

SESTRAN PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Dunedin Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

Or via Microsoft Teams

10:00am Friday 20th June 2025

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

AGENDA

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS
2. APOLOGIES
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
4. PRESENTATION
People and Place – 24/25 Programme Evaluation – by Claire Colquhoun, Julia Allard and Oliver Harte of Urban Foresight

AGENDA A – POINTS FOR DECISION

A1.	<u>MINUTES</u> (For Approval)	
	(a) Partnership Board – Friday 15 th March 2025	7
	(b) Special Partnership Board – 23 rd April 2025	16
	(c) Performance and Audit Committee – 6 th June 2025	18
A2.	UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2024/25, TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 - Report by Richard Lloyd-Bithell, Treasurer/Iain Shaw	22
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DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The date of the next meeting is **Friday 26 September 2025**

AGENDA B – POINTS FOR NOTING

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13 June 2025

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

Partnership Board Agenda Briefing Note – 20 June 25

Item	Paper	Board Action
4	<p>People and Place Presentation – Urban Foresight</p> <p>Urban Foresight will present the key findings of the 24/25 People and Place Programme Evaluation as well as key recommendations for future programmes.</p>	<u>For Noting</u>
A2	<p>Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25 & Treasury Management Report 2024/25</p> <p>Despite a 5% reduction in funding from Transport Scotland, and due to prudent planning and careful management, we were underspent by £84k on our Core Budget, and £264k on our Project Budgets, although these figures are subject to external audit.</p> <p>The Partnership Board is asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unaudited Annual Accounts for 2024/25 • That the audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course. • The annual Treasury Management report for 2024/25 	
A3	<p>Internal Audit Report</p> <p>SEStran is audited by City of Edinburgh auditors once each year as part of our financial services SLA. SEStran selects the activity or process to be audited, usually based on the perceived level of risk or exposure. This year we selected People and Place finger processes.</p> <p>The Partnership Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the outcomes of the 2024/25 internal audit of the SEStran People and Place Funding Proposals, including IA findings and recommendations and agreed management actions and implementation dates • Note the progress with completion of management actions from previous audits 	<u>For Noting</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input on key risks or any areas of concern that the Committee would like Internal Audit to consider including in the 2025/26 audit plan. 	
A4	<p>Partnership Director's Update</p> <p>Brian Butler will provide an update on the below subjects covered in the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Bus Strategy • Financial Planning Procedure • Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure • Council Requisitions • Strategic Stakeholder Liaison Group • Strategy Work • Potential Railway Stations at Newburgh and Winchburgh • People and Place Visits • Flat Bus Fare Pilot • Reduction in Car Use <p>The Partnership Board is asked to note the contents of this report.</p>	<u>For Noting</u>
A5	<p>Governance Scheme Update</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to seek approval of the revised Governance Scheme documents.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Board approve the amendments to the below documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 1 – Standing Orders • Part 3 – List of Officers Powers • Part 4 – Approved Financial Rules • Part 7 – Grant Standing Orders 	<u>For Approval</u>
A6	<p>Transport to Health Literature Review</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board the literature review of Transport to Health (TtH), which will precede a SEStran Transport to Health Strategy.</p> <p>The following points are covered within the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline data 	<u>For Noting</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges • Opportunities • Gaps in data <p>The Partnership Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the findings of the review • Offer any suggestions on how to fill data gaps • Share Transport to Health efforts with their networks • Agree to SEStran continue this work into a TtH Strategy in the coming years 	
A7	<p>Communications and Marketing Update</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Partnership Board with an update of the SEStran communications and marketing work that has been taking place over the last eight months. There will be updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • Newsletter • Website • Blogs • Factsheets • Annual Report 2024/25 • Thistle Assistance digital marketing campaign • People and Place case study films <p>The Partnership Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the communications and marketing activity that has taken place • Provide, where appropriate, commentary on the report • Note the availability of the newsletter and social media channels and share with others where appropriate 	<u>For Noting</u>
A8	<p>Appointments to Performance and Audit Committee</p> <p>This report seeks the Board's approval of nominations to the Performance and Audit Committee by Clackmannanshire Council, and to acknowledge the</p>	<u>For Approval</u>

	<p>resignations of Non-Councillor Members Kate Sherry and Geoff Duke</p> <p>The Partnership Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve the appointment of Cllr Scott Harrison to the Performance and Audit Committee• Put on record its thanks to both Kate Sherry and Geoff Duke for all their contributions to the Board, and to wish them success in their future roles• Note that recruitment of Non-Councillor Board Members will begin in September 2025 in order to align with the end of the current term in March 2026	
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SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10.00am, Friday, 14 March 2025

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

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Sally Pattle (Chair)	West Lothian Council
	Cllr Russell Imrie (Vice Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Cllr Sanne Dijkstra-Downie (Vice Chair)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Fiona Law	Clackmannanshire Council
	Cllr Kayleigh O'Neill	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Stephen Jenkinson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Margaret Anslow	Falkirk Council
	Cllr James Leslie	Fife Council
	Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	Alistair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Linda Bamford	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Geoff Duke	Non-Councillor Member
<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Andrew Rose (Clerk)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Iain Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Jamie Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Deborah Paton	City of Edinburgh Council
	Peter Forsyth	East Lothian Council
	Ian King	East Lothian Council
	John Mitchell	Fife Council
	Anna Herriman	Midlothian Council
	Graeme Johnstone	Scottish Borders Council
	Nicola Gill	West Lothian Council
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Alisdair Brown	SEStran
	Jess Carey	SEStran
	Angela Chambers	SEStran
	Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
	Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
	Sarah Junik	SEStran
	Sandra Lavergne	SEStran

	Beth Harley-Jepson	SEStran
	Michael Melton	SEStran
	Rachael Murphy	SEStran
	Rebecca Smith	SEStran
<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr John McMillan (Vice Chair)	East Lothian Council
	Cllr Ian Cameron	Fife Council
	Cllr Jane Cox	Scottish Borders Council
	Cllr Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
	Kate Sherry	Non-Councillor Member
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member

1. Order of Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and indicated that the order of business would be as listed in the circulated agenda.

2. Apologies for Absence

The Clerk read out the apologies which had been received, as detailed above.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A1. Minutes

The Chair highlighted that, at the meeting of the Partnership Board held on 6 December 2024, Board Member attendance had, during the meeting, fallen below that required for a quorum as detailed in Standing Order 6.6. The consequence of this was that no further decisions could be taken by the Board thereafter. The Chair further added that the only item of business which had required a decision to be made following the point at which a quorum was not present related to the Timetable of Meetings. To avoid a delay in setting meeting dates, the Partnership Director had used his delegated authority, in accordance with Standing Order 40, to approve and set these dates.

Councillor Imrie wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor John McMillan for standing in at a very late stage to Chair the SEStran Performance and Audit Committee of 28 February 2025.

Decision

- 1) That the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 6 December 2024 be approved as a correct record;
- 2) That the minute of the SEStran Performance and Audit Committee of 28 February 2025 be approved as a correct record, and
- 3) That it be noted that the Partnership Director had used his delegated authority, in accordance with Standing Order 40, to approve the Timetable of Meetings for 2025.

A2(a). Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Indicative Financial Plan 2026/27

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer seeking approval of the revenue budget for 2025/26 and presenting, for information, an indicative financial plan for 2026/27.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Iain Shaw and all other officers who continued to support the Board.

Decision

- 1) That the proposed Core budget of £852,000 for 2025/26, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- 2) That the proposed Projects budget for 2025/26, as detailed in Appendix 2(a) of the report, be approved;
- 3) That it be noted that financial planning for 2026/27 will be developed throughout 2025 for review by the Partnership Board in December 2025, and
- 4) That it be noted that the proposed budget is subject to a number of risks, and that all income and expenditure will be monitored, with updates reported to each Partnership meeting.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

A2(b). Annual Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer which presented the Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26.

Decision

That the continuation of the current arrangements, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

A2(c). Finance Officer's Report

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer which presented the third update on the financial performance of the Partnership's Core Budgets for 2024/25, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. The report also presented an analysis of financial performance to the end of January 2025.

Decision

- 1) That the forecast of a balanced Core revenue budget for 2024/25 be noted, and
- 2) That the forecast underspend on the Projects budget of £83,000, after future lease commitments are met, be noted and that the actual underspend will be confirmed at the financial year-end and carried forward to 2025/26.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

A3. GO SESTRAN

Prior to consideration of this item of business, the Chair ruled that, in accordance with Standing Order 20, in her view there had been a material change in circumstance since the decision made by the Board on this matter on 22 September 2024.

The Board considered a joint report by the Project Officer and the SEStran Consultant detailing the background to decisions which the Board had made in respect of GoSEStran, most recently in March and September 2024, and further detailing that confirmation had not been received on the availability of long-term funding for the project, which had been a criteria which the Board had determined should be met for the project to continue. The report also provided a timeline of activity that had been completed on the project to date.

Decision

- 1) That, as the Chair had ruled that there had been a material change in circumstances since the decision made by the Board at its meeting held on 22 September 2024, in accordance with Standing Order 20, the GoSEStran project and associated app be discontinued from 31 March 2025, and
- 2) That a review of the project be carried out at Performance and Audit Strategy and Delivery Oversight Sub-Group.

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

A4. Partnership Director's Update

The Partnership Director gave a presentation to the Board on (a) Equalities Outcomes, (b) Council Requisitions, (c) a Cross-Forth Ferry project, and (d) ongoing national conversations.

In reference to Equalities Outcomes, the Business Manager informed the Board that there was a statutory duty upon it to formally approve its Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equalities report and that, this required to be completed by 30 April 2025. The report was not yet available for consideration by the Board and there was not another scheduled meeting before the statutory deadline, therefore, it was proposed to hold a special meeting on Wednesday, 23 April at 2pm, to consider and, if appropriate, approve the report. The Business Manager also outlined the consultation that would take place prior to the Board's consideration.

Decision

- (1) That the Partnership Director's Update Presentation be noted, and
- (2) That a special meeting of the Board be held on 23 April 2025 at 2pm to consider the Board's Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equalities Report which required to be submitted by the statutory deadline of 30 April 2025.

(Reference – Presentation by Partnership Director, and oral update by the Business Manager, submitted)

A5. Business Plan and Annual Report

The Board considered a joint report by the Strategy Manager and the Communications and Marketing Officer informing the Board on progress of the Annual Report for financial year 2024/25 and the Business Plan for 2025/26 to 2027/28.

The Strategy Manager gave a presentation of the online tool that was available for the development of the Business Plan and confirmed that assistance was available to Board Members following the meeting if they required help with navigating the tool.

Decision

- (1) That any comments or questions which individual Board Members may have on the Annual Report could be directed to the Communications and Marketing Officer;
- (2) That any comments or questions which individual Board Members may have on the Business Plan could be directed to the Strategy Manager;
- (3) That, following publication, Board Members are encouraged to share and circulate the Annual Report to their network and contacts to help raise awareness of the work of SEStran;
- (4) That preparation work be undertaken on the presentation of information to external audiences on “SEStran @ 20” to mark the twentieth anniversary of the creation of SEStran.

(Reference – Joint report by the Strategy Manager and the Communications and Marketing Officer, submitted)

A6. Appointments to the Performance and Audit Committee and Sub-Committee

The Board considered a report by the Programme Manager seeking approval for the appointment to the Performance and Audit Committee and the Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Group, of Councillor Tom Conn, West Lothian Council, and Councillor Stephen Jenkins, City of Edinburgh Council, following nominations from each respective council in that regards.

Decision

- 1) That Councillors Conn and Jenkinson be appointed to the Performance and Audit Committee, and
- 2) That the membership and remit of the Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Group be noted.

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

A7. 20% Reduction in Car Use

The Board considered a report by the Partnership Director providing an update to the Board on developments since its last meeting and providing assurance that a revised timetable would allow interested parties to express their views as part of a future consultation process.

