 CDEL	Schools and Young People
<p><b>Access to Bikes: Young People</b> This proposal will enable continued delivery of the Access to Bikes for Young People Programme, to increase affordable access to bikes (including adaptive bikes) for young people who need a bike and wish to access one. Funding could support Local Authorities, schools, community groups and third sector organisations who work with young people. There will be a focus in this work package on provision of adapted bikes.</p>	Combination of local authority and third-party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarded accordingly	£300000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

Investment Proposal (Project Name)	Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)	Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)	Theme
<p><b>Active Ways to Work: Large Employers</b> This proposal will deliver a pilot project to support the promotion of active travel to work now that employers in the region are starting to understand the post-Covid "new normal" travel patterns of their staff. It will support two large employers that currently have high rates of unsustainable travel to increase rates of walking and cycling. It will deliver tailored support packages which are likely to include provision of bikes and associated equipment to staff, improved cycle storage, changing areas/lockers and signage/information, as well as training, campaigns and events, and support with travel planning. Private sector employers may be asked to match fund the investment.</p>	Third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarding accordingly	£60000 RDEL £110000 CDEL	Workplaces
<p><b>Active Ways to Work: Other Employers</b> This proposal will improve facilities for active travel at workplaces including cycle parking and changing areas, as well as funding for active travel campaigns, challenges, training and travel plan development to encourage and enable active travel. Private sector employers may be asked to match fund the investment. This proposal will also enable the continuation of schemes which accredit workplaces as supporting active travel use.</p>	Local Authority	£80610 RDEL £184840 CDEL	Workplaces
<p><b>Workplace Regional Active Travel Promotional Campaign/Challenge</b> This proposal will enable SEStran's existing comms and marketing resource to be used to more extensively promote the benefits to employers of supporting active travel to work through marketing activity and engagement with regional employers' networks. The proposal will include promotion of the opportunities of the Active Ways to Work proposal.</p>	Tbc (either direct delivery by SEStran or contract to be awarded to third party)	£30000 RDEL	Workplaces



## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

<b>Investment Proposal</b> (Project Name)	<b>Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)</b>	<b>Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<p><b>Street Audits and Enabling Facilities</b> This proposal will enable audits of areas with high pedestrian, wheeling and cycling potential, likely including town centres, shopping streets, and routes to schools, public transport hubs, leisure facilities and parks, including engagement with residents, pupils, cyclists, pedestrians to understand their concerns and priorities. It will also enable removal of barriers to active travel and installation of signage and small enabling interventions e.g. dropped kerbs, handrails and cycle parking, where these are identified by the audits. There will be a focus in this work package on aligning these measures to those being delivered elsewhere in the regional plan, to add further value and generate additional modal shift.</p>	Local Authority	£500000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Local Active Travel Community Delivery gaps study</b> This proposal will identify key locations for provision of local active travel delivery support with specific focus on access to existing infrastructure, travel behaviours and barriers to active travel. Analysis will be carried out of the most effective local delivery mechanisms to provide this.</p>	Direct delivery by SEStran	£30000 RDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Active Travel Hubs</b> This proposal will provide two new active travel hubs, located in communities in which significant potential for increased active travel is identified and where there is an existing lack of provision of support. Each will deliver a tailored range of services for local people to encourage and enable walking, cycling and wheeling as modes of transportation including access to bikes and associated equipment, cycle training, events and challenges.</p>	Third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarding accordingly	£100000 RDEL £210000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Existing Active Travel Communities support</b> This proposal will provide support to existing larger organisations with a track record of delivering effective active travel interventions in their local communities. This will specifically support these organisations to expand their support further. This could include setting up satellite locations to increase reach, 'consultancy style' support to other organisations to deliver their own interventions or add capacity, and shared learning/training opportunities.</p>	Third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarding accordingly	£110000 RDEL £115000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

<b>Investment Proposal</b> (Project Name)	<b>Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)</b>	<b>Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<p><b>Encouraging Active Travel: Communities</b> This proposal will deliver initiatives which address existing barriers that disproportionately affect people that are often excluded from walking, wheeling and/or cycling, making active travel options more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Initiatives could include training and events for community groups, social prescribing, buddy schemes and access to bikes.</p>	Combination of local authority and third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarded accordingly	£656,660 RDEL £200,000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Access to Bikes</b> This proposal will improve access to bikes, particularly for those people for whom cost is a barrier and that are not able to access provision through schools, workplaces or other community projects. It will include low cost access to bikes (including adaptive bikes for children/families and disabled people), cycle training and low-cost maintenance of bikes. There will be a focus in this work package on provision of adapted bikes.</p>	Combination of local authority and third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarded accordingly	£300,000 CDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Regional AT Comms Campaign</b> This proposal will enable SEStran's existing comms and marketing resource to expand the provision of campaign work to promote the benefits of active travel and the opportunities to walk, wheel and cycle at a regional level. Partnerships are likely to be sought with national organisation to ensure consistency of messaging with assets also made available for LAs.</p>	Direct delivery by SEStran	£100,000 RDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Regional Bike Share</b> This proposal will enable a SEStran-led feasibility study into the opportunities, costs and risks of a public bike hire schemes across the region, and which models may work best in different locations, with a focus on delivery options in 25/26</p>	Direct delivery by SEStran (or consultant acting on behalf of SEStran)	£40,000 RDEL	Accessibility and Inclusion
<p><b>Behaviour Change Project Officers</b> This proposal will provide two FTE project officers to support behaviour change strategy development in two local authorities. Their work will support delivery of behaviour change from 25/26 onwards, but direct delivery will not be a focus of their roles.</p>	Third party orgs to be invited to apply to a grant funding pot and all applications assessed against set criteria and funding awarded accordingly	£120,000 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

<b>Investment Proposal</b> (Project Name)	<b>Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)</b>	<b>Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<p><b>Plan Management for 2024/25</b> This proposal will provide the resource to enable strong and effective management of SEStran's People and Place plan for 2024/25, and will provide resource from existing SEStran officers and specialist external advisors as appropriate. This line includes 20% contingency.</p>	SEStran PM Costs	£120,000 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building
<p><b>Plan Preparation for 2025/26 onwards</b> This proposal will provide the resource for the planning of SEStran's People and Place plan in future years and will provide resource from existing SEStran officers and specialist external advisors as appropriate. A key remit will be coordination with Local Authorities' projects and joint planning with delivery partners. Its aim will be to develop a 5-year plan for delivery going forward, so this budget line will be significantly less/non-existent in future years. This line includes 20% contingency.</p>	Direct delivery by SEStran	£120,000 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building
<p><b>Capability and capacity building development</b> This proposal will provide support for the development of knowledge sharing and capacity building across the region and will be used to cover the costs incurred to enable community capacity to be developed.</p>	Direct delivery by SEStran	£58,660 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building
<p><b>Plan Level Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b> This proposal will support the overall monitoring and evaluation of SEStran's People and Place plan. The budget will be allocated to compiling project-by-project data, using this to inform future plans, plus the plan and regional wide monitoring that is required. The capital element of this will be used to add to the regional network of counters to support the evaluation of the regional plan.</p>	Combination of SEStran, local authority and consultant acting on behalf of SEStran	£112,000 RDEL £63,000 CDEL	Capacity and Capability Building
<p><b>Project Level Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b> This proposal will enable robust monitoring and evaluation of SEStran's People and Place plan, recognising the importance of this element, especially for the 2024/25 transition year. The budget will be allocated to ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the projects which make up the plan.</p>	Tied to individual projects	£325,000 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building

## SEStran People and Place Plan: summary

<b>Investment Proposal</b> (Project Name)	<b>Local Authority (and/or Delivery partner if applicable)</b>	<b>Total Investment (RDEL/CDEL)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<b>National Monitoring</b> This proposal will provide a contribution to the continuation of a national monitoring for active travel within the SEStran region.	Tbc pending further discussion (but likely Cycling Scotland)	£105,000 RDEL	Capacity and Capability Building
<b>Total</b>		<b>£3,412,200 RDEL</b> <b>£2,274,800 CDEL</b>	

## Expected benefits

SEStran's People and Place plan will:

- 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
- Raise awareness of the benefits of active travel to many other people, making them more likely to change in future
- Work in many of the region's communities, schools, and residential settings, plus build capacity and capability for further change

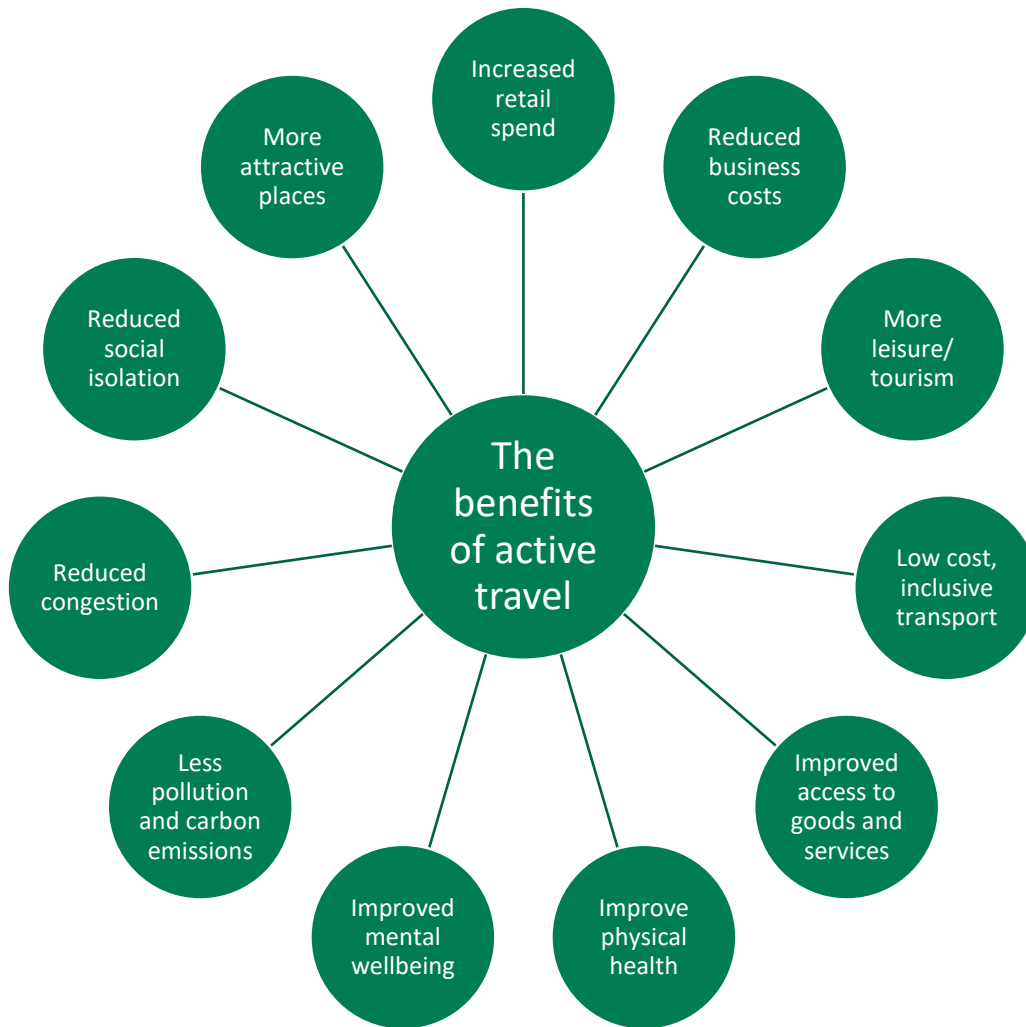
Its focus will be on active travel for utility journeys, though increased active travel for leisure may also be supported where this can be demonstrated to contribute to regional health and/or economic development objectives. It will promote use of both existing and newly completed infrastructure, and will seek increased use of active travel to connect to other sustainable transport modes as well as for end-to-end journeys.

SEStran and our Local Authority partners recognise that active travel provides huge benefits to the region's economy, public health, the environment and social inclusion. It is understood that high quality, attractive and accessible infrastructure is a prerequisite for people to walk, wheel and/or cycle, but that it is not sufficient to maximise the benefits for everyone .

The People and Place plan is therefore welcomed as 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:

- Strategy Objective 1: Transitioning to a sustainable, post-carbon transport system
  - Climate Change and Net Zero
  - Air Quality Transformed
  - Equitable Access to Transport
- Strategy Objective 2: Facilitating healthier travel options
  - Improved Physical & Mental Health and Activity
  - Increased Wellbeing
  - Transformed, Liveable Neighbourhoods
- Strategy Objective 3: Transforming public transport connectivity and access across the region
  - Greater Equality of Opportunity
  - Travel Barriers Removed
  - Reduced Social Isolation
- Strategy Objective 4: Supporting safe, sustainable and efficient movement of people and freight across the region
  - Reduced Road Casualties
  - A Just Transition in Inclusive Economic Growth
  - Improved Regional Competitiveness
  - Climate Change Adaptation

By enabling more people to walk, wheel and cycle more often, the People and Place plan will help realise many of the broad-ranging benefits of active travel to the region, as shown in the diagram.



The benefits will be delivered throughout the region, in our cities, towns large and small, villages and rural areas.