Decision

- 1) That it be noted that the 20% Reduction in Car Use by 2030 target was being reviewed;
- 2) That it be noted that the Route Map would now not be published until Spring 2026, and
- 3) That it be noted that local authorities, CoSLA, Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists (SCOTS) and Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) would be consulted prior to the Route Map being finalised.

(Reference – report by the Programme Director, submitted.)

A8. Asset Management Strategy

The Board considered a report by the Partnership Director seeking approval of the draft Asset Management Strategy and explaining that, as part of its External Audit of SEStran's accounts for financial year 23/24, Audit Scotland had recommended that SEStran should undertake a full review of its asset management procedures, ensuring that the asset register fully reflects the assets in use.

Decision

- 1) That the Asset Management Strategy be approved;
- 2) That the proposed Revised Asset Accounting Policy, detailed at paragraph 3.5 of the report, be approved, and
- 3) That it be noted that any further update to Accounting Policies required for adoption of International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS16) would be reported to the Board when the unaudited Annual Accounts were presented in June 2025.

(Reference – report by the Programme Director, submitted.)

B1. Communications Strategy

The Board received an update presentation from the Communications and Marketing Officer.

Decision

That the presentation by the Communications and Marketing Officer be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B2. People and Place 2025/26 Update

The Board received a report from the Programme Manager on the progress of the grant funds approved by it at its meeting held on 6 December 2024 and the updates made to the scoring and eligibility criteria as delegated to the Partnership Director by the Board at that meeting.

Decision

That the content of the report, including the changes made to the grant fund criteria under delegated authority, as detailed in Section 3 of the report, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B3. Climate Change Duties Report

The Board received a report from the Project Officer providing a summary of SEStran's carbon emissions for 2023/24, explaining any changes to the levels for the previous year, and providing a summary of the targets for 2024/25.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Project Officer, submitted)

B4. Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan

The Board received a report from the Strategy Manager informing it of progress of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Strategy Manager, submitted)

B5. People and Place Grant Awards

The Board received a report from the Programme Manager informing it of variations to the SEStran People and Place grant awards.

Decision

That the contents of the report, and the variations to the SEStran People and Place grant awards, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B6. Contracts Register

The Board received a report from the Programme Manager presenting the Partnership's Contract Register for noting, in line with a commitment to transparency in procurement and as per Contract Standing Orders.

Decision

That the Contract Register, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B7. Risk Register

The Board received a report from the Business Manager providing the quarterly update on SEStran's strategic risk register.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Business Manager, submitted)

B8. Projects and Strategy Performance

The Board received a report from the Programme Manager, which had been previously considered by the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting held on 28 February 2025, providing an update on the future reporting plans, as well as performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams in quarter 4 to date.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B9. External Audit – Annual Audit Plan 2024/25

The Board received a report from the Treasurer presenting the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for 2024/25.

Decision

That the External Audit Annual Audit Plan 2024/25, attached as an appendix to the report, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Treasurer, submitted)

At the conclusion of business, the Chair informed the Board that this meeting would be the last one which Councillor Law would be attending as she had changed her portfolio at Clackmannanshire Council. The Chair thanked Councillor Law for her attendance and support during her time on the Board.

The Chair also introduced Alistair Brown and Jess Caley who had recently been recruited as officers to SEStran.

SEStran Partnership Board Special Meeting Minutes

2.00pm, Wednesday, 23 April 2025

Online via Microsoft Teams

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Sally Pattle (Chair)	West Lothian Council
	Cllr Russell Imrie (Vice Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Cllr John McMillan (Vice Chair)	East Lothian Council
	Cllr Stephen Jenkinson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Cllr Jane Cox	Scottish Borders Council
	Cllr Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	Paul White	Non-Councillor Member
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	Alistair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Linda Bamford	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Andrew Rose (Clerk)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Jamie Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
	John Mitchell	Fife Council
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Keith Fiskien	SEStran
	Jess Carey	SEStran
	Michael Melton	SEStran
<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Denis Coyne	Clackmannanshire Council
	Cllr Iain Whyte	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Sanne Dijkstra-Downie (Vice Chair)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Derek Glen	Fife Council
	Cllr Ian Cameron	Fife Council
	Geoff Duke	Non-Councillor Member

1. Order of Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the special meeting and indicated that the order of business would be as listed in the circulated agenda.

2. Apologies for Absence

The Clerk read out the apologies which had been received, as detailed above.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A1. Equalities Outcomes 2025-2029 And Mainstreaming Report

The Board received a report which sought approval for the draft Equalities Outcomes 2025-2029 and Mainstreaming Report to enable publication by the statutory date of 30 April 2025, as required under the Equality Act 2010.

The Partnership Director reminded the Board that it had been requested to complete an online survey in relation to its gender composition, and, indicated that the deadline for returns had now been extended to 28 April and asked all Board members to complete and return the survey.

Decision

That the Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 and Mainstreaming Report be approved and that delegated authority be provided to SEStran officers to finalise the report with gender balance data, prior to the publication deadline of 30 April 2025.

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

A2. People and Place Grant Awards

The Board considered a report by the Programme Manager seeking to make one grant under the People and Place Programme, that exceeded the value permitted for this to be dealt with under the Partnership Director's delegated authority.

The proposed grant was for £1,041,079 to the City of Edinburgh Council.

Decision

That the award of £1,041,079 to the City of Edinburgh Council under the People and Place Programme be approved.

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

PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

**Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
on Friday 6 June 2025
1.00pm**

PRESENT:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor McMillan (Chair)	East Lothian Council
	Councillor Glen	Fife Council
	Councillor Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Councillor Jenkinson	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Councillor Conn	West Lothian Council
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Jess Carey	SEStran
	Angela Chambers	SEStran
	Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
	Callum Finlayson Cranshaw	Audit Scotland
	Christopher Gardner	Audit Scotland
	Andrew Henderson (Clerk)	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Colin McCurley	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Michael Melton	SEStran
	Rachel Murphy	SEStran
	Iain Shaw	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Karunamuni Nandana Silva	The City of Edinburgh Council

Action by

A1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Decision

To appoint Councillor McMillan as the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

A2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

A3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Imrie (Midlothian Council) Callum Hay and Simon Hindshaw

A4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

A5. MINUTES

- 1) To approve the minute of the Performance and Audit Committee of Friday 28th February 2025 as a correct record; and
- 2) To note the minute of the Project And Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup of Thursday 24 April 2025.

A6. UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2024/25 & TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

The unaudited Annual Accounts were presented in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014. The audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course. Thereafter the Treasury Management report 2024/25 was presented in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Sector.

Decision

- 1) To note the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2024/25 and refer the Unaudited Accounts to the Partnership Board for review;
- 2) To note the annual Treasury Management report for 2024/25;
- 3) To note the audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course; and
- 4) To note that further explanations in relation to underspends would be presented to the next meeting.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A7. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2024/2025

An update on the outcomes of the 2024/25 SEStran internal audit of the People and Place Funding Proposals, progress with the completion of actions agreed as part of previous audits was presented. Thereafter officers requested the Committee's input on potential areas for inclusion in the planned 2025/26 audit.

Decision

- 1) To note the outcomes of the 2024/25 internal audit of the SEStran People and Place Funding Proposals, including IA findings and recommendations and agreed management actions and implementation dates
- 2) To note the progress with completion of management actions from previous audits
- 3) To note that members could provide feedback to officers in relation to key risks or any areas of concern that the Committee would like Internal Audit to consider including in the 2025/26 audit plan.

(Reference – report by the Chief Internal Auditor, City of Edinburgh Council, submitted)

A8. RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The quarterly update on SEStran's strategic risk register was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report; and
- 2) To note that a final version of the Risk Register will be referred to the Partnership Board for noting.

(Reference – report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A9. PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE

The quarter 4 performance for projects and strategy was presented. An update on the future reporting plans as well as performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams in Quarter 4 was provided.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report, and;
- 2) To note that officers would explore ways of reporting HR and Health and Safety Policies to the Committee to ensure that scrutiny was robust.

(Reference – report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

A10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 12th September 2025

Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25 and Treasury Management report 2024/25

1.	Introduction
1.1	This report presents:
1.1.1	the unaudited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025
1.1.2	the annual Treasury Management report for 2024/25.
2.	Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25
2.1	The unaudited Annual Accounts are submitted to the Partnership in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014. The accounts are subject to audit and the audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course.
2.2	The unaudited Annual Accounts are appended at Appendix 1.
2.3	The Treasurer's opinion on the effectiveness of the Partnership's system of internal financial control is provided within the Annual Governance Statement on pages 13 to 15. The Treasurer's opinion is informed by the work of Internal Audit and managers in the Partnership.
2.4	The Management Commentary is on pages 2 to 11 of the Annual Accounts. This highlights key aspect of financial performance during the year. The unaudited underspend is £350,000. This comprises of underspends of £86,000 on the Core revenue budget and of £264,000 on the Projects budget. The Core budget underspend is stated after absorbing the reduction of £39,000 in Scottish Government grant funding received in 2024/25. Under the Partnership's Reserves Policy, it is planned to carry these balances forward to 2025/26.
3.	Reserves
3.1	In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated reserve. At 1st April 2024, the Partnership had an unallocated General Fund Reserve of £135,000.
3.2	Subject to confirmation of the audited outturn position, the Partnership will be asked to approve carry forward of £86,000 of the Core budget underspend. This will increase the unallocated reserve to £221,000.

3.3	Slippage of £264,000 on project delivery in 2024/25 will be managed by establishment of an earmarked balance in 2024/25, in accordance with the Partnership's Reserves Policy.																												
4.	Treasury Management report 2024/25																												
4.1	The Partnership has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Sector. Under the code, an annual report on Treasury Management must be submitted to the Partnership at the end of each financial year.																												
4.2	The Partnership 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 and is offset by expenditure undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Partnership. Interest is given on month end net indebtedness between the Council and the Partnership.																												
4.3	For 2024/25, interest was calculated in accordance with the (withdrawn) Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee's Guidance Note 2 on Interest on Revenue Balances.																												
4.4	Net end of month balances for 2024/25 are shown below.																												
	<table> <tr> <th></th><th>Balance due to SEStran(+ve) /due by SEStran (-ve)</th></tr> <tr> <td>Opening Balance</td><td>202,832</td></tr> <tr> <td>30 April 2024</td><td>679,214</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 May 2023</td><td>548,765</td></tr> <tr> <td>30 June 2024</td><td>662,946</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 July 2024</td><td>833,285</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 August 2024</td><td>794,159</td></tr> <tr> <td>30 September 2024</td><td>711,990</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 October 2024</td><td>1,437,367</td></tr> <tr> <td>30 November 2024</td><td>1,229,406</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 December 2024</td><td>796,046</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 January 2025</td><td>1,818,931</td></tr> <tr> <td>28 February 2025</td><td>1,279,167</td></tr> <tr> <td>31 March 2025</td><td>1,030,395</td></tr> </table>		Balance due to SEStran(+ve) /due by SEStran (-ve)	Opening Balance	202,832	30 April 2024	679,214	31 May 2023	548,765	30 June 2024	662,946	31 July 2024	833,285	31 August 2024	794,159	30 September 2024	711,990	31 October 2024	1,437,367	30 November 2024	1,229,406	31 December 2024	796,046	31 January 2025	1,818,931	28 February 2025	1,279,167	31 March 2025	1,030,395
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4.5	Interest is calculated on the average monthly balance. The interest rate applied was 4.824%, giving an interest payment of £44,197.																												
5	Recommendations																												
	It is recommended that the Partnership notes:																												
5.1	the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2024/25;																												
5.2	the annual Treasury Management report for 2024/25;																												
5.3	the audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course.																												

Richard Lloyd-Bithell

Treasurer

13th June 2025

Appendix

Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25

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.

**The South East of Scotland
Transport Partnership
(SESTRAN)**

**Unaudited
Annual Accounts**

2024/2025

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

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The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary

1. Basis of Accounts

The Partnership prepares its Annual Accounts in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. The Code of Practice is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

2. Statutory Background

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN) was established on 1st December 2005 under the Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005.

The Partnership's main source of funding is an annual revenue grant from Transport Scotland. Under Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, the net expenses of SEStran, after allowing for the government grant and any other income, are met by its constituent councils. The constituent councils are City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

In accordance with Section 122 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, the Partnership has established a General Fund reserve.

3. Corporate Strategy

Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) have a statutory remit which includes developing a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) in partnership with member local authorities and other stakeholders, monitoring and reporting on progress of the strategy's implementation.

The current RTS - SEStran 2035 - was approved by Scottish Ministers in March 2023 and replaces the Regional Transport Strategy 2015 - 2025 Refresh published in July 2015. It addresses the transport problems and issues being experienced in the SEStran region.

The SEStran region covers 8,400km², which is just over 10% of Scotland's landmass. It has 11,672 km of roads and over 870,000 cars. It is hugely diverse and includes areas which fall into every one of the Scottish Government's six-fold urban-rural classification. The total population of the SEStran area was estimated as 1,619,460 in 2022 (National Records of Scotland mid-year population estimate 2024). The majority of the population is concentrated in the centre of the SEStran area with large, sparsely populated rural areas to the north, south, and east particularly the remote rural areas in north and east Fife, Scottish Borders and East Lothian. The greatest concentration of population is within the City of Edinburgh, which accounts for approximately 32% of the total SEStran region population.

The new RTS sits within a policy hierarchy which spans the national, regional and local levels. In particular, the RTS has been developed within the policy framework provided by the National Transport Strategy 2 which was published in February 2020, and set out four strategic priorities, as well as defining a Sustainable Travel Hierarchy. These four priorities and hierarchy have been used to guide the development of this RTS.

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

The 4 key strategy objectives outlined in the RTS are:

- Transitioning to a sustainable, post-carbon, transport system
- Facilitating healthier travel options
- Transforming public transport connectivity and access across the region
- Supporting safe, sustainable and efficient movement of people and freight across the region.

Work to deliver the RTS takes various forms including:

- Collaborating with local authority partners to ensure that their Local Transport Strategies, Development Plans and related strategies or policies, all align with the RTS
- Leading on the development of strategies to help partners to tackle transport issues which can be more effectively addressed at a regional level
- Influencing senior stakeholders such as Scottish and UK governments, Transport Scotland, local authority partners, community planning partnerships, other RTPs, NHS, transport operators, and transport users' groups
- Building test cases for, and piloting, innovative solutions to transport problems, particularly where this would not be feasible for individual local authorities
- Seeking innovative funding mechanisms to support the delivery of priority projects
- Supporting on-the-ground delivery of regional projects by working with partners, consultants etc to develop detailed project plans and, where relevant, funding delivery of these plans.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

4. Risks and Uncertainties

The principal risks and uncertainties faced by the Partnership have traditionally fallen into two main categories - financial and transport governance. However, the increasing prevalence of cyber attacks means that cyber security has also been identified as a major risk to the organisation.

Financial Risks

Traditionally, the Partnership has had 4 main sources of funding:

- Annual grant funding from Transport Scotland
- Requisition from each of the eight local authority partners
- Funding for specific projects or activities e.g. Active Travel
- Funding from the European Union for collaborative projects with partners in other EU states.

The annual grant from Transport Scotland remained at the same level for over a decade, but it was reduced by 5% for 2024/25 in line with reductions across the Scottish Government. This reduced level of funding has continued into 2025/26. There is a real risk that there will be further reductions to this grant, which is designed to cover the Partnership's core costs, in 2026/27 and beyond.

SEStran is in regular contact with Transport Scotland to ensure that the scope and impact of the Partnership's work is recognised, valued and that the Scottish Government is aware of the additional benefits the Partnership would deliver if funding is increased.

Council requisitions have reduced by 10% over the last decade. Transport Scotland has encouraged RTPs to increase the requisitions and it is planned to seek an increase of 10% for the 2026/27 financial year. With council budgets already under significant pressure, this increase is likely to meet with significant resistance but the Partnership are confident that it can demonstrate a significant multiplier effect on current requisitions i.e. that, for every £1 spent with SEStran, the local authority receives benefits well in excess of £1.

Funding for specific projects has accounted for as much as 50% of the Partnership's overall income in recent years. As it not usually announced until part-way through each financial year, it does not form part of the budget process. Due to Scottish Government financial constraints, there was no such funding in 2024/25 and there is unlikely to be much, if any, in 2025/26.

European Union funding ceased entirely during 2023/24, primarily due to the exit of the UK from the EU. There is a more positive outlook though, as UK organisations are eligible to bid for EU Horizon funding. SEStran will work in partnership with other UK and EU organisations to pursue Horizon funding.

By far the biggest change to RTP's funding, has resulted from Transport Scotland's Active Travel Transformation Programme. This has resulted in RTPs becoming responsible for the disbursement of all government-funded active travel behaviour change projects within their region since April 2024. Now called 'the People and Place Programme', previously, this role was undertaken by the third sector.

In 2025/26, the Partnership will receive an additional £6.3m of grant funding for People and Place. Most will be passed through to local authorities or active travel delivery partners whose projects qualify for funding under the new grant standing orders (SOs) and funding processes which have been approved by the Partnership. These SOs and processes were the subject of the 2024/25 Internal Audit, and are being updated to incorporate further improvements to controls.

For 2025/26, certain tightly defined 'sustainable travel' activities are eligible for this 'active travel' funding. These include Real Time Passenger Information systems and signage, Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility Hubs. In addition, the scheme now incorporates funds which were previously directly awarded to community organisations to sustain them through the transition.

The Partnership is also proactively seeking additional sources of funding - particularly from a number of funds aimed at innovation and digital innovation, and had some success, in collaboration with partners, who received c.£0.189m through the Department for Transport's Rural Transport Accelerator to help support one of the Partnership's priority programmes.

Over the past 2 or 3 years, costs have been subject to the highest level of inflation for a generation. Although the situation is improving, there is a real risk that staff salaries and pensions could increase beyond budgeted levels. The Partnership mitigates this risk by:

- Making prudent planning assumptions
- Monitoring income and expenditure on a monthly basis and adjusting expenditure to mitigate against overspend

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

4. Risks and Uncertainties (*continued*)

Financial Risks

- Holding an appropriate cash reserve to be used in the event that an overspend cannot be prevented by other controls.

The Partnership's long-term financial sustainability was assessed by the City of Edinburgh Council's Internal Audit team in 2023/24. Apart from recommended changes to financial and budgeting processes, the audit report was very positive. A Financial Planning procedure has been developed to address the issues identified during the audit. The plan includes the implementation of measures such as scenario planning and sensitivity exercises as part of the budgeting process.

Transport Governance

Transport governance refers to the respective roles and responsibilities of Transport Scotland, the 7 Regional Transport Partnerships, 32 local authorities and selected other partners.

Over recent years, there has been much discussion. Successive independent reports have proposed that Transport Scotland should devolve much of its workload to other organisations which, due to better understanding of regional or local requirements, may be better placed to prioritise and deliver projects in their region or local authority area.

This is both a risk and an opportunity to the Partnership. The recent transfer of People and Place responsibilities indicates that Transport Scotland supports a regional approach to the governance of at least some transport functions and that it has a high degree of confidence in RTPs. SEStran is aiming to build on this by actively engaging with Transport Scotland about other matters where it believes it can make a significant positive impact.

In addition, Transport Scotland is planning to review transport governance, resources permitting, in the near future. The joint RTPs, COSLA and SCOTS are likely to form part of a working group reporting to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

Although the SEStran and Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region (CRD) regions are not entirely contiguous (Clackmannanshire and Falkirk are not in the CRD region), as a result of the Concordat agreed by SEStran and the CRD team in 2023, the two organisations work very closely together and the CRD has adopted the RTS as the masterplan for transport in the city region.

The CRD is in discussions with both the Scottish and UK Governments about the next steps for its region. The CRD team is keen to be given more responsibility and powers to ensure that transport infrastructure meets the needs of the region in future years. SEStran fed into and agreed the contents of a letter from the CRD to both governments.

Cyber Security

Public sector entities have increasingly become prime targets for cyber-attacks and data breaches, which can compromise sensitive information and disrupt services.

SEStran has contracted an Information Technology (IT) service company to provide support for all aspects of its IT service including cyber security.

This includes provision of technological defences against such attacks, and staff training to ensure that staff are fully informed about attacks using social engineering or common messaging systems such as email or SMS. phishing, vishing etc. SEStran is subject to an annual Cyber Essentials Plus audit and is fully accredited.

The Partnership also receives daily threat updates and weekly vulnerability emails from the Scottish/National Cyber Security Centre, and a monthly in-person visit by an IT Consultant/Engineer as part of the IT service contract.

5. Results for the Year

The net revenue budget of the Partnership in 2024/25 was £0.972m, funded by an anticipated Scottish Government grant of £0.782m and Council Contributions of £0.190m. Following Partnership Board approval of the 2024/25 revenue budget on 15th March 2024, the Scottish Government advised a grant reduction of £39,000. In summary:

- The Partnership had a Core budget underspend of £125,000. £39,000 of this underspend was required to manage the reduction in Scottish Government grant funding received in 2024/25, resulting in a net Core budget underspend of £86,000.
- After inclusion of carry forward of £0.187m from the 2023/24 Projects budget underspend, the Partnership had a Projects budget underspend of £264,000 in 2024/25. A further £0.084m of Projects expenditure is carried forward to 2025/26 to meet future lease commitments for an electronic bicycle scheme.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

5. Results for the Year (*continued*)

A summary of the 2024/25 financial results is shown in the table below.

	Revised Budget £'000	Earmarked Reserves from 23/24 £'000	Total Available Funding £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance from Total Funding £'000
Core Budget	901	0	901	820	(125)
Core Budget - Interest Received	0	0	0	(44)	
Revenue Projects - Expenditure	6,023	241	6,264	5,191	(264)
Revenue Projects - Income	(5,952)	(54)	(6,006)	(5,197)	
Revenue Projects - Electronic Bicycle Lease	0	106	106	22	(84)
Total Expenditure before Government Grant and Council Contributions	972	293	1,265	792	(473)
Government Grant	(782)	0	(782)	(743)	39
Constituent Council Requisitions	(190)	0	(190)	(190)	0
Total Government Grant and Council Contributions 2024/25	(972)	0	(972)	(933)	39

Core budget

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 principal favourable variances on the Core budget arose due to:

- £45,000 of software hosting costs (Novus FX) being recharged to the Projects budget
- £41,000 of employee costs being recharged to the Projects budget
- £44,000 of interest received on revenue balances (£44,000), reflecting the additional cash balances that the Partnership benefited from through the People and Place Programme.

£39,000 of the Core budget underspend was required to manage the reduction in Scottish Government grant funding received in 2024/25, resulting in a net Core budget underspend of £86,000.

Projects budget

The Partnership incurred expenditure of £5.191m on revenue projects and received external grants and contributions of £5.197m. After inclusion of carry forward of £0.187m from the 2023/24 Projects budget underspend, the Partnership had a Projects budget underspend of £264,000 in 2024/25.

A further £0.084m of Projects expenditure is carried forward to 2025/26 to meet future lease commitments for an electronic bicycle scheme.

The principal favourable variances on the Projects revenue budget arose on the following projects:

- £122,000 - Bus Strategy Development
- £34,000 - Mobility as a Service
- £26,000 - GO e-Bike
- £25,000 - Sustainable Travel.