Robust monitoring and evaluation of interventions will be provided in order to assess the value of what has been provided and feedback into improved project design/delivery.

*Prepared by Jacobs on behalf of SEStran 20 February 2024.*

APPENDIX 2

Programme Name	Old Revenue	Old Capital	Old Cost	New Revenue	New Capital	New Cost	Revenue Variance	Capital Variance	Total Variance
Active Ways to School	£820,000	£290,000	£1,110,000	£495,670	£250,000	£745,670	£-324,330	£-40,000	£-364,330
Encouraging Active Travel: Young People	£424,270	£121,960	£546,230	£264,017	£300,000	£564,017	£-160,253	£178,040	£17,787
Access to Bikes: Young People		£300,000	£300,000	£0	£635,074	£635,074	£0	£335,074	£335,074
Active Ways to Work: Large Employers	£60,000	£110,000	£170,000	£30,000	£80,000	£110,000	£-30,000	£-30,000	£-60,000
Active Ways to Work: Other Employers	£80,610	£64,840	£145,450	£53,199	£93,281	£146,480	£-27,411	£28,441	£1,030
Workplace Regional Active Travel Promotional Campaign/Challenge	£30,000		£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£-30,000	£0	£-30,000
Street Audits and Enabling Facilities		£500,000	£500,000	£0	£700,000	£700,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000
Local Active Travel Delivery gaps study	£30,000		£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£-30,000	£0	£-30,000
Active Travel Hubs	£100,000	£210,000	£310,000	£0	£150,000	£150,000	£-100,000	£-60,000	£-160,000
Existing Active Travel Hubs Communities support	£110,000	£115,000	£225,000	£117,700	£184,762	£302,462	£7,700	£69,762	£77,462
Encouraging Active Travel: Communities	£656,660	£200,000	£856,660	£443,368	£387,728	£831,095	£-213,292	£187,728	£-25,565
Access to Bikes		£300,000	£300,000	£0	£531,355	£531,355	£0	£231,355	£231,355
Regional AT Comms Campaign	£100,000		£100,000	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£-50,000	£0	£-50,000
Regional Bike Share	£40,000		£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£-40,000	£0	£-40,000
Behaviour Change Project Officers	£120,000		£120,000	£120,000	£0	£120,000	£0	£0	£0
Programme Management for 2024/25	£120,000		£120,000	£100,000		£100,000	£-20,000	£0	£-20,000
Programme Preparation for 2025/26 onwards	£120,000		£120,000	£80,000	£0	£80,000	£-40,000	£0	£-40,000
Capability and capacity building development	£58,660		£58,660	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£-43,660	£0	£-43,660
Programme level Monitoring & evaluation	£112,000	£63,000	£175,000	£40,000	£100,000	£140,000	£-72,000	£37,000	£-35,000
Project level Monitoring & evaluation	£325,000		£325,000	£0	£0	£0	£-325,000	£0	£-325,000
National Monitoring	£105,000		£105,000	£105,000	£0	£105,000	£0	£0	£0
	<b>£3,412,200</b>	<b>£2,274,800</b>	<b>£5,687,000</b>	<b>£1,913,954</b>	<b>£3,412,200</b>	<b>£5,326,154</b>	<b>£-1,498,246</b>	<b>£1,137,400</b>	<b>£-360,846</b>

# SEStran People and Place Plan Grant Fund – Eligibility Criteria and Assessment Process

## Purpose of the Fund

In line with the [Regional Transport Strategy 2035](#), the SEStran People and Places Grant Fund is a key part of the regional delivery of active travel behaviour change in South East Scotland under SEStran's People and Place Plan. The overall plan is designed to deliver behaviour change interventions to support people in the region to choose active travel over private vehicles for utility journeys. The plan will:

- 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 for those that do so already to do more
- Raise awareness of the benefits of active travel to many other people, making them more likely to change in future
- Work in many of the region's communities, schools, and residential settings, plus build capacity and capability for further change

## Project Eligibility

As part of SEStran's People and Place Plan, a list of programmes has been developed for which grant funding is available for projects that support delivery of these. To ensure that SEStran's retains a strategic role regionally, there will a minimum grant per organisation of £50,000 to ensure projects are of a sufficient scale to deliver regional impact.

## What is eligible for funding

Eligible projects must fit within one or more of the programmes identified as being open for third party delivery as identified in the wider Plan as follows:



<b>Programme Name</b>	<b>Programme Description</b>
Active Ways to School (walking, wheeling & cycling)	Projects under this programme will provide a programme of intensive support, delivered using embedded officers (assumed at 1 FTE per project), for a limited number of secondary schools and all of their associated feeder primary schools. It will deliver tailored support packages depending on schools' needs and circumstances, and will include provision of bikes and associated equipment to pupils, improved cycle/scooter storage and signage/information, as well as walking/wheeling/cycling training (depending on needs and across a wide range of age groups), campaigns, challenges and events, and support with travel planning to encourage and enable pupils and other members of the schools' communities to travel actively more often. They may also include measures to complement this cluster based model.
Active Ways to School (walking and wheeling)	The project under this programme will provide a programme of intensive support, delivered using embedded officers (assumed at 1 FTE per project), for a limited number of secondary school and all of their associated feeder primary schools. It will deliver tailored support packages depending on schools' needs and circumstances, with a specific focus on encouraging walking and wheeling to compliment Bikeability training, and could include campaigns, challenges and events, and support with travel planning to encourage and enable pupils and other members of the schools' communities to travel actively more often. They may also include measures to complement this cluster based model.
Access to Bikes: Young People	Projects under this programme will enable continued delivery of the Access to Bikes for Young People Programme, to increase affordable access to bikes for young people who need a bike and wish to access one. Funding could support community groups and third sector organisations who work with young people. There will be a focus in this work package on provision of adapted bikes.
Active Ways to Work: Large Employers	Projects under this programme will deliver a pilot projects to support the promotion of active travel to work now that employers in the region are starting to understand the post-Covid "new normal" travel patterns of their staff. They will support a limited number of large employers that currently have high rates of unsustainable travel to increase rates of walking, wheeling and cycling. It will deliver tailored support packages which are likely to include provision of bikes and associated equipment to staff, improved cycle storage, changing areas/lockers and signage/information, as well as training, campaigns and events, and support with travel planning.
Active Travel Hubs	Projects under this programme will provide a limited number of new active travel hubs, located in communities in which significant potential for increased active travel is identified and where there is an existing lack of provision of support. As a capital only programme, these hubs may be fixed locations that are unstaffed, but provide information and some services.

Existing Active Travel Communities support	Projects under this programme will provide support to existing larger organisations with existing active travel hubs and a track record of delivering effective active travel interventions in their local communities. This will specifically support these organisations to expand their support further. This could include setting up satellite locations to increase reach, 'consultancy style' support to other organisations to deliver their own interventions or add capacity, and shared learning/training opportunities.
Access to Bikes	Projects under this programme will enable continued delivery of the Access to Bikes Programme, to increase affordable access to bikes for people who need a bike and wish to access one. Funding could support community groups and third sector organisations who work with young people. There will be a focus in this work package on provision of adapted bikes.
Behaviour Change Project Officers	This proposal will provide 1 FTE project officers to support behaviour change strategy development in a limited number local authorities. Their work will support delivery of behaviour change from 25/26 onwards, but direct delivery will not be a focus of their roles.

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## What is not eligible for funding

- Any project that does not fit within the programmes listed
- Any project that provides for the construction of active travel infrastructure
- Any project that does not focus on increasing rates of walking, wheeling and/or cycling

## Organisation Eligibility

The fund will be open to any public body, charity or community organisation (note that local authorities are not eligible for this fund).

All applicants must be able to demonstrate a certain level of capability to deliver behaviour change projects, and have a baseline level of understanding, organisation and team set-up, finances, and insurance. We may ask for evidence of this when you submit your application.

If part of your application involves passing on funding to other groups, they will also need to comply with all of the eligibility criteria within this section.

## Community Organisations

To be eligible, community organisations must:

- Have a signed constitution
- Have the required number of board members, including a minimum of three unrelated board members
- Have an up to date Public Liability Insurance certificate
- Be financially solvent, and be able to provide evidence of such, such as recent accounts
- Have a project team of at least two people committed to lead and manage the project for its duration, including finance and administration

## Fair Work First

All grants awarded with Scottish Government funds from 1 July 2023 (which includes this fund) must comply with the [Fair Work First](#) conditionality requiring grant recipients to pay at least the real Living Wage, and provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, such as trade union recognition. This conditionality applies to:

- all directly employed staff of the grant recipient
- any workers who are not directly employed but are directly engaged in delivering the grant-funded activity, whether they be sub-contractors or agency staff

### *Real Living Wage*

- In general, a grant recipient must demonstrate it is paying the Real Living Wage before it can access a grant
- All directly employed staff of the grant recipient must be paid at least the rLW and any workers who are not [directly employed but are directly engaged in delivering the grant-funded activity](#), whether they be sub-contractors or agency staff, must also be paid at least the rLW (including Apprentices)

Evidence required will depend on the size of the grant as per [Scottish Government guidance](#).

### *Effective workers' voice*

- All organisations with a workforce must be able to demonstrate before they can access a grant that all workers employed within that organisation have an effective voice
- voice exists at both collective and individual levels and organisations will be expected to show how genuine and effective voice is evidenced

The collective element of voice does not have to be evidenced by organisations with fewer than 21 workers. Examples of the types of evidence you can provide are found in the [Scottish Government guidance](#).

### Work with vulnerable people

It is important we have assurances relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable groups. If your programme involves working with vulnerable groups, we will ask you to confirm that you have:

- Robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place to protect vulnerable adults and children (these may include things such as a specific safeguarding policy, training, support and supervision of staff, a Code of Conduct)
- Whistleblowing and monitoring and complaints processes.
- A clear procedure which must be followed if you become aware of any specific safeguarding incident

### Assessment Process

Once submitted, to ensure best value, applications will be scored by a minimum of 2 members of SEStran staff in line with the scoring criteria below. The average score under each criteria will then be taken and compiled into an overall score for each project.

A recommendation will then be made on a project by project basis, based on the score, but also taking due account of ensuring a geographical spread of projects across the region, and how the projects fit within each programme's budget. This recommendation will then be reviewed by a funding panel, who will make a final recommendation on which projects are successful in line with the set criteria to be approved in line with the Grant Standing Orders. The Panel will be made up of 4 members of staff from SEStran (not including those who have marked the applications) and be chaired by the Partnership Director. The quorum for this Panel shall be 3 members.

### Organisation Financial Assessment

Alongside the assessment, a financial sustainability assessment will be undertaken on organisations in line with City of Edinburgh Council's processes.

## Scoring Criteria

The scoring criteria that has been developed has been designed to assess projects on their overall quality, fit within the regional plan, experience of the organising delivering them, and value for money. A total score will be give out to 100 in line with the following criteria.

### *Organisation Experience*

This section will score the evidence that has been provided on an organisations previous success at delivering active travel behaviour change projects. The following scores will be assigned:

0	No experience provided, or experience is not relevant to active travel behaviour change
3	Relevant experience of active travel delivery shown, but lack of evidence of outcomes provided
6	Relevant experience of active travel delivery shown, with limited evidence of outcomes provided which partially aligns with the objectives of the People and Place Plan
10	Relevant experience of active travel delivery shown, with evidence provided that shows success of this delivery in line with the objectives of the People and Place Plan

### *Project fit to eligibility criteria*

This section will be scored based on the project summary and objectives provided, to ensure that they align with the specific programme. Note that a score of 0 in this section will result in an ineligible application, and no further scoring will be undertaken. The following scores will be assigned:

0	Project does not align with the programme's eligibility criteria
3	Project shows some alignment with the programme's eligibility criteria, but will require changes to make it fully eligible
10	Project fully aligns with the programme's eligibility criteria

### Value for Money

This section will be assessed based on the project budget provided, along with the project objective and outcomes. Consideration will also be taken of the overall plan budget, the affordability for specific programmes within that, and the comparative costs of other proposals (including costs of projects delivered in 2023/24). The following scores will be assigned:

0	Project cost is disproportionately high or low respective to the objectives and outcomes and the overall programme budget
10	Project cost is disproportionately high or low respective to the objectives and outcomes, but fits within the overall programme budget. Programme budget and/or objectives and/or budget will need adjusted to demonstrate value for money.
20	Project cost is proportionate to the objectives and outcomes, but not the overall programme budget. Programme budget will need adjusted to fit within the programme.
30	Project cost is proportionate to the objectives and outcomes and the overall programme budget

### Project History

This section will be assessed based on the evidence provided for the previous success of an existing project and how this aligns with the national [Active Travel Framework](#). If the project has not been run in previous financial years, the score for the 'organisational experience' section will be used here again. The following scores will be assigned:

0	Project has run previously and no, or inadequate, evidence of previous success provided
3	Project has run previously and limited evidence of previous success provided
6	Project has run previously and some evidence of previous success provided
10	Project has run previously and good evidence of previous success provided

### Project location

This section will be assessed based on the project location that provided, and how this ties in with the existing active travel network in that location for the modes being targeted (for example, for a project focused on walking and wheeling, we will consider the local walking and wheeling network). This section will be scored as follows:

0	Project location proposed does not connect with an existing active travel network relevant to the mode(s) targeted
5	Project location proposed either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Partially ties into an existing active travel network relevant to the mode(s) targeted</li><li>Fully ties into an existing active travel network relevant to only some of the mode(s) targeted</li></ul>
10	Project location proposed fully ties into an existing active travel network for the mode(s) targeted; or the location is to be specified by SEStran/a local authority rather than the applicant

### Project objectives

This section will be assessed based on the objectives provided, and how these will support the overall plan. This section will be scored as follows:

0	Project objectives are basic, lack relevance to the project, and do not align with delivery of the relevant programme objectives
2	Project objectives do not align with delivery of the relevant programme objectives, irrespective of their quality
4	Project objectives show minimal alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives, irrespective of their quality
6	Project objectives show partial alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives, irrespective of their quality
8	Project objectives are clear and have some relevance to the project, and show clear alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives.
10	Project objectives are clear and are specific to the project, and show clear alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives.

### *Project outcomes*

This section will be assessed based on the outcomes provided, how these will support the overall plan, and how these will align with the national [Active Travel Framework](#). This section will be scored as follows:

0	Project outcomes are basic, lack relevance to the project, and do not align with delivery of the relevant programme outcomes and Active Travel Framework
4	Project outcomes do not align with delivery of the relevant programme objectives and Active Travel Framework, irrespective of their quality
8	Project outcomes show minimal alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives and Active Travel Framework, irrespective of their quality
12	Project outcomes show partial alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives and Active Travel Framework, irrespective of their quality
16	Project outcomes are clear and have some relevance to the project, and show clear alignment with delivery of the relevant programme objectives.
20	Project outcomes are clear and specific to the project, and show clear alignment with delivery of the relevant programme outcomes and Active Travel Framework

## GoSEStran Future Approach

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December, the Board received a report on GoSEStran, updating on progress in this pilot project to trial Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT). The Board agreed:
- 1) To note the progress made since the last meeting;
  - 2) To agree to receive updates on the project as appropriate;
  - 3) To agree to SEStran participating in a procurement exercise in partnership with Tactran and other [Integrated Mobility Partnership](#) (IMPs) partners and entering into such licence and other agreements as are necessary to secure the continuation of the GoSEStran and other IMPs partners apps, subject always to appropriate levels of funding being secured.
- 1.2 The DDRT trial which formed part of the overall pilot, being an on-demand bus between Humbleton and Haddington, is to continue after March with East Lothian Council's support but without the digital app and therefore no longer forms part of SEStran's project.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report therefore is to update on recent progress with funding discussions for the MaaS part of the project, and to ask the Board to approve a six month extension of the GoSEStran project, taking into account the risks and opportunities involved in doing so.

### 2 PROGRESS

- 2.1 The MaaS element of the pilot has continued to show promising results, despite a very limited marketing budget and the focus to date on a restricted geographical target area within the SEStran region. Total downloads of the app stand at 3800. Promotional efforts have been reduced in recent months due to the uncertain future funding of the app. Appendix 1 shows high-level data on overall performance of the app.
- 2.2 The final report on the pilot project was delivered to Transport Scotland (TS) in January. This showed the success of the pilot and lessons learned during the period funded by the MaaS Investment Fund and beyond. The report has been circulated to the Board and forms a background paper to this report. Fundamentally the report's conclusion is that MaaS apps of this nature do help to promote sustainable transport, but that national leadership is required to drive progress forward.
- 2.3 In December 2023, a contractual dispute between Fuse, the supplier of the tech for GoSEStran, and Ember, a joint venture partner who provided the tech services as



a subcontractor, was resolved with the assistance of SEStran staff. The outcome of negotiations was that Ember took on Fuse's responsibilities as tech supplier and an agreement to that effect was signed on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

- 2.4 Following the Board decision in December, funding bids were made to Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) and TS. Officers met with TS, who were keen to explore the timescales required to procure an extension to the current licensing arrangements, and the funding that would be required to cover this period. TS have given an estimation of three months for them to evaluate the findings of the MaaS Investment Fund and to make a decision on their position on MaaS, so are unable to commit long-term funding or resources until that decision has been made.
- 2.5 On 4th March 2024, officers received confirmation from TS that the MaaS Investment Fund grant offer letter will be varied to show an increase in funding of £42,000 to enable the extension of the MaaS platform for SEStran and Tactran for 6 months. The outcome of the bid to SCSP is still awaited at time of publication of this report.
- 2.6 A successful meeting with the Minister for Transport (now Cabinet Secretary for Transport) took place in East Lothian on 31<sup>st</sup> January. SEStran officers were able to update Ms Hyslop on the progress of the MaaS and DDRT pilots and to offer a practical demonstration of the GoSEStran app. The SEStran Chair and Vice Chairs were then able to meet with the Minister and discuss a range of topics. The Minister has written since then expressing her appreciation of the meeting.
- 2.7 Discussions have also been held with constituent authorities of both SEStran and Tactran, as well as NHS Tayside, SPT, Nestrans and University of St Andrews about potential funding contributions from them. Members will recall that, since June, GoSEStran has been used by the University's 'St Andrews MaaSterplan' project, and that this has already drawn in some £72,000 of additional funding for the app's further development, as well as allowing extra marketing for the app via the University's consultants, Urban Foresight. This has seen a large increase in user numbers, particularly in the Fife area, bringing the total up to 3800 users.
- 2.8 It seems likely that at least one constituent authority in the Tactran area may be able to make a significant financial contribution to the joint project going forward. However, that has not been confirmed in writing as yet, and any caveats or conditions which may be associated with this contribution are still to be discussed.
- 2.9 The SCSP bid was complicated by the announcement that this fund will not be renewed in the next financial year. Accordingly, there is only a limited pot of money left to allocate before the fund closes this year. It is understood that some 46 applications are pending with SCSP officers, and discussions have been held with them to clarify the nature of the bid. Although the bid is for £100,000, any award will only fund a short-term extension to the Licence of a year at most.
- 2.10 SEStran and Tactran are having ongoing discussions with TS to ensure resources are not duplicated and support the Smart Ticketing project, and the Digital Data Travel Services (DTDS) project amongst others.

### **3 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- 3.1 The current licence which SEStran holds on behalf of itself and Tactran for the digital platform and the apps, including GoSEStran, GoNHS Tayside, My D&A Travel and the National Park Journey Planner, runs out at the end of March 2024, i.e. this month.
- 3.2 The preferred option had been to carry out a procurement exercise in time for the new supplier to take over running of the platforms and apps by 1st April 2024. However, given the continued uncertainty over funding, that is not going to be possible.
- 3.3 It is officers' strong recommendation that any new licence be for a multi-year period, to avoid the constant need to procure and re-procure tech services, and to avoid uncertainty over the apps' continued existence hampering marketing and promotion of them. Ideally any new contract with a supplier should be for a minimum of three years. However, that again presupposes multi-year funding being made available by TS and/or others such as constituent authorities.
- 3.4 To maintain the apps' existence meantime, one option would be to extend the current contract with Ember (following their taking over the contract from Fuse, as explained at 2.3). TS have indicated they are not able to confirm the future funding position until the outcome of their evaluation of all the MaaS pilots, and that a final decision may not be forthcoming till June at the earliest. Given the need to carry out a further procurement exercise once the position on funding is known, it is likely that an extension to the existing contract would need to be for a minimum of six months.
- 3.5 Extending the contract with the current supplier is not without risk:
  1. SEStran and Tactran have spoken to a number of tech suppliers as part of a market discovery exercise to inform procurement. SEStran has already extended the contract and published a Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice (VEAT Notice) in 2023, to confirm award of contract to the existing supplier without going out to tender. This was necessary then, as now, because of funding uncertainties. At the time, SEStran received a query from a future potential bidder, who were reassured that any wider procurement would be fully advertised. If the contract is extended for another 6 months then a further VEAT notice would be published. There is a risk that this could be challenged.
  2. The project has been resource heavy for SEStran. Throughout it has needed the input of a project officer more or less full time; the services of a part-time consultant; specialist legal input; and further consultancy support at various points for project management etc. There is an agreement in principle with Tactran that they will assume responsibility for procurement and management of the new contract. However SEStran will require assurances that Tactran will devote sufficient resources to ensure that SEStran will have no involvement in day to day aspects of the contract management. As a result, a service level agreement (SLA) would need to be put in place to assign responsibilities to Tactran. Establishing this SLA is one of the key success criteria for the project.

- 3.6 An opportunity to secure a contract, fully funded, to extend GoSEStran's operation for a number of years may yet come to pass.

If the Board decides not to proceed further, then the key associated risks are:

1. The chance for SEStran to be at the forefront of MaaS in Scotland will be lost.
2. All partners involved believe we are at the early stages of understanding what the public need in such tools, how to make the tools attractive to the target audience and how we can use these tools to achieve local, regional and national transport objectives. If a decision is made to withdraw SEStran's involvement whilst we wait for Transport Scotland's decision then users and partners will lose trust in similar products in the future, there will be a lack of focus on ensuring these tools help focus on policies and a higher cost will be associated to begin the MaaS journey again in the long term.

- 3.7 As mentioned in 2.5, other RTPs and organisations have shown an interest in IMPs, and the MaaS platform. If a decision is made for SEStran to continue and once funding is confirmed, there is the potential for GoSEStran to be rebranded as part of the procurement process to a more generic name (such as ThistleGo), resulting in the one app being utilised across a wider area.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The table at Appendix 2 sets out the relative risks of proceeding with a temporary extension to the existing GoSEStran supplier contract, and those of bringing the project to an end at this stage.
- 4.2 Whilst extending the contract is not without risk, ending the project at this stage will also have consequences – particularly if funding subsequently becomes available to run an extended contract for the existing apps. Part of the IMPs project going forward would be about ensuring that conversations around a 'national' MaaS app are progressed. In that context there would be considerable benefit in SEStran being able to take a lead role in those conversations.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Board:

- 5.1 Note the risks and opportunities for SEStran in relation to the continuation of the GoSEStran MaaS project;
- 5.2 Subject to the above, agree to SEStran continuing to participate in a procurement exercise in partnership with Tactran and other IMPs partners, and entering into such licence and other agreements as are necessary to secure the continuation of the GoSEStran and other IMPs partners apps, subject always to appropriate levels of funding being secured;
- 5.3 Note that a report detailing the outcome of the funding bids and, if appropriate, the procurement exercise, will be put to the September Board.

It is proposed that progress against the following key success criteria will be reported to the Partnership Board in September. If any of the criteria have not been met, then officers will recommend that SEStran withdraws from the MaaS pilot:

1. Long term funding committed (at least 3 years)
2. Successfully concluded procurement exercise to confirm future partners
3. Service Level Agreement in place with Tactran and other IMPs partners to confirm responsibilities, including project management.

Hattie James  
**Projects Officer**

Andrew Ferguson  
**SEStran Consultant**

8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Policy Implications	The project is in line with the new RTS as set out in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2022 Board report.
Financial Implications	The funding position is as set out in the report.
Equalities Implications	The project has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA).
Climate Change Implications	The project will contribute to overall aims to reduce CO2 emissions, by pointing users to the most environmentally friendly mode of transport for their chosen mode. These are quantified in the journey options set out in the app.
Appendices	1. Overview of GoSEStran data; 2. Risks table
Background Papers	The following background papers were relied on in the production of this report: <a href="#">GoSEStran Final Report (March 2024)</a>