In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated reserve. At 1st April 2024, the Partnership had an unallocated General Fund Reserve of £135,000. Slippage on project delivery from 2024/25 to 2025/26 will be managed by establishment of an earmarked balance, in accordance with the Partnership's Reserves Policy.

Treasury Management

The Partnership has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Sector. The Partnership 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 and is offset by expenditure undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of the Partnership. Interest is given on month end net indebtedness between the Council and the Partnership. For 2024/25, interest of £44,197 was calculated in accordance with the (withdrawn) Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee's Guidance Note 2 on Interest on Revenue Balances. The role of Treasury Management in the management of financial risks is referenced in Note 25.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

5. Results for the Year (*continued*)

Non Financial Results

During 2024/25, the Partnership progressed work on a number of exciting projects and on the development of strategies essential to facilitate delivery of the RTS.

People and Place

In 2024/25, Transport Scotland set out their new regional approach to funding active travel behaviour change across Scotland, passing funding to each of Scotland's seven RTPs. The programme supports activity that gives people the knowledge, skills and confidence to choose to walk, wheel and cycle more often.

Following this, the Partnership developed the People and Place Plan and through this distributed £5.3m of funding to 18 delivery partners, including the region's eight local authorities.

Schools and young people

This theme focuses in and around schools, and on projects that deliver holistic solutions to create an environment where active travel choices are not only an option, but the most desirable way for young people and families to travel.

The Partnership funded:

- Two regional projects to work intensively with schools to support young people to choose active travel more often
- The WOW project, allowing 49 schools across the region to encourage more children to walk to school
- Six local authorities to deliver a range of cycle storage improvements in their primary and secondary schools
- Six local authorities to provide access to bikes for young people
- Fife Council to purchase 13 adaptive cycles for young people
- A bike library for children to loan bikes for free in Edinburgh.

Accessibility and inclusion

This theme is for projects that create opportunities for everyone to make the choice to travel actively.

The Partnership funded:

- Seven projects to audit street / areas with high pedestrian, wheeling and cycling potential and remove barriers where needed
- The creation of an active travel hub in East Lothian
- Two organisations to deliver walking and cycling activities for their local communities to encourage participation in active travel
- An access to cycles project across the region to support cycle repairs, bike recycling and purchase of new cycles.

Workplaces

The workplace theme is for projects which are focussed in and around places of work (including further and higher education), that make active travel choices a realistic solution for commuting.

The Partnership funded:

- TravelKnowHow Scotland to support employers in the region enable employees to travel by more sustainable modes
- NHS Fife to improve cycle storage facilities and to set-up an e-bike hire scheme for staff
- Midlothian Council's project to encourage staff to walk more with a series of lunchtime led walks and council wide step count challenges
- East Lothian Council to install additional cycle storage facilities for staff.

Capacity and capability building

This theme is for projects that build the knowledge base and delivery capacity and capability of the sector itself (including SEStran, local authorities, the third sector and beyond).

The Partnership funded:

- A strategy officer to work with Falkirk Council to develop a comprehensive behaviour change strategy for active travel
- A shared learning workshop for all local authorities in our region
- The creation of a public dashboard to share information on funding distribution and project delivery.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

5. Non Financial Results (*continued*)

People and Place (*continued*)

Capacity and capability building (*continued*)

The Partnership also:

- Organised a visit for the Cabinet Secretary for Transport to funded projects in Edinburgh
- Worked with partners to create a future delivery plan for People and Place
- Commissioned an evaluation of the 2024/25 People and Place programme delivery.

Go e-Bike

Go e-Bike enables people to access e-bikes and bike share initiatives through a variety of ways, including e-bike trials, bike share initiatives and bike training and bike maintenance training.

e-bike trials

During 2024/25 e-bike trials took place at East Lothian Council, St John's Hospital and Persimmon Homes in West Lothian, and at Skills Development Scotland in Edinburgh. The trials are supported in partnership with West Lothian Bike Library and gives access to a fleet of e-bikes for staff to use for four weeks.

Bike share

During the year, the Partnership began trialling Brompton bike lockers in two locations. The lockers provide access to Brompton's folding bikes, which can be hired for up to 60 days at a time. The bike lockers are at Sheriffhall park and ride in Edinburgh and Queen Margaret University in East Lothian.

Bike training and maintenance

The Partnership provided cycle ride leader training to staff at the Social Bite Village in Edinburgh to support the use of the e-bike fleet with both staff and residents. The Partnership also delivered bike maintenance and cargo bike training to Porty Community Energy to support volunteers with the e-bikes available to loan.

Go SEStran

Go SEStran was a pilot regional journey planning app. It has been designed to prioritise sustainable travel. This approach is often referred to as Mobility as a Service (MaaS). The Partnership received funding from Paths for All to run a pilot to assess the viability of MaaS in the South-East of Scotland and have been working with Tactran, a neighbouring Regional Transport Partnership, who are developing similar pilots in their region.

The Partnership's focus during 2024/25 was to investigate opportunities for the app to offer more to users, including signposting to more payment methods, integrating more features and targeting specific user groups. Alongside this, the Partnership has been developing VoyagAR, an app focused on providing digital support to users. This includes augmented reality providing visuals during the journey, and chat support for carers, friends and family.

Unfortunately, due to uncertain future funding and low user numbers, a decision to end the pilot was taken at the March 2025 meeting of the Partnership Board.

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

To help support the move to electric vehicles (EVs), the Partnership has been working with seven of the eight local authorities in the region (East Lothian Council is working independently) and Dumfries and Galloway (the SWestrans region) to develop documentation and explore opportunities to regionally procure public EV charging infrastructure. The aim is to create efficiencies by creating a bigger market for suppliers in the final tender process, and to support a joined-up network for the public.

The beginning of the year saw the Partnership putting into place the formal governance structure needed to run the project, along with the procurement of a consultant to develop documentation and support local authorities. The Partnership worked with Transport Scotland to identify the grant available to each local authority and understand the available budget.

The second half of the year was focused on agreeing a lead local authority (City of Edinburgh) and running regular steering group and working group meetings to determine the best route forward.

Real-time passenger information

Reliable real time passenger information is vital if the Partnership is to encourage people to move towards more sustainable travel methods rather than use their car. The Partnership has worked with local authorities and operators in the region to provide real time, and accurate, information for bus users. The screens can also be used to advertise local campaigns and information.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

5. Non Financial Results (*continued*)

Real-time passenger information (*continued*)

A focus for the year has been the integration of live information from Lothian Buses to the network of screens across the region. The Partnership has worked with Journeo to provide training for local authorities so new staff members can report faults, track the status of screens, add imagery and adverts to screens, and track performance.

The Partnership was pleased to be able to use the screens in advance of Storm Eowyn in January 2025 to inform public that no bus or tram services would be running during the region's red weather warning – thus preventing people from unnecessarily exposing themselves to the storm.

Thistle Assistance

Thistle Assistance is an initiative to help people with disabilities to feel safer and more comfortable when using public transport. The free Thistle Assistance card and app are recognised by many public transport operators across Scotland, and the initiative allows people, in an easy and subtle way, to request the extra support they would like. The Partnership manages and operate Thistle Assistance for the whole of Scotland, and on behalf of the other RTPs.

The focus for Thistle Assistance has been to understand how the Thistle Assistance card and app are currently being used and where improvements may be needed. To do this, the Partnership worked with Disability Equality Scotland and distributed a questionnaire to their members. The Partnership also promoted the questionnaire more widely across our own channels. The results of this work will enable the Partnership to improve Thistle Assistance going forward.

The Partnership has also been focusing on marketing Thistle Assistance, working with a media buying agency to advertise to target audiences across a range of digital channels. This has resulted in an unprecedented level of demand for cards, and the work is currently being evaluated to determine whether the benefits to users justify the costs involved.

Transport to Healthcare (TtH)

Getting to and from an appointment at a hospital, at the local doctor's surgery or other healthcare setting can be difficult for many people. The Partnership is working with healthcare partners across the region to better understand the issues and find ways to tackle them. By connecting key stakeholders, the Partnership hopes to enable positive and educational conversations, leading to more joined-up and strategic thinking on this complex subject.

During the first half of the year, the Partnership's focus was on developing relationships with the Partnership's four health boards (Fife, Lothian, Forth Valley and Borders), NHS Assure and the Scottish Ambulance Service. Following this, the Partnership set up a transport to health project group and began meeting regularly to share best practices and discuss current challenges.

During the second half of the year, the Partnership began working with Public Health Scotland to grow engagement and knowledge of the key relationship between transport and health. The Partnership presented work at the Public Health Scotland conference in November 2024 and held a joint stakeholder event in February 2025. This event brought together transport, planning and public health colleagues from across the region to address shared ambitions to improve health, take climate action and reduce inequalities.

Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan

The Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan provides a mechanism to assess and prioritise regional projects required over the next ten years to realise the ambitions of the Regional Transport Strategy, supporting the economic and net-zero goals of the Regional Prosperity Framework. The Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan supports the delivery of a transport network that:

- Takes climate action
- Addresses inequalities and accessibility
- Improves health and wellbeing
- Supports sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- Improves safety and resilience.

The Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan complements Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2), highlighting projects within and outside the plan that contribute to the Partnership's vision for transport in South East Scotland.

Over the course of the year, the Partnership has been working closely with colleagues from both the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region Deal and local authorities to develop a matrix of regional projects, agree scoring and weighting that brings parity across our eight authorities. Those priorities are now plotted with Power BI and GIS mapping to demonstrate how rich the region is with opportunities.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

5. Non Financial Results (*continued*)

Regional Bus Strategy

The Partnership wants a world-class bus service for the SEStran region. Pre-covid, almost half of residents in the region used a bus at least once a month. The impact of covid saw this reduce drastically, but data shows that bus patronage is building. 2024/25 saw the beginning of the process to shape a bus strategy for the region.

The Partnership has commissioned consultants to develop a regional bus strategy to:

- Explore the current state of the bus network in the SEStran region and develop a problem statement
- Identify gaps caused by the withdrawal of services or by the development of new housing schemes, destinations, etc
- Consider the potential of the bus provisions of the Roads (Scotland) Act 2019 to improve the situation. These include bus service improvement partnerships, municipally owned bus services, bus franchising, and data sharing
- Propose a set of recommendations to address the problem statement.

At the beginning of the year, the Partnership procured consultants Stantec and Systra and engaged the Partnership's local authorities and bus operators in the bus strategy development process. With ongoing engagement from the local authorities, bus operators, Partnership Board and a group from our Integrated Mobility Forum, the Partnership has worked through a Case for Change and consulted on draft strategy policies and actions.

Freight

As set out in the Regional Transport Strategy, the Partnership will support, where appropriate, the development of new or enhanced rail freight services in the SEStran region. The Partnership is currently exploring an innovative idea to incorporate freight on trams in Edinburgh. The Partnership is also looking at how the SEStran region can support improved road freight services with better driver facilities and using non-traditional fuel for HGVs and LGVs as there is a transition to a post carbon transport system.

During the year, the Partnership worked to achieve funding for two proposals:

- Access to goods proposal in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland
- Edinburgh Tram for Freight proposal - part of the wider Freight and Urban System Integration for Optimised Networks (otherwise known as FUSION), which aims to cut average travel delays by 30%, reduce transport energy consumption, and lower greenhouse gas emissions through simulations and pilot programmes.

Unfortunately, due to a very competitive funding market, the Partnership has not yet been successful in securing funds, but will continue to explore opportunities to improve freight transport in our region.

The Partnership is also working with the Forth Green Freeport partners on enhanced freight links between Rosyth and Alloa.

Rail

The rail network has an important role to play in helping people travel sustainably around the South-East of Scotland. The Partnership's work includes exploring how improvements to the rail network can help people travel in a more sustainable way. This can include more direct through-services between locations, reducing the need for interchange on existing routes, and increased frequencies on particular routes or at key times of the day.

The main focus of the Partnership's rail work during 2024/25 has been supporting the Newburgh community in Fife in the quest to get the railway station in the town reinstated, and working with the community in Winchburgh, through their monthly steering group, on the case for a station in the town following substantial house building and development.

Newburgh

During the year, and in response to comments from Transport Scotland, the Partnership completed work to enhance the existing STAG appraisal, including a stakeholder workshop. This has now been submitted to Transport Scotland for review.

Winchburgh

The Winchburgh work is progressing with both the development of the business case and the design of the new station. The Partnership is a member of the steering group, which meets monthly.

6. Future Developments

The Partnership's Business Plan for 2025/26 builds further on the work undertaken in 2024/25 and introduces new projects and approaches to drive forward delivery of the RTS.

Regional Bus Strategy

Work will continue throughout 2025/26, with an Options Appraisal and public consultation exercise, ahead of the complete strategy being published, subject to Board approval, in September 2025. This will be followed by a route map demonstrating how to organise and realise the strategy's suggested actions.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

6. Future Developments (*continued*)

RTS Delivery Plan

Building on the prior year's success, the Partnership will take a decision about the best way to illustrate RTS priorities; whether that be as a prioritised list a multi-year route map of interventions. In either case, the effort will form the basis for funding conversations with stakeholders including the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland.

The Partnership expects to procure external consulting report to undertake this task.

People and Place Plan

To deliver People and Place in 2025/26 and onwards, the Partnership has developed a Delivery Plan that establishes the regional priorities for change, how funding will be prioritised, and how the Partnership will work with local authorities and delivery partners to provide a holistic approach to support broader transport outcomes. SEStran will continue to work with partners to review progress annually, learn lessons from robust monitoring and evaluation, and make changes as required.

In 2025/26, SEStran's People and Place delivery will build on work in 2024/25, as well as incorporating changes to the programme such as including sustainable transport alongside active travel. The programme will:

- Increase the proportion of active and sustainable journeys in the region
- Increase awareness of the benefits of active and sustainable travel to encourage future behaviour change
- Increase the use of active and sustainable travel modes among underrepresented groups in the region who might face additional barriers
- Collaborate with local authorities and third-sector partners to strengthen capacity and capability in active and sustainable travel.

Its focus will be on travel for functional journeys though changed travel habits for leisure may also be supported where this can be demonstrated to contribute to regional health and/or economic development objectives.

The People and Place budget will be split across five funding areas, with the majority of the budget allocated to the Regional Priority Intervention Fund, alongside funding for Local Authorities and community groups.

Travel to Healthcare Strategy

As detailed earlier, lack of travel options is cited as one of the main reasons for people missing healthcare appointments, and this is likely to be worse in rural areas with higher levels of transport poverty. The Mobility and Access Commission produced a series of recommendations to address this in the Transport to Health and Social Care report in 2019.

Since then the Scottish Government's Primary Care team has produced an action plan to tackle this issue, but the plan lacks detail, misses opportunities to capitalise on existing assets, and progress has been, at best, very slow.

Therefore SEStran will establish a programme to develop a TtH strategy in the region. The programme will now build on the network that has been established to build a case for change, outline options appraisal, detailed options appraisal, and final business case.

It is anticipated that an implementation plan will then be developed and mobilised, but as this is beyond the scope of the initial programme, it will be subject to further approval, and is likely to take place between late 2026 and 2028.

Rail Strategy and Freight Strategy

Given the importance of passenger rail to achieve modal shift to more a more sustainable means of travelling by encouraging people to use trains instead of cars for both utility and leisure journeys, it is vital that the SEStran region has a carefully thought out Rail Strategy that supports the enormous scale of development and population growth in the region.

Additionally, freight transport accounts for a significant proportion of the region's carbon emissions. It is important that the Partnership is able to gather data on freight movements into, within and out of the region, and to examine the potential to move it from road to rail, or to move it from HGVs or vans to more sustainable forms of transport such as cargo bikes or trams.

These strategies will form part of a holistic approach to delivering a number of key pillars in the RTS. The emerging strategies on bus, rail, active travel, interchanges / mobility hubs, and freight will be developed in such a way that they form a comprehensive sustainable travel strategy for the region.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

Management Commentary (*continued*)

7. Certification

It is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the Annual Accounts, given ongoing Regional Transport Partnership grant funding provided by Scottish Ministers under Section 70 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 and constituent councils obligation to meet the net expenses of the Partnership under Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Partnership's Responsibilities

The Partnership is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that the proper officer has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Partnership, that officer is the Treasurer;
- to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of its resources and safeguard its assets;
- to ensure the Annual Accounts are prepared in accordance with legislation (The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014) and so far as is compatible with that legislation, in accordance with proper accounting practices (section 12 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003);
- to approve the Annual Accounts.

The Treasurer's Responsibilities

The Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the Partnership's Annual Accounts in accordance with proper practices as required by legislation and as set out in the CIPFA / LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom ('the Code').

In preparing the Annual Accounts, the Treasurer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- complied with legislation;
- complied with the Local Authority Accounting Code (in so far as it is compatible with legislation).

The Treasurer has also:

- kept adequate accounting records which were up to date;
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

I certify that the Annual Accounts give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Partnership at the reporting date and the transactions of the Partnership for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Treasurer: RICHARD LLOYD-BITHELL, CPFA _____ Date signed:

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

1. Scope of Responsibility

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

The Partnership is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and appropriate standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently, effectively and ethically. The Partnership also has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are carried out.

In discharging these overall responsibilities Elected Members and Senior Officers are responsible for implementing proper arrangements for the governance of the Partnership's affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Partnership has approved and adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance which is consistent with appropriate corporate governance principles and reflects the requirements of the "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)".

This Statement explains how the Partnership delivers good governance and reviews the effectiveness of these arrangements. It also includes a statement on internal financial control in accordance with proper practice.

The Partnership's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016).

2. The Partnership's Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Partnership is directed and controlled, and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and influences the community. It enables the Partnership to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The framework reflects the arrangements in place to meet the six supporting principles of effective corporate governance:

- Focusing on the purpose of the Partnership and on outcomes for the community, and creating and implementing a vision for the local area;
- Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles;
- Promoting values for the Partnership and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour;
- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk;
- Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective;
- Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

A significant part of the governance framework is the system of internal control which is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and manage the risks to the achievement of the Partnership's policies, aims and objectives. These are defined in the Partnership's Business Plan, which is updated annually. This enables the Partnership to manage its key risks efficiently, effectively, economically and ethically.

The Partnership aims for compliance with Public Sector Equality Duties, including Scottish Specific Duties.

Within the overall control arrangements the system of internal financial control is intended to ensure that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period. It is based on a framework of regular management information, financial regulations, administrative procedures and management supervision.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25 (*continued*)

2. The Partnership's Governance Framework (*continued*)

While the system of internal control is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level it cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance of effectiveness.

3. Determining the Partnership's purpose, its vision for the local area and intended outcomes for the Community

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

The Business Plan defines how to implement the aims of this strategy and the Annual Report provides a report of performance against objectives, targets and performance indicators as outlined in the Regional Transport Strategy.

4. Review of Effectiveness

The Partnership has put in place arrangements, detailed in the Local Code, for monitoring each element of the framework and providing evidence of compliance. A Principal Officer within the Partnership has been nominated to review the effectiveness of the Local Code.

The review of the effectiveness of its governance framework, including the system of internal financial control is informed by:

- the work of Internal Audit on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Partnership's control environment, governance and risk management frameworks;
- the Partnership Director's Certificate of Assurance on internal control;
- the operation and monitoring of controls by Partnership managers;
- the External Auditors in their Annual Audit Letter and other reports; and
- other inspection agencies comments and reports.

Through the year Elected Members and Officers have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. These review mechanisms include:

- **The Partnership Board**, which provides strategic leadership, determines policy aims and objectives and takes executive decisions not delegated to officers. It provides political accountability for the Partnership's performance;
- **The Performance and Audit Committee**, which demonstrates the Partnership's commitment to the principles of good governance, undertaking the core functions of an audit committee as identified in Audit Committees: Practice Guidance for Local Authorities and Policy (CIPFA);
- **The Internal Audit Service** of the City of Edinburgh Council provides an independent and objective assurance service to the Partnership, by completing one review in each financial year that is focused on the adequacy and effectiveness of controls established to manage a key risk of the Partnership. The Partnership seeks to ensure that Internal Audit arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.
- **The External Auditor's Annual Audit Report** is considered by the Partnership Board and the Performance and Audit Committee, along with the output from other external audits and inspections;
- **The risk management system** requires that risks are regularly reviewed by the Performance and Audit Committee and Board. This ensures that actions are taken to effectively manage the Partnership's highest risks;

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25 (*continued*)

4. Review of Effectiveness (*continued*)

- **The Partnership Secretary** is responsible to the Partnership for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed. The Partnership has a contractual arrangement with an external Legal Services provider to ensure all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with.
- The Partnership operates Anti-Bribery, Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.
- **CIPFA Financial Management Code**
A requirement of the Annual Governance Statement is to disclose compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management (FM) Code and identify any outstanding areas for improvement or change. The Code is designed to support good practice and assist local government organisations in demonstrating their financial sustainability and resilience, by setting out expected standards of financial management.
The Partnership has undertaken an evaluation of compliance with the Financial Management Code.
The Partnership's financial management arrangements are assessed as being compliant with the FM Code.

5. Procurement Procedures

During 2023/24, the Partnership's legal advisers were engaged to review the Partnership's procurement procedures. All the Partnership's Standing Orders were reviewed and strengthened in 2023/24 and 2024/25, including Contract and Grant Standing Orders. Procurement procedures will be subject to ongoing review, with any revisions to procedures and processes requiring Board approval.

6. Internal Audit Opinion

The City of Edinburgh Council Internal Audit Service undertakes one annual review each year to provide assurance over the controls established by the Partnership to mitigate specific key risks. During 2024/25, the Internal Audit Service undertook a review of the internal processes and controls surrounding the development and management of the People and Place Plan grant funding. The objective was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the existing control environment and to identify areas for improvement to support sound decision-making and governance. The review provided reasonable assurance that SEStran has a generally sound framework of governance, risk management and control in place to support the administration of People and Place Plan grant funding. While some areas for improvement were identified, particularly related to the design and operational effectiveness of certain key processes, these are not considered to significantly undermine the overall control environment. Addressing them would provide an opportunity to further transparency, financial stewardship, and regulatory compliance.

Due to the 2024/25 review being focussed on the key controls in place surrounding the development and management of the People and Place Plan grant funding, an internal audit annual opinion is not given on the Partnership's overall governance arrangements. As the Partnership uses the financial systems of City of Edinburgh Council, assurance is placed on work undertaken by Internal Audit on the City of Edinburgh Council's financial systems.

7. Certification

In compliance with accounting practice, the Treasurer has provided the Partnership Director with a statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Partnership's internal financial control system for the year ended 31st March 2025. It is the Treasurer's opinion that reasonable assurance can be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the Partnership's internal control system.

8. From this year's review, there is reasonable assurance that the Local Code of Corporate Governance is operating adequately, with overall compliance by the Partnership with its corporate governance arrangements.
9. The Partnership's governance arrangements and systems are confirmed as being operational and current at the date of signing of this Annual Governance Statement.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

REMUNERATION REPORT

1. Audit of Remuneration Report

The tables at sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 on pages 16 and 17 in the Remuneration Report will be audited by the Partnership's external auditor. The other sections in the Remuneration Report will be reviewed by the external auditor to identify material inconsistencies with the financial statements, or is inconsistent with knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

2. Remuneration Policy for Senior Employees

The Partnership Board determines remuneration for senior employees with reference to the level of responsibility of the post. The Partnership does not operate a Remuneration Committee. Annual inflationary increases are based on those agreed by the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee (SJNC) for Local Authority services.