# Appendix 1: GoSEStran summary data

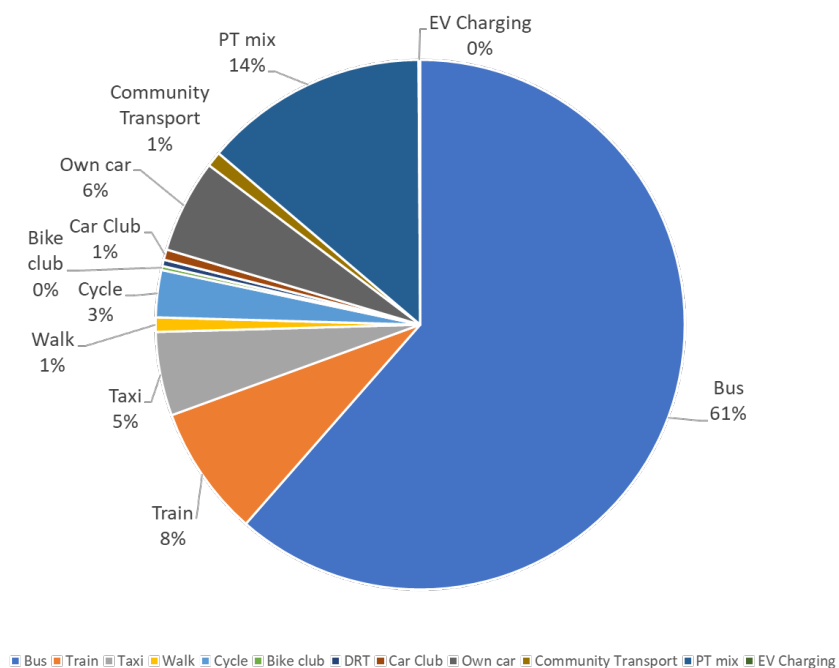


Figure 1 Pie chart to show modal split of users on GoSEStran

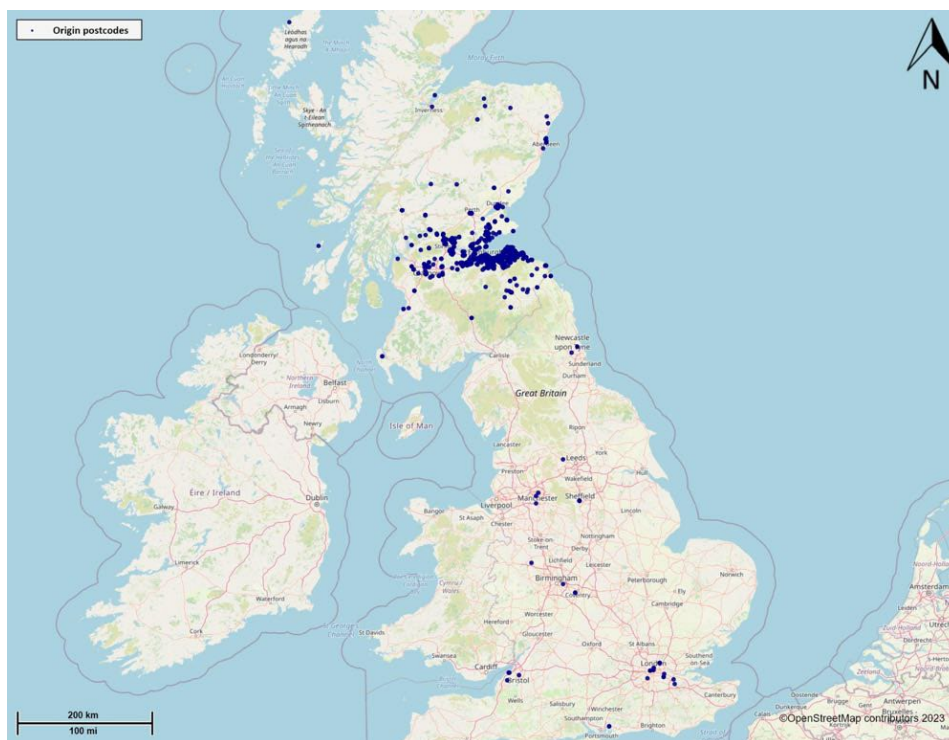


Figure 2 Blue dots showing origin postcode of journey searched by users

Appendix 2: Risks table

Risk	Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Treatment
<p><b>Risk of Proceeding</b> Failure to carry out procurement exercise by end March results in challenge by other potential tenderers</p>	Financial risk as well as resource implications of defending challenge	H	L	Explain to potential suppliers need for extension to current contract to allow funding discussions to conclude. Negotiate three month extension with option for further three month extension to minimise risk. Issue a VEAT notice and advise potential tenders of forthcoming procurement.
<p><b>Risk of Proceeding</b> Resource challenge of taking on extension to contract</p>	Acting as lead funding recipient/contract lead may have implications for other areas of work	M	H	Conclude robust SLA with Tactran to ensure resource challenge is spread.
<p><b>Risk of Proceeding</b> Other, commercial apps create a market where public sector led apps no longer have relevance</p>	<p>Public sector money being spent where the private sector has provided a viable equivalent solution.</p> <p>Creation of an effective private sector led MaaS app would however be a desirable outcome.</p>	M	M	The IMPs project creates the opportunity for a single, public sector led app by which policy makers can ensure maximum public benefit from behaviour change tools.
<p><b>Risk of Not Proceeding</b> Lost opportunity to progress project if pull out now</p>	The GoSEStran app will disappear from users' phones on 31 <sup>st</sup> March. Funding may be made available later in the year. By cancelling the project now, SEStran lose the opportunity to help lead MaaS in Scotland.	M	M	If SEStran withdraw at this stage, would have to be very clear with all partners as to why.

## **Develop to Deliver**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of a policy document prepared by Scotland's seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) on the opportunities to maximise the role of the partnerships in delivering strategic transport improvements, working with others.
- 1.2 The document will be used as the basis for discussions with Transport Scotland, CoSLA, and the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) with the aim of devolving some roles and responsibilities from Transport Scotland to the RTPs.
- 1.3 The report has been shared with, and noted by, the Performance and Audit Committee at their meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Chairs of Scotland's seven Regional Transport Partnerships meet on a quarterly basis to discuss matters of common interest and ensure a voice for all parts of the country. The Chairs previously agreed a policy paper in 2015 entitled "Develop to Deliver". It was agreed by the Chairs that this document required updating and instructed officers to bring back a report.
- 2.2 The attached paper entitled "Develop to Deliver – 2023 Refresh" was considered by the RTP Chairs at their meeting in Glasgow on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and it was agreed to seek the endorsement of the report by the seven partnership boards. The paper will then be shared with CoSLA, SCOTS and Transport Scotland.

### **3. MAIN REPORT**

- 3.1 The Develop to Deliver document sets out the RTPs' aspirations including a series of Recommendations and Actions, focussed on ten priorities:
  1. Co-ordinating action on reducing emissions
  2. Delivering more effective and transparent, delivery-focused governance and roles and responsibilities
  3. Transforming active travel
  4. Helping make public transport more affordable
  5. Seizing the opportunity to ensure the true alignment of strategic transport and landuse planning
  6. Working in partnership to Improve transport access to health and social care
  7. Ensuring our islands are better connected
  8. Delivering for the freight sector

9. Promoting and delivering Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service
10. Sustaining air services.

3.2 Although the document is deliberately concise and high-level, it provides some further discussion on each of these topics. The intention is to provide an opportunity for considering these issues and any others deemed necessary, reflecting the views of constituent local authorities and ensuring coordinated policy discussion across Scotland at a strategic level.

#### 4. Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that the Partnership Board:

1. Approves the “Develop to Deliver – 2023 Refresh” document
2. Notes that the report will then be shared with CoSLA, SCOTS and Transport Scotland and used as the basis for discussions about devolving some roles and responsibilities from Transport Scotland to the RTPs, in line with the principles enshrined in the Verity House agreement

Brian Butler  
**Partnership Director**  
 15 March 2024

#### Appendix 1: Develop to Deliver – 2023 Refresh

Policy Implications	None – all recommendations in the report align with the approved policies in the Regional Transport Strategy
Financial Implications	None at this stage
Equalities Implications	The report provides a basis for improving the experience of all users across a number of transport-related issues and services, and has a particular focus on improving access and travel to healthcare
Climate Change Implications	The report has a real focus on reducing emissions by encouraging people to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider whether a journey is really necessary</li> <li>• Consider the use of active travel or public transport for those journeys which are necessary</li> <li>• Where neither of these are realistic options and the use of a car is essential for making a particular journey:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use shared vehicles (e.g. car clubs)</li> <li>○ Use electric vehicles</li> </ul> </li> </ul>





### REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS

## Develop to Deliver – 2023 Refresh

Maximising the Role of Regional Transport Partnerships in Furthering Improvements to Transport in Scotland

**A report by the Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships of Scotland**

November 2023

### About this report

This report has been prepared by the Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) of Scotland. It is a summary of work undertaken in seeking to 'refresh' the recommendations of the original 'Develop to Deliver' report\* from 2015, and was approved by the Chairs at their meeting of 29 November 2023.

The report has not been approved by individual RTP Boards, and does not alter the policy content detailed in or status of each RTPs respective Regional Transport Strategy.

The report will be circulated to all relevant partners, and will be used to guide and progress future work by the RTP Chairs and their engagement with those partners, including the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, COSLA, operators and others. Further information and background on the report is available from the RTP Lead Officers – contact [mark.speed@tactran.gov.uk](mailto:mark.speed@tactran.gov.uk).

\* <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/10266/sg-rtp-working-group-report-final-august-2015-pdf.pdf>

## **Foreword – A New Future for Regional Transport Partnerships**

*Transport in Scotland is at a crossroads.*

The challenges we face are significant: from addressing island connectivity and achieving a sustainable model for rural transport, through to widespread bus service withdrawals across our towns and cities.

Opportunities are there too. Our strategies, at national, regional and local levels are, for the first time, in almost complete alignment.

We know what we need to do. We just need to get on with doing it.

But there are many options and permutations of the path we need to take from that crossroads to get to the optimal results we all desire.

*We believe that the Regional Transport Partnerships of Scotland hold the key to collectively guiding us down the right path.*

There is no ‘magic bullet’, no ‘one size fits all’ solution to the transport issues we face. We all know that.

But the RTPs’ unique and wide-ranging perspective - from the local to the strategic, crossparty, urban and rural – our partnership-focused approach, and crucially, capability to deliver, can give us a head-start in making a real positive difference for the people and communities we are here to serve.

The original “Develop to Deliver” report in 2015 set out a growth strategy for RTPs. When we had our first meetings as RTP Chairs after the May 2022 council elections, we realised we needed to take stock, revisit that report, refresh it, and set out an up-to-date vision of how RTPs could help in a much-changed world and address head-on the challenges our sector faces.

*This 2023 Refresh sets out that vision.*

We commend it to you, and hope that it triggers a transformation in strengthening RTPs to lead and support the right solutions for Scotland’s transport challenges, working with our partners towards delivering the world-class sustainable transport system our communities want, need and deserve.

**The Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships of Scotland**

**November 2023**

## Introduction and Context

Taking the conclusions of the original “Develop to Deliver” as its base, set out below are a series of recommendations and actions showing how the RTP Chairs believe the RTPs could further help improve transport in Scotland. Development of the report has been based on the range of significant work undertaken by RTPs and partners over recent years – from Regional Transport Strategies to development and delivery of projects on the ground. The recommendations are intended to stimulate discussion, accelerate progress and delivery, and to sit alongside and complement each RTP’s Regional Transport Strategy.

The recommendations and actions of the 2023 Refresh are:

### 1. Co-ordinating action on reducing emissions

There is an opportunity for RTPs to play a stronger, co-ordinating role in reducing emissions, and accelerating climate adaptation and resilience, working with Transport Scotland, councils, operators, Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturers and infrastructure providers, and others. RTPs can play an important role as a conduit between partners to deliver at a regional scale, bringing efficiencies and a complementary approach across boundaries. This approach will be especially important in infrastructure provision, in rural and island areas and areas of deprivation where, for example, enhanced support may be required.

*Action:* Through dialogue with Transport Scotland and others, the RTPs will seek a lead role in co-ordinating future actions on initiatives and infrastructure to reduce emissions to ensure maximum effects and an efficient approach.

*Progress / Case Studies:* SPT is working with partners through the Climate Ready Clyde Partnership and has established a transport resilience group to share best practice and work together to coordinate and align actions on adaptation. This has the potential to be replicated in other RTP areas to drive good practice and innovation. Similarly, Nestrans has signed the Aberdeen Climate and Nature Pledge. The pledge is a commitment by the organisations and people of the City of Aberdeen to act within their own organisations and lives to contribute towards the Net Zero Aberdeen Route map and Aberdeen Adapts Climate Adaptation Framework.

### 2. Delivering more effective and transparent, delivery-focused governance and roles and responsibilities

Building on the earlier findings of the NTS Roles and Responsibilities workstream, the recent report<sup>1</sup> by the Scottish Parliament’s Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, and work and consultation undertaken by RTPs in the recent preparation of their Regional Transport Strategies, the RTPs offer a potential route to lead and co-ordinate work to identify any required change in governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities in transport across Scotland, working with partners at national and local levels. This work would be focused on delivery of the Regional Transport Strategies, and will consider enhanced powers for the right partners where needed to ensure and accelerate that delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/NZET/2023/1/23/2c9752ff-eb3f-4273-8f78e726676a3b6e/NZET062023R1.pdf>

*Action:* RTPs will seek to co-ordinate any future work on changes to transport governance / roles and responsibilities in their areas.

*Progress / Case Studies:* The report by the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and

Transport Committee noted that: "The Committee supports a stronger Regional Transport Partnership model to help enable positive behavioural change. RTPs should be empowered and resourced to be lead decision-takers on achieving a more joined up and strategic approach to public transport and active travel at regional level: one reflective of actual travel or commuting patterns, which do not stop at Council boundaries, and to achieve better integration on transport policy between member Local Authorities. This in turn requires RTPs to be higher profile, more transparent and more responsive organisations, with clearer processes for public engagement."

### **3. Transforming active travel**

RTPs are supportive of the partnership model proposed as a result of Transport Scotland's Active Travel Transformation Programme (ATTP). We believe this will form the framework for greater regional co-ordination of active travel project development and delivery. With our experience, RTPs are ideally placed to lead on these partnerships as required, building on the successful Regional Active Travel Grant process and regional active travel strategies currently being developed. Working with our councils and others, we believe this approach will ensure delivery of regional active travel projects of a significantly enhanced scale to ensure effective and efficient utilisation of the expected big increase in active travel funding by Transport Scotland over coming years.

*Action:* RTPs to continue work with TS and others to ensure a robust, regional approach to the new partnership model of funding, developing and delivering active travel improvements.