3. Remuneration for Senior Councillors

The Partnership does not provide any remuneration to senior councillors.
Expenses paid to Board members are detailed in note 19 to the annual accounts.

4. Management of Remuneration Arrangements

The remuneration of the Partnership's employees is administered by the City of Edinburgh Council, as part of a service level agreement with the Partnership.

5. Officers Remuneration

The numbers of employees whose remuneration during the year exceeded £50,000 were as follows:

Remuneration Bands	2024/25	2023/24
£50,000 - £54,999	1	1
£55,000 - £59,999	2	0
£60,000 - £64,999	0	1
£65,000 - £69,999	1	0
£90,000 - £94,999	0	1
£95,000 - £99,999	1	0

6. Senior Employees Remuneration

The remuneration paid to the Partnership's senior employees is as follows:

Name and Post Title	Salary, Fees and Allowances	Total Remuneration	Total Remuneration
	2024/25	2023/24	2023/24
	£	£	£
Brian Butler - Partnership Director	98,712	98,712	92,787
	98,712	98,712	92,787

The senior employees detailed above have/ had responsibility for management of the Partnership to the extent that they have power to direct or control the major activities of the Partnership (including activities involving the expenditure of money), during the year to which the Remuneration Report relates, whether solely or collectively with other persons.

7. Senior Employees Pension Entitlement

The pension entitlement of the Partnership's senior employee(s) is as follows:

Name and Post Title	In-year pension contributions			Accrued pension benefits	
	2024/25	2023/24		As at 31 March 2025	Difference from 31 March 2024
	£	£		£'000	£'000
Brian Butler - Partnership Director	25,923	30,713	Pension	5	3
			Lump Sum	0	0
	25,923	30,713			

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

REMUNERATION REPORT *(continued)*

7. Pension Entitlement

Pension benefits for the Partnership's employees are provided through the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

For the Partnership's employees, the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) became a career average pay scheme on 1 April 2015. Benefits built up to 31 March 2015 are protected and based on final salary. Accrued benefits from 1 April 2015 will be based on career average salary.

The scheme's normal retirement age for employees is linked to the state pension age (but with a minimum of age 65).

From 1 April 2009 a five tier contribution system was introduced with contributions from scheme members being based on how much pay falls into each tier. This is designed to give more equality between the cost and benefits of scheme membership. Prior to 2009 contributions rates were set at 6% for all non-manual employees.

The tiers and members contributions rates for 2024-25 were as follows:

Whole Time Pay	Contribution rate
On earnings up to and including £27,000 (2023/2024 £25,300)	5.50%
On earnings above £27,000 and up to £33,000 (2023/2024 £25,300 to £31,000)	7.25%
On earnings above £33,000 and up to £45,300 (2023/2024 £31,000 to £42,500)	8.50%
On earnings above £45,300 and up to £60,400 (2023/2024 £42,500 to £56,600)	9.50%
On earnings above £60,400 (2023/2024 £56,000)	12.00%

From April 2015, when allocating contribution rates to members, pensionable pay means the actual pensionable pay, regardless of hours worked.

There is no automatic entitlement to a lump sum for members who joined the scheme post April 2009. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for lump sum or bigger lump sum up to the limit set by the Finance Act 2004.

The value of the accrued benefits has been calculated on the basis of the age at which the person will first become entitled to receive a pension on retirement without reduction on account of its payment at that age; without exercising any option to commute pension entitlement into a lump sum; and without any adjustment for the effects of future inflation - assuming that the person left the related employment or service as at 31st March in the year to which the value relates.

8. Exit Packages

Exit packages include compulsory and voluntary redundancy costs, pension contributions in respect of added years, ex-gratia payments and other departure costs.

Exit Package Cost Band	Number of Compulsory Redundancies		Number of Other Agreed Departures		Total Number of Exit Packages by Cost Band	Total Cost of Exit Packages in Each Band	
						£'000	£'000
All Cost Bands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

9. Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017

The Partnership is required to report information on facility time made available to employees who are trade union representatives. For 2024/25, no individual spent time during the year on trade union-related activities.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

This statement shows the movement in the year on different reserves held by the Partnership, analysed into "Usable Reserves" (that is, those that can be applied to fund expenditure) and "Unusable Reserves". The Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Partnership's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Partnership.

2023/24 - Previous Year Comparative

Opening Balances at 1 April 2023

Movement in reserves during 2023/24

Surplus or (Deficit) on Provision of Services
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income

Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income

Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 7)

Increase/Decrease in 2023/24

Balance at 31 March 2024 carried forward

Usable Reserves		Unusable Reserves	Total Partnership Reserves
General Fund Balance	Total Usable Reserves		
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
208	208	220	428
223	223	0	223
0	0	(48)	(48)
223	223	(48)	175
(3)	(3)	3	0
220	220	(45)	175
428	428	175	603

2024/25 - Current Financial Year

Opening Balances at 1 April 2024

Movement in reserves during 2024/25

Surplus or (Deficit) on Provision of Services
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income

Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income

Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 7)

Increase/Decrease in 2024/25

Balance at 31 March 2025 carried forward

Usable Reserves		Unusable Reserves	Total Partnership Reserves
General Fund Balance	Total Usable Reserves		
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
428	428	175	603
107	107	0	107
0	0	(31)	(31)
107	107	(31)	76
34	34	(34)	0
141	141	(65)	76
569	569	110	679

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2024/25

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded by government grant, council requisitions and other income.

2023/24			2024/25			
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Services	Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
749	0	749	Core	858	(5)	853
996	(990)	6	Projects	5,213	(5,197)	16
1,745	(990)	755	Cost Of Services	6,071	(5,202)	869
142	(148)	(6)	Financing & Investment Income (Note 9)	165	(208)	(43)
0	(972)	(972)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (Note 10)	0	(933)	(933)
1,887	(2,110)	(223)	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	6,236	(6,343)	(107)
			Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			
0	(48)	(48)	Change in Demographic Assumptions	0	(4)	(4)
0	(164)	(164)	Change in Financial Assumptions	0	(474)	(474)
0	(68)	(68)	Changes in the effect of the asset ceiling	466	0	466
369	0	369	Other Experience	0	(28)	(28)
0	(41)	(41)	Return on Assets excluding amounts included in net interest	71	0	71
369	(321)	48	Total Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	537	(506)	31
2,256	(2,431)	(175)	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	6,773	(6,849)	(76)

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Partnership. The net assets of the Partnership (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Partnership. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, that is, those reserves that the Partnership may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use. The second category of reserves are those that the Partnership is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves include reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example, the Capital Adjustment Account Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line "Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations".

31 March 2024 £'000		Note	31 March 2025 £'000
189	Property, plant and equipment	11	152
0	Other long-term assets (Pensions)	24	0
189	Long term assets		152
741	Short-term debtors	13	2,212
0	Provision for Bad Debts	14	0
228	Cash and cash equivalents	15	1,327
969	Current assets		3,539
0	Contributions and Grants Received in Advance		0
(555)	Short-term creditors	16	(3,001)
(555)	Current liabilities		(3,001)
0	Property Lease	23	(11)
0	Long-term liabilities		(11)
603	Net assets/ (liabilities)		679
	Financed by:		
428	Usable reserves	17	569
175	Unusable reserves	18	110
603	Total reserves		679

The unaudited Annual Accounts were issued on the 13th June 2025.

Treasurer: RICHARD LLOYD-BITHELL, CPFA

Date signed: _____

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Partnership during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Partnership generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flow arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Partnership are funded by way of government grant income, council requisitions and other receipts and contributions for services provided by the Partnership. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Partnership's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (that is, borrowing) to the Partnership.

31 March 2024 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000		31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2025 £'000
		OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
(782)		Government Grants	(3,730)	
(190)		Constituent Council Requisitions	(176)	
2		Interest paid/ (received)	(5)	
(1,871)		Other receipts from operating activities	(1,470)	
	(2,841)	Cash inflows generated from operating activities		(5,381)
585		Cash paid to and on behalf of employees	768	
2,121		Cash paid to suppliers of goods and services	3,513	
	2,706	Cash outflows generated from operating activities		4,281
	(135)	Net cash flows from operating activities		(1,100)
		INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
134		Purchase of property, plant and equipment	1	
0		Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	0	
	134	Net cash flows from investing activities		1
		FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
0		Other receipts from financing activities	0	
	0	Net cash flows from financing activities		0
	(1)	Net(increase)/ decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(1,099)
	227	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		228
	228	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period (Note 15)		1,327

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Accounting Policies

The Annual Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) based Code of Practice in the United Kingdom (the Code). This is to ensure that the Annual Accounts "present a true and fair view" of the financial position and transactions of the Partnership.

The Annual Accounts have been prepared on an historic cost basis, modified by the valuation of pension assets and liabilities and property, plant and equipment, where appropriate.

1.2 Revenue Expenditure

Revenue expenditure is that which does not yield benefit beyond the year of account. In broad terms the revenue expenditure of the Partnership can be divided into two categories:

- employees;
- day-to-day operating expenses, includes costs incurred in respect of office accommodation transport, ICT, and project expenditure.

1.3 Revenue Income

Revenue income is that which does not yield benefit beyond the year of account. In broad terms the revenue income of the Partnership can be divided into the following categories:

- Council requisitions, which fund day to day expenditure;
- European Union, Scottish Government and other grant income awarded to fund specific projects;
- other income recoveries to fund specific projects.

1.4 Accruals of Expenditure and Income

The revenue account has been prepared on an accruals basis in accordance with the Code of Practice. Amounts estimated to be due to or from the Partnership, which are still outstanding at the year end, are included in the accounts. Government Grants have been accounted for on an accruals basis.

1.5 Leases

a) Finance Leases

Leased-in assets

Leases for Right of Use assets are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease are consistent with International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS16). All other leases are classified as operating leases.

The Partnership has identified one leased-in property asset that falls within the definition of a finance lease.

The lease is recognised as a Right of Use asset on the Balance Sheet. Depreciation and an Interest expense is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement over the life of the lease.

Leased-out assets

The Partnership has not identified any leased-out assets that fall under the definition of finance leases.

b) Operating Leases

Leased-in assets

Rental payments under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on a straight line basis over the life of the lease.

Leased-out assets

The Partnership has not identified any leased-out assets that fall under the definition of operating leases.

1.6 Overheads

The cost of service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement includes overheads.

1.7 Charges to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for use of non-current assets

Charges are made to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the use of non-current assets, through depreciation charges. The aggregate charge to individual services is determined on the basis of the assets used in each service.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES (*continued*)

1.8 Employee Benefits

Pensions

The Partnership is an admitted body to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is administered by Lothian Pension Fund. The LGPS is a defined benefit statutory scheme, administered in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 1998, as amended.

The Annual Accounts have been prepared including pension costs, as determined under International Accounting Standard 19 – Employee Benefits (IAS 19). The cost of service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement includes expenditure equivalent to the amount of retirement benefits the Partnership has committed to during the year. Pensions interest cost and the expected return on pension assets have been included in the “Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services” within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The pension costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in respect of employees are not equal to contributions paid to the funded scheme for employees. The amount by which pension costs under IAS19 are different from the contributions due under the pension scheme regulations are disclosed in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the General Fund.

Pension assets have been valued at bid value (purchase price), as required under IAS19.

Under pension regulations, contribution rates are set to meet 100% of the overall liabilities of the Fund.

Accruals of Holiday Leave

Cost of service includes a charge for annual leave to which employees are entitled, but have not taken as at the Balance Sheet date. The Partnership is not required to raise requisitions on constituent councils to cover the cost of accrued annual leave. These costs are therefore replaced by revenue provision in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the General Fund balance by way of an adjusting transaction with the Accumulated Absence Account.