*Progress / Case Studies:* Hitrans "Hi-Bike" system offers e-bikes to residents and visitors in Inverness and Fort William. It's easy, fun and comfortable, and allows the Scottish highlands to join the active transportation revolution by offering a sustainable new transit option for people to get around the two towns. Hi-Bike is available 24/7 and is perfect for commuting, errands, or recreation. At present, there are 11 bike stations and around 90 bikes available.

### **4. Helping make public transport more affordable**

Current ticketing and fare structures are too complex and confusing, As we await the outcome of the Fair Fares Review, RTPs are in a key position to work collectively with operators and Transport Scotland on more affordable fares and integrated, multi-modal smart ticketing, in line with our respective Regional Transport Strategies. Specifically, and potentially utilising the provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, and reflecting the continuing significant public sector investment in supporting bus services and infrastructure – and support during the pandemic - there is a real opportunity to grow bus patronage back to pre-Covid levels and beyond through working with operators on fares. Similarly, we believe there is the opportunity for innovative pathfinder projects to examine new ways to promote more affordable fares.

*Action:* Building on the outcomes of the Fair Fares Review when published, RTPs will seek to co-ordinate any action to reduce fares or offer incentives to travel in their respective areas.

## **5. Seizing the opportunity to ensure the true alignment of strategic transport and landuse planning**

Through our statutory RTSs, and our formal role as 'key agencies' in the development planning and management process, RTPs are already working hard to achieve the much-longed for goal of integrated transport and land-use planning. This ambition has never been more important given our collective targets to reduce car travel, grow the use of public transport and active travel, and achieve such initiatives as 20-minute neighbourhoods. RTPs present an opportunity to strengthen regional involvement in planning and development, both in terms of transport and land-use, through a 'co-production' approach to the development of Regional Spatial Strategies, working with councils and other partners.

*Action:* RTPs to seek discussion with the Scottish Government, local authorities and regional planning teams to establish a more effective framework in which economic growth, land use and transport can co-exist and more effectively align, and secure a co-production approach to development of Regional Spatial Strategies.

## **6. Working in partnership to Improve transport access to health and social care**

RTPs remain committed to working with partners across the Scottish Government, NHS, local authorities, Scottish Ambulance Service, transport operators including the Community and Voluntary Transport sectors and representatives of patient groups to deliver improved transport outcomes for people accessing healthcare, and in particular those who find access most challenging. RTPs have recently delivered successful pilot schemes in this regard. However, we believe much more could be done, and believe we need to bring relevant partners together to focus on stepping up improvements and efficiencies in transport access to healthcare facilities.

*Action:* RTPs to request the Scottish Government convene a Transport Access to Health and Social Care Ministerial Group to help co-ordinate national, regional and local leadership and action.

*Progress / Case Studies:* A report<sup>2</sup> by MACS in 2019 made 27 recommendations on improving transport access to health and social care. The recommendations included:

- One organisation needs to take accountability for the lead strategic planning role to ensure ambulance, hospital, community and public transport provision meets demand and is accessible, available and affordable to all
- All local authorities should have an accessible transport strategy and targets, which encourages and facilitates more disabled people and older people being able to use public transport to attend medical appointments.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47020/subgroup-transport-to-health-report.pdf>

## **7. Ensuring our islands are better connected**

The ferry services which ensure our islands remain connected are a genuine lifeline service for the people and businesses which need them. But the challenges facing the sector are significant, and there is regular negative coverage in the media of issue on our ferry network. RTPs have done their best to help in this area, but want to do more in supporting Transport Scotland, local communities, and operators to secure a sustainable future for our ferries.

*Action:* RTP Lead Officers to scope out an enhanced role for RTPs in this important area. This consideration should take place alongside the work to implement improved Governance of ferry services that has been committed to by Ministers through the Project Neptune process.

*Progress / Case Studies:* An example of the work RTPs are doing in this area is the collaboration between HITRANS, ZetTrans, Shetland Islands Council and Orkney Islands Council between 2013 and 2015 and the follow-on studies in Orkney and Shetland. The Shetland Inter Island Transport Study (SIITS), published in December 2016, was developed by Shetland Islands Council and ZetTrans. The study reviewed connectivity across the Shetland Islands and developed a Strategic Business Case for future of inter-island transport services and infrastructure covering 30 years. The study provided the basis for successfully securing additional funding for the costs of ferry services of £5.0 million in 2018/19 and a further £5.2 million for 2019/20 with the current funding sitting at £23 million in 2023/24.

To secure longer term funding for the running of services and the building of new infrastructure, Shetland Council and ZetTrans are undertaking an update of their 2016 study in the form of an Inter-Island Transport Connectivity Business Case to include detailed work on fixed links which will also contribute to considering solutions in addition to ferries in other areas of the Highlands and Islands.

## **8. Delivering for the freight sector**

RTPs want to support the major freight operators and Transport Scotland to encourage the reduction of diesel mileage by 20% in line with Scottish Government aspirations, including the electrification of rail freight services and development of electric Heavy Goods Vehicles. The impact of Freeports on the 20% diesel mileage reduction aspirations and the costs associated with decarbonisation of the railway will be key factors to be considered as we progress these matters.

*Action:* RTPs will work with the freight sector, Transport Scotland and other partners to build on existing and promote more sustainable freight approaches including Consolidation Centres, Cyclelogistics, drone testing, and decarbonisation of fleets.

## **9. Promoting and delivering Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service**

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) are and will play a crucial role over coming years to improve travel options for people including some of our most vulnerable passengers. It will be important that RTPs work with a range of transport and wider partners to identify, promote and implement best practice across Scotland while recognising different solutions will be required for different geographies and demographics. Strong leadership at a national and

regional level will be critical to this process to drive progress and provide a clear pathway forward.

*Action:* RTPs are committed to playing their role in the promotion and delivery of MaaS and DRT and we are keen to improve engagement across the sectors and with Transport Scotland to establish an appropriate Framework on which to build progress.

*Progress / Case Studies:* There are examples of DRT across Scotland including Aberdeenshire's A2B Dial-a-Bus, SPT's MyBus and Fife Dial-a Ride. Combining DRT and MaaS has also been taken forward by HITRANS and Tactrans as part of a joint project. The RTPs received around £1 million of funding from the Transport Scotland MaaS Investment fund to implement MaaS trials which include key elements of modern DRT. To further develop these projects and turn the MaaS concept into reality will require further investment but there is no doubt that MaaS and Digital DRT present a huge opportunity to reduce private car use and promote more sustainable travel in rural areas.

## **10. Sustaining air services**

Protecting Scotland's air services including essential links to wider markets in England, UK and beyond is essential to the wellbeing of our communities. Internal flights are a lifeline service and must be protected and enhanced to ensure our rural and island economies can share in opportunities and prosperity. RTPs are a crucial voice in calling for more investment in air services and have the potential to be at the forefront of exploring innovative new technology to decarbonise the sector, starting with internal flights.

*Action:* RTPs would welcome a new partnership along with Transport Scotland, local authorities, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the aviation sector to support the growth of new decarbonised technologies to support the sector, grow Scotland's connectivity and meet the needs of its residents for access to services.

*Progress / Case studies:* Air links from and between Scotland's Islands make up the vast majority of Scotland's internal scheduled air services and provide islanders access to healthcare, employment, education and access to friends and family. Air services also deliver vital freight supplies essential to the viability of island communities. We often see air travel as being additional to our normal daily lives or link it in our minds with leisure travel but island air services including intra island services are integral to the daily life of islanders particularly those living on some of our most remote island communities. Looking further afield, access to slots at Heathrow Airport are essential to communities and economies including those for Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee and the Western Isles, Shetland and Orkney to enable onward travel for people and goods to the wider world. It is recognised that air services must play their full part in efforts to decarbonise the transport sector, in-turn reducing the significant emissions currently experienced. The greatest opportunity to affect change in the medium term is to explore and develop low carbon and electric aircraft to serve internal flights. Progress is already being made in testing low carbon aviation solutions and the Highlands and Islands air networks offer real potential for a switch to low carbon solutions in the early stages of this journey.

**External Audit - Annual Audit Plan 2023/24**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report presents the External Auditor’s Annual Audit Plan for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 was reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 1st March 2024.

**2. MAIN REPORT**

- 2.1 Audit Scotland has been appointed as the Partnership’s External Auditor for the period from 2022/23 until 2026/27.
- 2.2 The Annual Audit Plan for 2023/24 is appended.

**3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended the Partnership Board:

- 3.1 notes the External Audit Plan.

**Richard Lloyd-Bithell**

Treasurer

8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Appendix**            Annual Audit Plan 2023/24  
**Contact**            iain.shaw@edinburgh.gov.uk

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



# South East Scotland Transport Partnership

Annual Audit Plan



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for South East Scotland Transport Partnership  
March 2024

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# Introduction

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## Summary of planned audit work

1. This document summarises the work plan for our 2023/24 audit of South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran). The main elements of the audit include:

- an audit of the financial statements and an Independent Auditor's Report expressing an opinion on whether they give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement
- an audit opinion on other statutory information published with the financial statements in the annual accounts, including the Management Commentary, the Annual Governance Statement, and the Remuneration Report
- consideration of arrangements in relation to wider scope areas including the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and the financial sustainability of SEStran and its services
- consideration of the arrangements to secure Best Value

## Respective responsibilities of the auditor and SEStran

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

### Auditor responsibilities

3. Our responsibilities as appointed auditor are established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Code of Audit Practice (including [supplementary guidance](#)) and guided by the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.

4. Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other information within the annual accounts. We also review and report on the wider scope arrangements in place at SEStran. In doing this, we aim to support improvement and accountability.

5. The appointed auditor, and engagement lead, for SEStran is Christopher Gardner, Senior Audit Manager.

### The responsibilities of SEStran

6. SEStran is responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records and internal controls and preparing financial statements for audit that give a true and fair view. They are also required to produce other reports in the annual accounts in accordance with statutory requirements.

**7.** SEStran has the primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of public funds, compliance with relevant legislation, and establishing effective arrangements for governance, propriety, and regularity that enable them to deliver their objectives.

## **Adding Value**

**8.** We aim to add value to SEStran through our external audit work by being constructive and forward looking, by attending meetings of the Performance and Audit Committee; and by recommending good practice. In so doing, we will help SEStran promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision making, and more effective use of resources.

**9.** The Code of Audit Practice included provisions relating to the audit of less complex bodies. Where the application of the full wider scope is judged by auditors not to be appropriate to an audited body, then the annual audit work can focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and the financial sustainability of the body and its services.

**10.** We plan to apply the less complex body provision of the Code to the 2023/24 audit of SEStran. This is based on our assessment of SEStran complying with both the quantitative and qualitative criteria for defining less complex bodies:

- SEStran has gross revenue, gross assets and gross liabilities less than £10.2 million
- We have not identified any wider scope risks beyond financial sustainability as part of our financial audit planning; SEStran was not subject to a statutory report in the prior year, and is not subject to significant public scrutiny

# Annual accounts

## Introduction

- 11.** The annual accounts are an essential part of demonstrating SEStran's stewardship of resources and its performance in the use of those resources.
- 12.** Appointed auditors are required to perform an audit of the financial statements, consider other information within the annual accounts, and express a number of audit opinions in an Independent Auditor's Report in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) in the UK, Practice Note 10 from the Public Audit Forum which interprets the ISAs for the public sector, and guidance from Audit Scotland.
- 13.** We focus our work on the areas of highest risk. As part of our planning process, we perform a risk assessment highlighting the audit risks relating to each of the main financial systems relevant to the production of the financial statements.

## Materiality

- 14.** The concept of materiality is applied by auditors in planning and performing the audit, and in evaluating the effect of any uncorrected misstatements on the financial statements. I am required to plan my audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement over both the amount and the nature of the misstatement.

### Materiality levels for the 2023/24 audit

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

## Exhibit 1

### 2023/24 Materiality levels for SEStran

Materiality	Amount
<b>Planning materiality</b> – This is the figure we calculate to assess the overall impact of audit adjustments on the financial statements. Materiality has been set based on our assessment of the needs of the users of the financial statements and the nature of SEStran's operations. For the year ended 31 March 2024, we have set our materiality at 2% of gross expenditure based on the audited financial statements for 2022/23.	£41,340
<b>Performance materiality</b> – This acts as a trigger point. If the aggregate of errors identified during the financial statements audit exceeds performance materiality, this could indicate that further audit procedures are required. Using our	£26,500

professional judgement, we have assessed performance materiality at 65% of planning materiality.

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<b>Reporting threshold (i.e. clearly trivial)</b> – We are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements more than the 'reporting threshold' amount.	£2,000
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Source: Audit Scotland

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## Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements

**16.** Our risk assessment draws on our cumulative knowledge of SEStran, its major transaction streams, key systems of internal control, and risk management processes. It is informed by our discussions with management, meetings with internal audit, attendance at committees, and a review of supporting information.

**17.** Audit risk assessment is an iterative and dynamic process. Our assessment of risks set out in this plan may change as more information and evidence becomes available during the progress of the audit. Where such changes occur, we will advise management, and where relevant, report them to those charged with governance.

**18.** Based on our risk assessment process, we identified the following significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements. These are risks which have the greatest impact on our planned audit procedures. [Exhibit 2](#) summarises the nature of the risks, management's sources of assurance over these risks, and the further audit procedures we plan to perform to gain assurance over the risks.

**Exhibit 2****2023/24 Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements**

Significant risk of material misstatement	Management's sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p><b>1. Risk of material misstatement due to fraud caused by management override of controls</b></p> <p>As stated in ISA (UK) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of management's ability to override controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test journals with a focus on significant risk areas.</li> <li>We will consider any unusual or material transactions identified through our audit testing for any evidence of management override of controls.</li> <li>Substantive testing of income and expenditure transactions around the year-end to confirm they are accounted for in the correct financial year.</li> <li>Focussed testing of accounting accruals and prepayments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Risk of material misstatement caused by fraud in expenditure</b></p> <p>The Code of Audit Practice expands the consideration of fraud under ISA (UK) 240 to include the risk of fraud over expenditure. There is a risk that expenditure may be materially misstated in the 2023/24 financial statements due to the extent and nature of the following significant expenditure streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project-related expenditure (2022/23: £1.472m)</li> <li>Other service expenditure (2022/23: £0.211m)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controls in place over expenditure approval and payment processes.</li> <li>Scrutiny of monthly financial reports by management and quarterly budget monitoring reports by the Performance &amp; Audit Committee and Partnership Board</li> <li>Fraud prevention arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed testing of expenditure transactions, focussing on the areas of greatest risk.</li> <li>Review of budget monitoring reports, focusing on significant budget variances.</li> <li>Review of arrangements in place to prevent and detect fraud.</li> </ul>

Source: Audit Scotland

**19.** As set out in ISA (UK) 240: *The auditor's responsibilities relating to fraud in an audit of financial statement*, there is a presumed risk of fraud over the recognition of revenue. There is a risk that revenue may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements. We have rebutted this risk for SEStran because, whilst the possibility of fraud exists, we consider this specific risk of misstatement to be low. This is due to the nature of the partnership's revenue streams and key sources of income, namely government grants, constituent council contributions and grants from other public bodies which is clearly communicated and can be readily agreed to third party confirmations.

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



## Wider scope risks

**21.** We have identified significant risks in the wider scope areas set out in [Exhibit 3](#). This exhibit sets out the risks, management's sources of assurance for the risks, and the further audit procedures we plan to perform to gain assurances over the risks.

### Exhibit 3

#### 2023/24 wider scope risks

Description of risk	Management's sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p><b>1. Financial sustainability</b></p> <p>SEStran has submitted a proposal to Transport Scotland for additional Scottish Government funding of c.£5m to administer Active Travel awards from 2024/25 onwards, representing a significant increase in the partnership's overall expenditure. Without adequate planning for this expansion in activity, there is a risk that resources are strained and the partnership is unable to secure best value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing budget monitoring and reporting arrangements by management.</li> <li>• Appropriate procurement procedures and arrangements in place to support good governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of SEStran's strategy to accommodate organisational and financial changes due to increased government funding.</li> <li>• Ongoing review of financial budget monitoring and reporting arrangements in place to achieve a balanced budget.</li> <li>• Review and assessment of SEStran's revised governance arrangements to accommodate increased government funding and change of role.</li> </ul>

Source: Audit Scotland

## Best Value

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

# Reporting arrangements, timetable, and audit fee

## Reporting arrangements

**23.** Matters arising from our audit will be reported on a timely basis and will include agreed action plans. Draft reports will be shared with the relevant officers to confirm factual accuracy.

**24.** We will provide:

- an Independent Auditor's Report to SEStran and the Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual accounts
- SEStran and the Accounts Commission with an Annual Audit Report containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen during the audit and conclusions on wider scope areas.

**25.** [Exhibit 4](#) outlines the target dates for our audit outputs set by the Accounts Commission. In determining the target reporting date, due regard is paid to the dates for approving the annual accounts set out in regulations of 30 September 2024.

## Exhibit 4 2023/24 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Performance and Audit Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan	1 March 2024
Independent Auditor's Report	13 September 2024
Annual Audit Report	13 September 2024

Source: Audit Scotland

**26.** All Annual Audit Plans and the outputs detailed in [Exhibit 4](#), and any other outputs on matters of public interest, will be published on our website: [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk).



## Timetable

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

**28.** We will continue to work closely with management to identify the most efficient approach as appropriate and will keep timeframes and logistics for the completion of the audit under review. Progress will be discussed with management and finance officers over the course of the audit.

### Exhibit 5

#### Proposed annual accounts timetable

 Key stage	 Provisional Date
Consideration of the unaudited annual accounts by those charged with governance	7 June 2024
Latest submission date for the receipt of the unaudited annual accounts with complete working papers package.	30 June 2024
Issue of draft Letter of Representation and proposed Independent Auditor's Report	TBC August 2024
Agreement of audited and unsigned annual accounts	TBC August 2024
Issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance.	6 September 2024
Signed Independent Auditor's Report	13 September 2024

Source: Audit Scotland

## Audit fee

**29.** In determining the audit fee, we have taken account of the risk exposure of SEStran and the planned management assurances in place. Fee levels are also impacted by inflation which increases the cost of audit delivery. The proposed audit fee for 2023/24 is £12,560 as set out in [Exhibit 6](#).

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

Fee component	Fees (£)
External Auditor Remuneration	24,110
Pooled costs	880
Sectoral Cap Adjustment	(12,430)
Total 2023/24 fee	12,560

Source: Audit Scotland

**30.** In setting the fee for 2023/24, we have assumed that SEStran has effective governance arrangements and will prepare a comprehensive and accurate set of annual accounts for audit in line with the agreed timetable for the audit. The audit fee assumes there will be no major change in respect of the scope of the audit during the year and where our audit cannot proceed as planned, a supplementary fee may be levied.

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# Other matters

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## Internal audit

**31.** It is the responsibility of SEStran to establish adequate internal audit arrangements. We will review the internal audit plan and the results of internal audit's work.

**32.** While we are not planning to place formal reliance on the work of internal audit in 2023/24, we will review internal audit reports and assess the impact of the findings on our financial statements and wider scope audit responsibilities.

## Independence and objectivity

**33.** The appointed auditor for SEStran is Christopher Gardner, Senior Audit Manager. Auditing and ethical standards, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, require the appointed auditor to communicate any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of audit staff. We are not aware of any such relationships pertaining to the audit of SEStran.

**34.** Audit Scotland has robust arrangements in place to ensure compliance with Ethical Standard including an annual *'fit and proper'* declaration for all members of staff. The arrangements are overseen by the Executive Director of Innovation and Quality, who serves as Audit Scotland's Ethics Partner.

## Audit Quality

**35.** Audit Scotland is committed to the consistent delivery of high-quality public audit. Audit quality requires ongoing attention and improvement to keep pace with external and internal changes. A document explaining the arrangements for providing assurance on the delivery of high-quality audits is available from the [Audit Scotland website](#).

**36.** The International Standards on Quality Management (ISQM) applicable to Audit Scotland for 2023/24 audits are:

- ISQM (UK) 1 which deals with an audit organisation's responsibilities to design, implement and operate a system of quality management (SoQM) for audits. Our SoQM consists of a variety of components, such as: our governance arrangements and culture to support audit quality, compliance with ethical requirements, ensuring we are dedicated to high-quality audit through our engagement performance and resourcing arrangements, and ensuring we have robust quality monitoring arrangements in place. Audit Scotland carries out an annual evaluation of our SoQM and has concluded that we comply with this standard.
- ISQM (UK) 2 which sets out arrangements for conducting engagement quality reviews, which are performed by senior management not

involved in the audit to review significant judgements and conclusions reached by the audit team, and the appropriateness of proposed audit opinions of high-risk audit engagements.

**37.** To monitor quality at an individual audit level, Audit Scotland also carries out internal quality reviews of a sample of audits. Additionally, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) carries out independent quality reviews.

**38.** Actions to address deficiencies identified by internal and external quality reviews are included in a rolling Quality Improvement Action Plan which is used to support continuous improvement. Progress with implementing planned actions is regularly monitored by Audit Scotland's Quality and Ethics Committee.

**39.** Audit Scotland may periodically seek your views on the quality of our service provision. The team would also welcome feedback more informally at any time.

# South East Scotland Transport Partnership

## Annual Audit Plan 2023/24

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[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/accessibility](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/accessibility)

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## **PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report and its appendix update the Partnership Board on the performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams over the last quarter.
- 1.2 It was agreed at the Partnership's December Board meeting that project performance and progress against targets would, in future, be scrutinised by the Committee with any comments and concerns highlighted to the next Partnership Board as needed.
- 1.3 The Performance & Audit Committee at its meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2024 reviewed the report and supporting appendix.

### **2 BUSINESS PLAN & FUTURE PERFORMANCE AND ISSUES REPORTING**

- 2.1 The additional work on the new People and Place Active Travel programme has necessitated a delay in the development of the next Business Plan and subsequent monitoring format.  
As
- 2.2 If the SEStran People & Place plan is approved by Transport Scotland (estimated mid to late March 2024) it will be a significant change in the funding and scale of work that the Partnership will be delivering. It is prudent that we align current workstreams with the new work and this will take some time to do post confirmation from Transport Scotland.
- 2.3 It is proposed that a new integrated business plan and monitoring framework be presented to the forthcoming Performance and Audit Committee in June and then to the subsequent Partnership Board.

### **3. KEY ISSUES AND FUNDING**

- 3.1 Unless otherwise highlighted in 3.2 below all existing workstreams are tracking to plan, i.e. have a GREEN RAG rating.
- 3.2 Current Amber-rated issues are highlighted below, there are no Red-rated issues.
  - GO e-Bike Shared System (section 1)
  - Real Time Passenger Information (section 2)
- 3.3 The Partnership has received £1,037,500 in additional funding so far in the financial year 2023/24. This funding will allow the Partnership to undertake additional work and is summarised in section 7 of the appendix.

### **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**



4.1 The Partnership Board is asked to:

- a) Note progress recorded in the past quarter, summarised in the attached Appendix

Keith Fiskin  
**Senior Partnership Manager**  
15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Appendix: SEStran Projects & Strategy Tracker – February 2024**

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

## Appendix 1: SEStran Projects and Strategy Activity Update – February 2024

### Project Tracker

Key:

For each activity area the alignment with the Regional Transport Strategy is indicated with a 1 to 4 for the following:

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

For each active RAG Status used is as follows:

Red	Severe issues with delivery and/or budget
Amber	Delayed and/or not tracking to budget but can be mitigated
Green	On track to plan and budget
Blue	Complete

Project Name	Progress	Risks & Issues	Benefits & Outcomes
SEStran Strategic Network		Compressed program could lead to delays	Coordinated regional development of active travel routes
GO e-Bike Community Hubs		Promotional campaign delayed Trial program delayed	Community & employer engagement & trial Increased awareness of e-bikes
GO e-Bike Shared System		Removal of old assets	New replacement system
Vivacity Traffic Monitoring		Installation delays, equip failure	Improved data leads to improved planning
Regional RTP1		System failure, operator data failure	Increased confidence in PT Increased patronage
RTP1 Novus FX		System failure	A regional approach to bus service management
Newburgh STAG		Delays to STAG decision making	Multi- modal appraisal for new rail station
GO SEStran (MaaS)		Lack of funding to develop	Better travel info for public
DRT		Tech failure, low use, complexity	Increased PT network reach & capacity
VoyagAR		Tech failure, lack of new partner	Better access to PT info
Thistle Assistance		Lack of awareness, operator engagement	Reduced PT anxiety for vulnerable groups

Strategy Name	Progress	Risks & Issues	Benefits & Outcomes
RTS 2035		Lack of funding to support delivery	Regional framework for transport strategy
Electric Vehicle Strategy		Compressed timescales Resource & Capacity	Co-ordination of regional approach to EV charging capacity development & delivery
Regional Bus Strategy		Complexity of appraisal process	Improved approach to bus
Regional Freight Strategy		Complexity of appraisal process	Develop business cases for interventions to encourage modal shift

## 1. Active Travel

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
SEStran Strategic Network	1	2	4	2017	March 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>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. The Network presents a proposal for phased investment in active travel infrastructure across the region to help guide potential future projects and funding bids for both SEStran and partner Local Authorities.</p> <p><a href="https://sestran.gov.uk/publications/sestran-strategic-network-cross-boundary-active-travel-routes-connecting-people-and-place/">https://sestran.gov.uk/publications/sestran-strategic-network-cross-boundary-active-travel-routes-connecting-people-and-place/</a></p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
▪ Brief for Tender of consultancy work					July 2023	
▪ Feasibility and preliminary design of options					Mar 2024	
▪ Consultation with stakeholders on furthering design					Feb 2024	
▪ Completion of Fife feasibility studies					Mar 2024	
▪ Completion of Falkirk detailed design					Mar 2024	
▪ Plan activity for 2024/25 delivery					Mar 2024	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications – Social media promotion was successfully carried out to support the active travel consultations and drop-in events in Fife and Falkirk. was completed.</li> <li>▪ Funding agreement signed with TS for additional £180,000 to progress Falkirk routes to point of being almost construction ready</li> <li>▪ Funding application submitted to Sustrans Places for Everyone programme for 24/25 to enable all remaining design tasks to be completed prior to handover of project as construction ready to Falkirk Council</li> <li>▪ Ongoing progress meetings with the consultant and Fife and Falkirk Council to monitor progress</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
▪ Promote virtual reality engagement rooms and input to consultation for Falkirk and Fife routes					February 2024	
▪ Engagement with Sustrans on 24/25 funding outcome					March 2024	
▪ Completion of current stage of work on Fife routes, and handover to Fife Council					March 2024	
▪ Completion of current commission of work on Falkirk routes, and finalisation of work required to complete in early 24/25					March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
Funding timescales mean that programme is very compressed, leaving no time contingency if delays occur, which runs risk of underspend and/or additional funding being required in 24/25 to complete delayed tasks						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
None at this time						

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
GO e-Bike Community Hubs	1	2	4	2017	March 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>The Go e-Bike community project was developed by the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran). The project has involved setting up a series of hubs across the region. The hubs are developed with a mix of local community organisations, charities and academic institutions. Each hub is unique and tailored to its community to support long term sustainability of the hire bike scheme. In 2023 additional funding was received through the Smarter Choices Smarter Places Active Nation funding to support a promotional campaign, provide cycle training and deliver an e-bike trial to employers.</p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Update e-bike fleets					April 2023	
Implement employer trial					Oct 2023	
Develop e-bike promotional campaign					Feb 2023	
Implement e-bike promotional campaign					March 2024	
Run e-bike trial event					March 2024	
Review project data and produce final report					April 2024	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ West Lothian Bike Library (WLBL) are taking on the bulk of the work on the employer trial and have engaged with 3 large employers to run trials</li> <li>▪ A series of one day employer trials will be run alongside the delivery of the promotional campaign</li> <li>▪ Communications – An integrated promotional campaign is planned to go live on 18 March 2024. This campaign will run across social, digital and radio channels, with employer field events</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase engagement with community hubs</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launch, monitor and evaluate awareness campaign</li> </ul>					April 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
Unable to deliver effective promotional campaign						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
Employer trial start delayed so will not meet target number of employers						

Project Name	RTS Alignment				Start	End	Status
GO e-Bike Shared System	1	2	3	4	2019	Mar 24	
<b>Summary of Project</b>							
The Go e-bike shared system was a public e-bike hire system installed in East Lothian and Midlothian. As of May 2023, the operator of the scheme ceased trading and the scheme stopped operating.							
<b>Milestones</b>						<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
▪ New milestones TBC						n/a	n/a
<b>Activity since last report</b>							
Bewegen System – actions post supplier liquidation (Feb 2023)							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreement in place to transfer all SEStran assets to Hitrans</li> <li>▪ Liaising with Hitrans about coordinating collection of bikes, spare parts and infrastructure for use in their system</li> <li>▪ Invoice received from Scottish Power Energy Networks for disconnecting power from existing sites. Hitrans will be covering costs of removal and relocation.</li> </ul>							
Replacement Approach							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revised approach to bike share, that will be lower cost, less at risk from vandalism and with the capacity to support multi modal journeys. Brompton Bikes have been identified as offering a service that meets all the outlined requirements within the available budget.</li> <li>▪ QMU will have a Brompton hire locker on site near to the previous Bewegen hire site at Musselburgh Station. A location has been identified at the site of the proposed mobility hub adjacent to the bus stop and Amazon lockers</li> <li>▪ Currently in discussion with Midlothian Council to identify a suitable site for a second locker</li> </ul>							
<b>Planned Activity</b>						<b>Date</b>	
▪ Schedule in Scottish Power to disconnect 2 sites						March 2024	
▪ Request for quotes from civils companies for work required to remove docking stations						March 2024	
▪ Remove existing system and transfer all assets to Hitrans						March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>						<b>Status</b>	
Delay in identifying suitable site for second locker							
<b>Issues</b>						<b>Status</b>	
Ability to coordinate contractors and Hitrans for dock removal and pick-up at same time							

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Traffic Monitoring Cameras (Vivacity)	1	2	4	2022	2027	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
To inform future project work SEStran is working with LAs and Vivacity to deploy a range of traffic camera/sensors across the region to produce an accurate representation of travel patterns of multi-modal traffic and produce data to enable support for appropriate infrastructure changes.						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
▪ Identify 23 camera locations for monitoring and identify relevant assets and required permissions					November 2023	
▪ Request for quotes for electric hook-up of cameras					November 2023	
▪ Cameras operational and monitoring started					March 2024	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 5 remaining cameras sites have been reviewed In Midlothian and with Vivacity, awaiting final decision to ensure they are best locations</li> <li>▪ Contractor working to connect cameras to power planned completion by March 2024</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
▪ Finalise sites for remaining 5 cameras					March 2024	
▪ Complete installation and connection of all cameras					March 2024	
▪ Share information from camera feeds with Cycling Scotland Open data portal once cameras are connected					March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
▪ Additional delays to installation as a result of weather/permit requirements						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	

## 2. Public Transport

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Real-Time Passenger Information (RTPI)	1	3	4	2010	Mar 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>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.</p> <p><a href="https://sestran.gov.uk/projects/real-time-passenger-information/">https://sestran.gov.uk/projects/real-time-passenger-information/</a></p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new RTPI system testing was completed, and the system accepted</li> </ul>					Nov 21	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system is live with bus operator data being integrated into the live system.</li> </ul>					Apr 22	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on new content management system completed with local authority representatives.</li> </ul>					Aug 23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The regional RTPI purchasing framework is being utilised by SEStran and Local Authorities to provide additional real-time infrastructure for the region.</li> </ul>					Apr 22	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fife is surveying new sites for additional e-ink screens and the new Levenmouth rail link – screens have been ordered and are being prepared for installation</li> <li>Lothian Bus data integration work is progressing – testing of new API underway</li> <li>SEStran is currently working with Ticketer, Fife Council and M&amp;W to facilitate the integration of real-time data from their services into the system</li> <li>Midlothian has placed an order for 32 new screens</li> <li>Scottish Borders have completed procurement for new screens and the installation is progressing</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install Midlothian 32-inch and Fife e-ink screens</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with Lothian Buses on feed improvement and integration</li> </ul>					April 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Moffat &amp; Williamson to standardise their data entry</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to bus strategy development study</li> </ul>					Dec 23 to March 24	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data feed stops working – technology or comms failure</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operator does not update data or provides incorrect data</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installation of hardware delayed e.g. power connection not available</li> </ul>						

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lothian Buses data integration has been problematic as there is a separate stream of work being undertaken by LB to update their internal systems. The data feed is currently incompatible with the regional system.</li> <li>▪ A solution is in place and the target is for real time data will roll out from their fleet from end first quarter 2024. For the regional screen network only, scheduled data will be displayed. The screens will be updated with a message to this effect</li> <li>▪ A temporary mitigation for the above has been implemented with the screens directing the public to the Lothian Buses app and website which is providing accurate real time data for their services.</li> </ul>	



Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status	
Novus FX Local Authority System	1		3	4	2010	2025	
<b>Summary of Project</b>							
Novus-FX 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.							
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>	
▪ Renewal of contract with Trapeze in April 2022 which runs up to March 2025					2022		
▪ First round of local authority training complete					2023		
▪ Second round of local authority training complete					Feb 2024		
<b>Activity since last report</b>							
▪ Working with Local Authorities on designing a new module for bus stop integration.							
▪ 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 a number of new officers which will help increase capacity within this area for local authorities and increase the system resilience							
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>		
▪ Develop new bus stop management and mapping module with LAs & Trapeze					Q1 2024		
▪ Plan the next round of training					March 2024		
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>		
▪ Data feed fails, communication or software issue							
▪ Wrong data entered							
▪ Key knowledge base in local authority is unavailable through illness or retirement							
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>		
▪ Relatively small number of people working on the system							
▪ System complexity and time taken to train new users							

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Newburgh Transport Appraisal	1		3	2019	Mar 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>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.</p> <p>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). <a href="https://newburghtrainstation.org.uk/">https://newburghtrainstation.org.uk/</a></p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case or Change and Initial Options work completed</li> </ul>					2021	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed Options Appraisal Revised (taking into account TS comments) and submitted to TS (Rail)</li> </ul>					Sep 23	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Met with Transport Scotland in January to discuss comments on the revised report</li> <li>The project team has been working with consultants SYSTRA on a response to TS</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop plan with budget for an addendum to the report to present to TS</li> </ul>					Feb 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newburgh Train Station Group to hold public information event in March</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with Transport Scotland to review responses to questions raised</li> </ul>					April 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport Scotland does not approve the next stage of work</li> </ul>						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complexity of appraisal process – number of revisions needed takes time</li> </ul>						

### 3. Technology

Project Name	RTS Alignment				Start	End	Status
GO SEStran	1	2	3	4	2022	Sep 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>							
<p>SEStran has worked with a wide range of stakeholders across the South East of Scotland to develop the GoSEStran project, an innovative MaaS and DRT project proposal that was submitted to the Transport Scotland's MaaS Investment Fund Round 2 (MIF2). The GoSEStran project was awarded £212,440 for the development of MaaS, which integrates DRT pilots in the SEStran region over the course of a one-year period, which was due for completion in March 2023. The Go SEStran app was launched in early August 2022 and can be downloaded from Google Play and Apple app store.</p> <p>GoSEStran is an app that can be consistently updated to integrate various localised modes, for example private bus operators in the area. The app will show you real time information for bus timetables and you can also filter the results to your preference, such as the cheapest option or the lowest emission. SEStran is delivering the project in partnership with three project partners; Fuse Mobility as MaaS providers, East Lothian Council and Tactran.</p>							
<b>Milestones</b>						<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New Software Licence signed with Fuse continuing the digital platform that supports both SEStran and Tactran apps until March 2024.</li> </ul>						July 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ University of St Andrews officially became a partner, and from their MIF budget have paid for a web-based version of the GoSEStran platform, further integrations to make it more viable in Fife and improvements to the app for users such as the inclusion of a mobility menu.</li> </ul>						September 2023/ ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ IMPs Interest Group meetings are held every month with other parties interested in joining the platform with SEStran and Tactran, including Nestrans/Aberdeen Council, SPT, City of Edinburgh Council, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, NHS Tayside, and Perth and Kinross Council.</li> </ul>						Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Integrated Mobility Partnership website</a> now live.</li> </ul>						September 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Novation Agreement signed, to assign the contract for the MaaS platform over to Ember instead of Fuse Mobility.</li> </ul>						February 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SEStran welcomed the Minister for Transport to East Lothian to see a demonstration of the GoSEStran app and to discuss the next steps for MaaS in Scotland.</li> </ul>						January 2024	
<b>Activity since last report</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussions are ongoing with Transport Scotland about what their plans are for the future of MaaS in Scotland. SEStran are encouraging conversations with other RTPs, other MaaS pilots and MaaS Scotland for plans for multi-year funding and future of the pilots.</li> <li>▪ Conversations are ongoing with the Smart Ticketing Board and the Traveline &amp; Trapeze team about how the work from all projects can link in with the work on MaaS.</li> </ul>							

<b>Planned Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm funding for collaborative procurement with Tactran to secure platform and hosting licences for existing GoSEStran and Tactran apps.</li> </ul>	March 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject to funding and Board approval, proceed with procurement process and select platform for after March 2024 and hosting supplier and any other parties necessary to move IMPs project forward on multi-funded basis.</li> </ul>	March 2024
<b>Risks</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of funding to proceed. Mitigation is to continue discussions with potential funders. A bid has been submitted to SCSP and conversations are ongoing with Transport Scotland to encourage national funding for MaaS.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confusion with other apps e.g. Traveline, Google, Citymapper. Focus is on emphasising differences/advantages of genuine MaaS products being funded by public sector for policy reasons. Regular meetings now to be set up with Traveline.</li> </ul>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having shown promising results in relation to the initial MIF pilots and successful developed IMPs, the challenge is now to develop a governance structure and working relationships with other public bodies to provide a multi-party funded model for the development of MaaS across Scotland.</li> </ul>	

Project Name	RTS Alignment				Start	End	Status
Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)	1	2	3	4	2023	Mar 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>							
SEStran received funding as part of the MaaS Investment Fund to trial a new DRT service in East Lothian. This service began in March 2023, after a procurement process to award The Routing Company a contract to provide the booking office dashboard and mobile booking app for the 109 supported bus service run by Prentice Coaches. SEStran also continues to engage with the local authorities in the region running their own DDRT/ DRT pilots including Borders Council and Fife Council.							
<b>Milestones</b>						<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched a new DDRT service in East Lothian.</li> </ul>						March 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated the new DDRT service in East Lothian in March 2023, and the DRT Berwickshire service in Scottish Borders into the GoSEStran MaaS app.</li> </ul>						March 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After evaluating the 109-DRT pilot, a decision has been made with Prentice Coaches and East Lothian Council to withdraw the tech due to the cost and lack of passenger uptake. Prentice Coaches will continue to run the service as DRT offering users chance to book via the phone or email, instead of booking app.</li> </ul>						March 2024	
<b>Activity since last report</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing discussions with community transport operators in the region to assess if their services could benefit from engaging with DDRT tech companies, to improve the efficiency of booking their passengers.</li> <li>Continue discussions with the local authorities in the region to assess potential of other routes or services that may benefit from the technology offered by DRT.</li> <li>Communications: Key partners are being engaged to discuss the transition away from DDRT in 24/25 and the relevant communication requirements.</li> </ul>							
<b>Planned Activity</b>						<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to investigate further potential DRT pilots in the region, potentially around community transport operators, or workplace mobility and employee transport.</li> </ul>						Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on available funding, explore the potential of DRT for workplace mobility, such as trialling a DRT service for a big company in the region that employees tend to run to a shift pattern to see if by offering tailored bus service, it can reduce the number of employees driving.</li> </ul>						Bid submitted to EU-Horizon with Ride Tandem January 2023. Awaiting response.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue discussions with Scottish Borders Council to explore funding opportunities to support the extension of the PINGO service in Berwickshire after March 2024.</li> </ul>						March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>						<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tech does not work as well as it could – mitigation has been joint work with operator, tech provider and Council to resolve issues.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low passenger uptake.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No national leadership on analysing DRT pilots, or providing ongoing funding and resource support. SEStran continue discussions with Transport Scotland and the Department for Transport to encourage more of a national leadership for DRT.</li> </ul>							
<b>Issues</b>						<b>Status</b>	

- East Lothian pilot has demonstrated so far that DDRT is not always an easy solution, and availability of drivers and extra rolling stock is as essential as the tech.



Project Name	RTS Alignment		Start	End	Status	
Thistle Assistance VoyagAR		3	4	2020	Mar 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received £300,000 funding from Scottish Enterprise to develop project through phase one proof of concept and phase two prototype development</li> </ul>					2020	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot developed by Sentireal (developer)</li> </ul>					Sep 23	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentireal are working through enhancements to the platform due to be complete end February</li> <li>Sentireal have met with 2 potential developers who are interested in working on VoyagAR in the future</li> <li>Creative design of marketing materials is in development.</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop the system with Sentireal – fine-tuning and enhancements.</li> </ul>					Feb 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise the launch of the app with marketing materials.</li> </ul>					April 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with Anderson Strathern develop a legal approach to transfer the system and intellectual property from Sentireal to a new developer.</li> </ul>					Feb 2023	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Software failure</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User accident whilst using</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Third-party supplier changes or fails</li> </ul>						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of resources to promote and engage at a national level</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System complexity</li> </ul>						

#### 4. Accessibility

Project Name	RTS Alignment		Start	End	Status
Thistle Assistance Programme		3   4	2008	Mar 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>					
<p>The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership has developed the Thistle Assistance Programme 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. It is credit-card sized and comes with a supply of peel-off stickers, which advise the driver or conductor of your disability and the help you need in an easy-to-read format. <a href="http://www.thistleassistance.com">www.thistleassistance.com</a></p>					
<b>Milestones</b>				<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New branding launched for the programme with new creative and website</li> </ul>				2021	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New app developed</li> </ul>				2021	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guide for transport operators developed</li> </ul>				2022	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mailout system for card distribution in place</li> </ul>				2022	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National yearly budget agreed with all RTPs contributing</li> </ul>				2020	
<b>Activity since last report</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On going print media campaign using 'A Little Help Goes a Long Way' creative targeting specialist audience publications</li> <li>▪ Key stakeholders are being engaged to understand how staff employees are being engaged and made aware of the campaign.</li> </ul>					
<b>Planned Activity</b>				<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop new stakeholder engagement plan to increase awareness with key stakeholders</li> </ul>				May 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilise launch of the new journey planner VoyagAR (see item in technology section)</li> </ul>				March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>				<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport Operators use their own approach – increases complexity for public</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ App fails or stops working</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cards and leaflet distribution delayed or fails</li> </ul>					
<b>Issues</b>				<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No current issues</li> </ul>					



## 5. Strategy

Project Name	RTS Alignment				Start	End	Status
	1	2	3	4			
SEStran 2035 Regional Transport Strategy	1	2	3	4	Mar 2023	2035	
<b>Summary of Project</b>							
<p>The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) provides the framework and a direction for transport in the southeast of Scotland area covered by the eight partner local authorities: The City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, the Scottish Borders and West Lothian.</p> <p>SEStran 2035 fulfils the key statutory duty of the South-East of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran) which was set up under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. This Act also set the requirement to produce a statutory RTS to provide a strategic framework for transport management and investment for the Partnership area.</p>							
<b>Milestones</b>						<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Board approval of draft RTS</li> </ul>						Sep 22	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scottish Ministers approved RTS</li> </ul>						Mar 23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SEStran Partnership Board approved and adopted new RTS</li> </ul>						Mar 23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Programme Investment Plan (PIP) baseline work complete</li> </ul>						Aug 23	
<b>Activity since last report</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engaged with ESECRD grouping to align with transport delivery plan workstream</li> <li>▪ Refining PIP work by looking at integration of case studies with consultants S82</li> <li>▪ Develop action plan matrix and integrate into 2024 to 2027 SEStran Business Plan</li> </ul>							
<b>Planned Activity</b>						<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop RTS Delivery Plan with ESECRD;</li> <li>▪ Create single source of truth of data and update with local authorities</li> <li>▪ Develop matrix</li> <li>▪ Start mapping baseline &amp; Gap analysis</li> <li>▪ Set up working group</li> <li>▪ Decide what is 'Regional' and what is 'Cross-boundary' – need to agree criteria</li> <li>▪ Gather thinking on funding models for projects.</li> </ul>						Mar 2025	
<b>Risks</b>						<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding not available for specific actions within the plan</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changing national or political priorities, less aligned to the RTS This is mitigated by refreshing the RTS at regular intervals.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actions are superceded by events or others' activities. This is mitigated by refreshing the RTS at regular intervals.</li> </ul>							
<b>Issues</b>						<b>Status</b>	

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Electric Vehicle Strategy	1		4	2023	Jul 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>In January 2022, The Scottish Government published a new draft vision statement for public electric vehicle (EV) charging in Scotland. The vision places people and businesses first, outlining the accessible, affordable and reliable public network required for the future. A just transition is at the heart of the new approach, where no one is left behind from the benefits afforded by the transition to a net zero transport system.</p> <p>SEStran is exploring with stakeholders the potential benefits of a regional approach to the development of EV infrastructure and potential models for partnership working to maximise efficiencies and delivery opportunities.</p> <p>Builds on the recently approved Concordat between SEStran and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCRD), which is supported by Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils.</p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
▪ Regional Electric Vehicle Charging Forum set up and meeting					Aug 23	
▪ Agree on structure, governance and funding					Mar 24	
▪ Approval to proceed to delivery via the Concordat between SEStran and the ESESCRD					Apr 24	
▪ Task force formed to progress delivery					Apr 24	
▪ Task force ready to issue tender for Charge Point Operators					Oct 24	
▪ Award contract to successful CPO					May 25	
▪ Handover to appointed CPO complete					Dec 25	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Received agreement from the 8 local authorities plus Dumfries &amp; Galloway to progress a collaborative approach to the procurement of public EV charging infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Commissioned Urban Foresight to begin work on a regional EV Delivery Plan</li> <li>▪ Developed draft Project Initiation Document and governance structure to support a regional approach to procurement of public EV charging infrastructure</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
▪ EV Forum meeting to begin work to clearly define the Project Initiation Document prior to review by the City Region Directors					27/02/24	
▪ City Region Directors meeting to agree to proceed in line with the Project Initiation document					04/04/24	
▪ Set up a task force in line with the structure agreed					April 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
▪ Timescale for completion of first tender phase are comparatively short and set by TS						
▪ Limited resource in some LAs to take forward work around EVs and therefore actively participate in the regional approach						
▪ Failure to agree operational or governance structure, or to fund the structure						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Regional Bus Strategy	1		3 4	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
SEStran will develop a Regional Bus Strategy with the aspiration for a 'World Class Bus Service' that aligns with objectives in SEStran's Regional Transport Strategy and the National Transport Strategy 2.						
The proposed Regional Bus Strategy will support the objectives of equality, opportunity and community and incorporate the outcome of Transport Scotland's Fair Fares Review to be published later in 2023. Options being considered include a series of BSIPs, an overarching regional BSIP, a complementary data BSIP, the development of a franchise network or the extension of the operation of the municipally owned network, as the foundation of a world-class bus network.						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval from SEStran Partnership Board in June 2023 to progress the work.</li> <li>Grant award from Transport Scotland Community Bus Fund for £150K to undertake the work.</li> </ul>					June 2023	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement for consultant support for the project undertaken using Scottish Govt. framework.</li> <li>Appointed consultant, Systra/ Stantec</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Package 1 Case for Change</li> <li>Work Package 2 Options Appraisal</li> <li>Work Package 3 Strategy Development</li> <li>Work Package 4 Finalise Strategy &amp; Consultation</li> <li>As part of this, we have considered the role of bus in improving transport to health, which will be its own project in 2024/25</li> </ul>					Aug 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complexity of appraisal process – number of revisions needed takes time</li> </ul>						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance from Scottish Government delayed</li> </ul>						

Project Name	RTS Alignment			Start	End	Status
Freight Strategy	1		4	2020	2024	
<b>Summary of Project</b>						
<p>The GO SEStran Forth Freight Strategy is being funded by Transport Scotland through the Local Rail Development Fund, with the central aim being to help provide the evidence base for local areas to bring forward schemes that can enter the Scottish Government Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy pipeline.</p> <p><a href="https://sestran.gov.uk/projects/regional-freight-study/">https://sestran.gov.uk/projects/regional-freight-study/</a></p>						
<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>STAG Case for Change and Initial Options phases completed</li> </ul>					2022	
<b>Activity since last report</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with Diageo &amp; Forth Ports to discuss options (multi user freight train)</li> <li>Developing workshop plan with AECOM</li> </ul>						
<b>Planned Activity</b>					<b>Date</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise transport planning objectives and refine options</li> </ul>					Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder engagement - workshop</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess against STAG criteria, establish cost to govt and undertake risk/uncertainty analysis</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit a final report to TS</li> </ul>					March 2024	
<b>Risks</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complexity of appraisal process – number of revisions needed takes time</li> </ul>						
<b>Issues</b>					<b>Status</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme delay</li> </ul>						

## 6. Communications and Marketing

Communications and marketing's primary aim remains to develop and maintain a robust presence across digital platforms. As well as engaging external stakeholders through proactive meetings to establish or build relationships.

SEStran-owned channels have started to be utilised with great effect. The ongoing focus on organic social media activity is focused on providing regular updates on project development and ensuring timely engagement with key stakeholders. Our SEStran's website is undergoing updates to reflect the latest activities including business updates.

External stakeholder engagement remains a primary focus in our communication approach. We are actively meeting with key stakeholders associated with Thistle Assistance, GO e-Bike, DRT, and MaaS, building relationships based on reliability, and consistency.

Additional communication activities are geared towards improving the organisation's agility and recognition. This involves creating recognisable brand assets, and elevating SEStran's profile among external stakeholders. This includes the development of virtual meeting backgrounds and customisable social media assets.

As part of our business plan, the development of a communication and engagement plan is underway. Aligned with the key strategic objectives of the RTS, this plan encompasses project-specific communication activities tailored to their respective goals.

## 7. Funding

Summary of additional funding in current financial year.

Funding Body	Title	Amount
Transport Scotland	Active Travel Grant	£467,500
Paths for All	Smarter Choices Smarter Places – GOSEStran	£100,000
Paths For All	Active Nation	£100,300
Paths for All	Smarter Choices Smarter Places – Thistle Assistance	£40,000
Transport Scotland	Active Travel Transformation Fund - Design Support	£180,000
Transport Scotland	Community Bus Fund	£150,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,037,300</b>

Proposals that are being developed:

Funding Body	Title	Submitted
DFT Catapult	Rural Accelerator (Catapult)	Feb 2024
Horizon Europe	Sustainable Freight	Sep 2024

## **8. Meetings & Forums Update**

A meeting with the Scottish Transport Minister took place on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2024. The meeting highlighted the work done on the GoSEStran MaaS app in partnership with East Lothian Council, and to showcase the new Demand Responsive Transport Service in the area run by Prentice Coaches and The Routing Company. Both pilots were partly funded by the MaaS Investment Fund from Transport Scotland. The second half of the meeting with the transport minister focussed on discussions with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the SEStran Board to highlight the key transport challenges in the region and the work SEStran are doing to meet the national and regional transport objectives.

Integrated Mobility Forum: aims to facilitate discussions between stakeholders to make progress in reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys, maximise the use of public transport and maximise active travel opportunities. The forum meets twice a year and is open to all. Last Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Logistics and Freight Forum: aims to support economic growth and resilience across the region by developing, promoting and implementing sustainable business and distribution solutions. The forum meets twice a year and is open to all. Last Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum: aims to deliver our Equality Outcomes and the legislative requirement to consult Health Boards and those who represent those with or who share a protected characteristic. The forum meets twice a year and is open to all. Last Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**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 Fisker	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>LG</p> <p>PF</p> <p>LG</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>BB</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Bus Strategy</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>	