1.9 Non Current Assets

Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment is categorised into the following classes:

- Vehicles, plant and equipment;
- Assets under construction;

Recognition:

- Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment has been capitalised on an accruals basis;

Depreciation:

- Depreciation is provided on all Property, Plant and Equipment;
- The Partnership provides depreciation on its Property, Plant and Equipment from the month when it comes into use. Thereafter depreciation is provided on a straight line basis over the expected life of the asset. No depreciation is provided on Assets Under Construction.

Measurement:

Property, Plant and Equipment are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of net current replacement cost or net realisable value in existing use, net of depreciation.

1.10 Government Grants and Other Contributions

Revenue

Revenue grants and other contributions have been included in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

Where such funds remain unapplied at the Balance Sheet date, but approval has been given to carry these funds forward to the next financial year, the funds have been accrued.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES (*continued*)

1.1 Government Grants and Other Contributions (*continued*)

Capital

Capital grants and contributions are recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, except to the extent there are conditions attached to them that have not been met.

Where there are no conditions attached to capital grants and contributions, these funds are a reconciling item in the Movement in Reserves Statement by way of an adjusting transaction with the capital adjustment account where expenditure has been incurred and the unapplied capital grants account, where expenditure has not been incurred.

Where there are outstanding conditions attached to capital grants and contributions that have not been met by the Balance Sheet date, the grant or the contribution will be recognised as part of capital grants in advance. Once the condition has been met, the grant or contribution will be transferred from capital grants received in advance and recognised as income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

1.11 Provisions

Provisions are made for liabilities of uncertain timing or amount that have been incurred.

The value of provisions is based upon the Partnership's obligations arising from past events, the probability that a transfer of economic benefit will take place, and a reasonable estimate of the obligation.

1.12 Reserves

Reserves held on the Balance Sheet are classified as either usable or unusable. Unusable reserves cannot be applied to fund expenditure. The Transport Scotland (2019) Act permits the Partnership to operate a usable reserve. In March 2020 a Reserves Policy was approved, permitting the Partnership to hold a general reserve with a minimum value of 5% of annual Core budget. Balances held in excess of 5% require to be reviewed annually in-line with risk/identified commitments. The Partnership also operates a General Fund reserve to manage slippage on approved Project budget delivery.

The Partnership operates the following unusable reserves:

a) Pension Reserve

The Partnership operates a Pensions Reserve Fund under the terms of the Local Government Pension Reserve Fund (Scotland) Regulations 2003. The Pension Reserve represents the net monies which the Partnership requires to meet its net pension liability, or is the value of the net pension asset, as calculated under IAS 19, Employee Benefits;

b) Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account represents movement in the funding of assets arising either from capital resources such as capital receipts, or capital funded directly from revenue contributions;

c) Accumulated Absences Account

This represents the net monies which the Partnership requires to meet its short-term compensated absences for employees under IAS19.

1.13 Financial Instruments

Financial Assets

Loans and receivables are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument.

Surplus funds held on behalf of the Partnership are managed by the City of Edinburgh Council under a formal management agreement in a pooled investment arrangement.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES (*continued*)

1.14 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include:

- Credit and debit funds held in banks

1.15 Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Partnership a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Partnership.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts.

1.16 Value Added Tax

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

1.17 Events After the Reporting Period

Events after the reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Annual Accounts are authorised for issue.

Two types of events can be identified:

- i) those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period - the Annual Accounts are adjusted to reflect such events;
- ii) those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period - the Annual Accounts are not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the Annual Accounts.

1.18 Short Term Debtors and Short Term Creditors

The revenue transactions of the Partnership are recorded on an accruals basis which means that amounts due to or from the Partnership, but still outstanding at the year end, are included in the accounts. Where there was insufficient information available to provide actual figures, estimates have been included.

1.19 Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the Partnership's financial position or performance.

Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively; i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

1.20 Going Concern

It is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the Annual Accounts, given ongoing Regional Transport Partnership grant funding provided by Scottish Ministers under Section 70 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 and constituent councils obligation to meet the net expenses of the Partnership under Section 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

2. ACCOUNTING STANDARDS THAT HAVE BEEN ISSUED BUT NOT YET ADOPTED

The Code requires the disclosure of information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted by the Code for the relevant financial year. The standards introduced by the 2025/26 Code where disclosures are required in the 2024/25 financial statements in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 3.3.4.3 of the Code are:

- IAS 21 The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rate (Lack of Exchangeability);
- IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts;
- changes to the measurement of non-investment assets, which include adaptations and interpretations of IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment and IAS 38 Intangible Assets.

For the standards introduced by the 2025/26 Code, there is currently no information known on the potential impact that application of the new standards will have on the Partnership's financial statements.

3. CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 1, the Partnership has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events.

The critical judgements made in the Annual Accounts are:

- There is high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government. The Partnership has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the Partnership's assets might be impaired as a result of a need to reduce service provision;
- Section 37 confirmations (Virgin Media vs NTL Pension Trustees II Limited ruling) - the actuary to Lothian Pension Fund has made no additional allowance for this initial legal judgement from July 2023 due to:
 - > the ruling only applying to the above-named private sector pension scheme;
 - > the legal judgement was subject to appeal and in July 2024, the Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal, with the original ruling standing;
 - > it is unknown whether there would be any potential remedy required to public service schemes;
 - > it is unknown what the impact of any potential remedy would be;
 - > The Department of Works and Pensions is being asked by pension bodies to look at pragmatic solutions where schemes are unable to evidence historic section 37 confirmation.
- Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) equalisation / indexation treatment (Lloyds' ruling). The actuary has allowed for the impact of full GMP indexation in the calculation of the latest funding valuation results. The Employer's funding valuation results are used as the starting point for the accounting roll forward calculations and therefore an allowance for full GMP indexation is included in the disclosure;
- GMP equalisation – historical transfers (Further Lloyd's ruling) - the actuary has advised that this further ruling is unlikely to have a significant impact on the pension obligations of a typical employer. The historic individual member data required to assess the impact is not readily available. As a result, no allowance has been made within the actuary's calculations at the Accounting Date;
- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - McCloud and Sargeant cases. The actuary has allowed for the McCloud judgement in the calculation of the latest funding valuation results. The Employer's funding valuation results are used as the starting point for the accounting roll forward calculations and therefore an allowance is included in the accounting disclosure;
- The Goodwin case judgement in respect of deemed discrimination in spousal transfer on death of a member may also result in the potential increasing of the pension liabilities. The actuary has previously carried out some approximate analysis across LGPS clients to understand the potential impact of implementing a solution to correct the past underpayment of spouses' benefits. The remedy is still uncertain. It is estimated the potential impact of this to be very small for a typical Fund (c0.1% of obligations). The actuary does not believe it is necessary or appropriate to make an adjustment to account for this at the moment, given the level of additional work and fees that would be involved for the Employer (and indeed the highly approximate nature of applying an unknown remedy);

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

3. CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

The Walker and O'Brien court cases may impact on future LGPS benefits. The Partnership's actuary understands these are unlikely to be significant judgements in terms of impact on the pension obligations of a typical employer. As a result, and until further guidance is released from the relevant governing bodies in the LGPS, no allowance has been made for the potential remedies for these judgements.

4. ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND OTHER MAJOR SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

The Annual Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Partnership about the future or events that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Partnership's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2025 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are:

4.1 Pension Asset/Liabilities

Uncertainties

Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Partnership with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.

Effect if Actual Result Differs from Assumptions

Formal actuarial valuations are carried out every three years, where each employer's assets and liabilities are calculated on a detailed basis, using individual member data for cash contribution setting purposes. For LGPS Funds, asset investment returns have been greater than expected compared to last year's accounting date assumption. The net discount rate assumption has increased by more than the increase in the CPI assumption, which has resulted in a gain on the balance sheet position. Using more up-to-date longevity assumption has also led to a small gain on the obligations.

Under accounting guidance, employers are expected to disclose the sensitivity of the valuation to key assumptions. The following table shows the sensitivity of the results to the changes in the assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities, including approximate percentage changes and monetary values:

	Approximate % increase to Defined Benefit Obligation	Approximate monetary amount (£000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	2%	45
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4%	97
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0%	1
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2%	45

5. EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

The unaudited Annual Accounts were authorised for issue on 13th June 2025. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provide information about conditions existing at 31st March 2025, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

There were no events which took place after 31st March 2025 which would materially affect the 2024/25 Annual Accounts.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

6. EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources by the Partnership in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the Partnership in accordance with general accounting practice. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between service areas. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) (see page 19).

Expenditure and Funding Analysis

	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund	Adjustments	Net Expenditure in the CIES
	£'000	£'000	£'000
2024/25			
Core	820	34	854
Projects	16	0	16
Net Cost of Services	836	34	870
Other Income and Expenditure			
Government grant	(743)	0	(743)
Constituent council requisitions	(190)	0	(190)
Interest paid/ (received)	(44)	0	(44)
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	0	30	30
Net pension interest cost/ (income)	0	(30)	(30)
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(141)	34	(107)
	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund	Adjustments	Net Expenditure in the CIES
	£'000	£'000	£'000
2023/24			
Core	734	14	748
Projects	23	(16)	7
Net Cost of Services	757	(2)	755
Other Income and Expenditure			
Government grant	(782)	0	(782)
Constituent council requisitions	(190)	0	(190)
Interest paid/ (received)	(5)	0	(5)
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	0	31	31
Net pension interest cost	0	(32)	(32)
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(220)	(3)	(223)

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

6. EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS (*continued*)

Expenditure and Funding Analysis (*continued*)

6.1 Adjustments from the General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts:

	Adjusts. For Capital Purposes £'000	Net Change for Pensions Adjusts. £'000	Other Differences £'000	Total Statutory Adjusts. £'000
2024/25				
Core	53	(31)	12	34
Projects	0	0	0	0
Net Cost of Services	53	(31)	12	34
Other Income and Expenditure				
Interest paid/ (received)	0	0	0	0
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	0	30	0	30
Net pension interest cost/ (received)	0	(30)	0	(30)
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	53	(31)	12	34
	Adjusts. For Capital Purposes £'000	Net Change for Pensions Adjusts. £'000	Other Differences £'000	Total Statutory Adjusts. £'000
2023/24				
Core	58	(47)	3	14
Projects	(16)	0	0	(16)
Net Cost of Services	42	(47)	3	(2)
Other Income and Expenditure				
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	0	31	0	31
Net pension interest cost	0	(32)	0	(32)
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	42	(48)	3	(3)

- Adjustments for capital purposes include the removal of depreciation and impairment costs, and the inclusion of capital funded from current revenue.
- Net changes for pensions adjustment relates to the adjustment made for the removal of IAS19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income with the pension contributions.
- Other differences relate to the reversal of the value of entitlement to accrued leave.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

6. EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS (*continued*)

6.2 Segmental Analysis of Income included in Expenditure and Funding Analysis

	Core £'000	Projects £'000	Total £'000
2024/25			
Expenditure			
Employee expenses	680	0	680
Other service expenses	145	5,213	5,358
Total Expenditure	825	5,213	6,038
Income			
Income from recharges for services	0	0	0
Government grants and other contributions	(5)	(5,197)	(5,202)
Total Income	(5)	(5,197)	(5,202)
Net Cost of Services	820	16	836

	Core £'000	Projects £'000	Total £'000
2023/24			
Expenditure			
Employee expenses	494	0	494
Other service expenses	240	1,013	1,253
Total Expenditure	734	1,013	1,747
Income			
Government grants and other contributions	0	(990)	(990)
Total Income	0	(990)	(990)
Net Cost of Services	734	23	757

6.3 Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

The Partnership's expenditure and income, as set out within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is analysed as follows:

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Expenditure		
Employee expenses	661	450
Other service expenses	5,358	1,234
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	52	61
Interest payments	165	142
Total Expenditure	6,236	1,887
Income		
Fees, charges and other service income	0	0
Interest and investment income	(208)	(148)
Income from constituent councils	(190)	(190)
Government grants and other contributions	(5,945)	(1,772)
Total Income	(6,343)	(2,110)
(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(107)	(223)

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

7. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATIONS

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement recognised by the Partnership in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Partnership to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

2024/25	Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Adjustment Account	Accumulated Absence Account	Pension Reserve	Movement in Unusable Reserve
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account					
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)					
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	58	(58)			(58)
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)					
Contributions credited to the CIES that have been applied to capital financing	(5)	5			5
Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve					
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CIES	111			(111)	(111)
Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(142)			142	142
Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absence Account					
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	12		(12)		(12)
Total Adjustments	34	(53)	(12)	31	(34)

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

7. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATIONS

(continued)

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement recognised by the Partnership in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Partnership to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

2023/24	Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Adjustment Account	Accumulated Absence Account	Pension Reserve	Movement in Unusable Reserve
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account					
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)					
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	61	(61)			(61)
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)					
Contributions credited to the CIES that have been applied to capital financing	(19)	19			19
Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve					
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CIES	74			(74)	(74)
Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(122)			122	122
Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absence Account					
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	3		(3)		(3)
Total Adjustments	(3)	(42)	(3)	48	3

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

8. TRANSFERS TO/FROM EARMARKED RESERVES

In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy. An earmarked balance will be established to meet slippage on project delivery from 2024/25 to 2025/26.

9. FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Interest income on pension asset/liability	(165)	(143)
Interest Paid/ (Received)	(43)	(5)
Pensions interest cost	135	111
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	30	31
	(43)	(6)

10. TAXATION AND NON SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Government Grant	(743)	(782)
Constituent Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)
	(933)	(972)

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

11. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

11.1 Movements on balances:

Movements in 2024/25

Cost or Valuation	Property Lease (Right of Use Asset)	Vehicles Plant and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total Property Plant and Equipment £'000
At 1st April 2024	0	839	11	850
Additions	21	0	0	21
Transfers	0	0	0	0
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	0
At 31st March 2025	21	839	11	871

Accumulated Depreciation

At 1st April 2024	0	(661)	0	(661)
Depreciation charge	(5)	(53)	0	(58)
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services		0	0	0
At 31st March 2025	(5)	(714)	0	(719)

Net Book Value

At 31st March 2025	16	125	11	152
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The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

11. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT *(continued)*

11.2 Movements on balances:

Comparative Movements in 2023/24

Cost or Valuation	Vehicles Plant and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total Property Plant and Equipment £'000
At 1st April 2023	795	36	831
Additions	19	0	19
Transfers	25	(25)	0
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0
At 31st March 2024	839	11	850
Accumulated Depreciation			
At 1st April 2023	(600)	0	(600)
Depreciation charge	(61)	0	(61)
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0
At 31st March 2024	(661)	0	(661)
Net Book Value			
At 31st March 2024	178	11	189

11.3 Depreciation

The following useful lives have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

- Vehicles, plant and equipment: 4 - 5 years

The Partnership provides depreciation on its Property, Plant and Equipment from the month when it comes into use.

11.4 Capital Commitments

As at 31st March 2025, the Partnership had no capital commitments.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

12. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

12.1 Financial Instruments - Classifications

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Non-exchange transactions, such as those relating to government grants, do not give rise to financial instruments.

Financial Liabilities

A financial liability is an obligation to transfer economic benefits controlled by the Partnership and can be represented by a contractual obligation to deliver cash or financial assets or an obligation to exchange financial assets and liabilities with another entity that is potentially unfavourable to the Partnership.

The Partnership’s financial liabilities held during the year comprised:

- Trade payables for goods and services received.

Financial Assets

A financial asset is a right to future economic benefits controlled by the Partnership that is represented by cash, equity instruments or a contractual right to receive cash or other financial assets or a right to exchange financial assets and liabilities with another entity that is potentially favourable to the Partnership.

The Partnership’s financial assets held during the year comprised:

- Cash in hand;
- Cash and cash equivalents (Loans and receivables). The Partnership maintains its funds 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;
- Trade receivables for goods and services provided.

12.2 Financial Instruments - Balances

The financial liabilities disclosed in the Balance Sheet are analysed across the following categories

	Current	
	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Trade creditors	1,253	567

The financial assets disclosed in the Balance Sheet are analysed across the following categories:

	Current	
	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Loans and receivables	3,261	562
Trade debtors	57	121
	3,318	683

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

12. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(continued)*

12.3 Financial Instruments - Fair Values

The financial assets represented by loans and receivables are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Since all of the Partnership's loans and receivables mature within the next 12 months, the carrying amount has been assumed to approximate to fair value. The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

	31 March 2025		31 March 2024	
	Carrying	Fair	Carrying	Fair
	Amount	Value	Amount	Value
Financial Liabilities	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade creditors	1,253	1,253	567	567
	31 March 2025		31 March 2024	
	Carrying	Fair	Carrying	Fair
	Amount	Value	Amount	Value
Financial Assets	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Loans and receivables	3,261	3,261	562	562
Trade debtors	57	57	121	121
	<u>3,318</u>	<u>3,318</u>	<u>683</u>	<u>683</u>

12.4 Income, Expenses, Gains and Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Total expense and income in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services:		
Interest Expense/ (Income)	(43)	(5)

13. DEBTORS

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Debtors:		
Central government bodies	1,934	340
Other local authorities	109	201
HM Customs and Excise - VAT	30	62
Other entities and individuals	139	138
	<u>2,212</u>	<u>741</u>

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

14. PROVISION FOR BAD DEBTS

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Cost or Valuation		
Opening Balance	0	0
Provision made during year	0	0
Unused amounts reversed during the year	0	0
Closing Balance	0	0

15. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

The balance of cash and cash equivalents is made up of the following elements:

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Bank account	1,327	228
	1,327	228

16. CREDITORS

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
Central government bodies	(92)	(4)
Other local authorities	(2,032)	(25)
Other entities and individuals	(846)	(511)
Employee costs	(26)	(15)
Finance Lease obligations	(16)	0
	(3,012)	(555)

17. USABLE RESERVES

	31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
17.1 Unallocated General Fund Reserve	221	135
17.2 Earmarked Balance - Project Budget slippage	348	293
	569	428

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

18. UNUSABLE RESERVES

		31st March 2025 £'000	31st March 2024 £'000
18.1	Capital Adjustment Account	136	189
18.2	Pension Reserve	0	0
18.3	Accumulated Absence Account	(26)	(14)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		110	175
		<hr/>	<hr/>

18.1 Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions. The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Partnership as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement.

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Balance at 1st April	189	231
Reversal of items related to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:		
• Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(58)	(61)
• Charges for revaluation of non-current assets	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in year	131	170
Capital financing applied in the year:		
• Contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	5	19
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance at 31st March	136	189
	<hr/>	<hr/>

18.2 Pension Reserve

The Pension Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Partnership accounts for post employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Partnership makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Partnership has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

18. UNUSABLE RESERVES *(continued)*

18.2 Pension Reserve *(continued)*

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Balance at 1st April	0	0
Remeasurements of the net defined benefit liability	(31)	(48)
Reversals of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.	(111)	(74)
Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year.	142	122
Balance at 31st March	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

18.3 Accumulated Absence Account

The Accumulated Absence Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, for example, annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31st March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Balance at 1st April	(14)	(11)
Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	14	11
Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	(26)	(14)
Balance at 31st March	<u>(26)</u>	<u>(14)</u>

19. MEMBERS EXPENSES

The Partnership paid the following amounts to members during the year:

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Expenses	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

20. EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

The Partnership has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Annual Accounts by the Partnership's external auditors:

	2024/25	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Fees payable in respect of:		
• external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year	13	13
	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>

21. GRANT INCOME

The Partnership credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

	2024/25	RESTATED 2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income		
Scottish Government - Revenue Grant	(782)	(782)
Constituent Council Requisitions (Note 22.3)	(190)	(190)
	<u>(972)</u>	<u>(972)</u>
Credited to Services		
EU Grant - Bling	0	(11)
EU Grant - Connect	0	(13)
EU Grant - Primaas	0	1
EU Grant - Regio Mob	0	2
Contribution - Scotrail Trains	(5)	0
EU Grant - Surflogh	0	(8)
Contribution - City of Edinburgh Council	0	(2)
Contribution - East Lothian Council	0	(2)
Contribution - Falkirk Council	0	(7)
Contribution - Fife Council	(1)	(3)
Contribution - Midlothian Council	0	(5)
Contribution - Scotrail	0	(5)
Contribution - Scottish Borders Council	(1)	(2)
Contribution - Paths for All	(87)	0
Contribution - Stirling Communication Centre	(4)	(4)
Contribution - Scottish Government/ Transport Scotland	(5,084)	(867)
Contribution - The Media Shop	0	(1)
Contribution - West Lothian Council	(1)	(1)
Contribution - HITRANS	0	(10)
Contribution - NESTRANS	(3)	(6)
Contribution - SPT	(5)	(11)
Contribution - SWESTRANS	(2)	(2)
Contribution - TACTRAN	(7)	(31)
Contribution - ZETRANS	(1)	(1)
	<u>(5,201)</u>	<u>(989)</u>

* Contributions have been reduced by £0.627m to remove agency income.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

22. RELATED PARTIES

The Partnership is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Partnership or to be controlled or influenced by the Partnership. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Partnership might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Partnership.

22.1 Scottish Government

The Partnership receives grant-in-aid revenue funding through the Scottish Government. Grants received from the Scottish Government are set out in the subjective analysis in Note 21.

22.2 Members

Members of the Partnership have direct control over the Partnership's financial and operating policies. The total of members' expenses paid by the Partnership in 2024-25 is shown in Note 19.

22.3 Other Parties

During the year, the Partnership entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
• Revenue Expenditure - Support Services		
City of Edinburgh Council - Financial and Clerking Services	42	42
Falkirk Council - HR Services	0	0
	<hr/> 42	<hr/> 42
• Revenue Expenditure - Interest on Revenue Balances		
City of Edinburgh Council	0	0
	<hr/> 0	<hr/> 0
• Revenue Expenditure - Grants/ Other		
City of Edinburgh Council	825	2
Clackmannanshire Council	212	0
East Lothian Council	162	0
Falkirk Council	84	0
Fife Council	320	0
Midlothian Council	105	0
Scottish Borders Council	459	0
Scottish Government	105	17
West Lothian Council	151	0
	<hr/> 2,423	<hr/> 19

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

22. RELATED PARTIES *(continued)*

22.3 Other Parties *(continued)*

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
• Revenue Income - Requisitions		
Clackmannanshire Council	(6)	(6)
East Lothian Council	(13)	(13)
City of Edinburgh Council	(61)	(62)
Falkirk Council	(19)	(19)
Fife Council	(44)	(44)
Midlothian Council	(11)	(11)
Scottish Borders Council	(14)	(13)
West Lothian Council	(22)	(22)
	<u>(190)</u>	<u>(190)</u>
• Revenue Income - Interest on Revenue Balances		
City of Edinburgh Council	(44)	(5)
	<u>(44)</u>	<u>(5)</u>
• Revenue Income - Other		
City of Edinburgh Council	0	(2)
East Lothian Council	0	(2)
Falkirk Council	0	(7)
Fife Council	(1)	(3)
Midlothian Council	0	(5)
Scottish Borders Council	(1)	(2)
Scottish Government/ Transport Scotland	(5,084)	(867)
West Lothian Council	(1)	(1)
	<u>(5,087)</u>	<u>(889)</u>
• Revenue Income - Agency Income		
Clackmannanshire Council	(2)	0
Fife Council	(151)	(180)
Falkirk Council	(52)	0
Midlothian Council	0	(275)
Scottish Borders Council	(59)	(59)
West Lothian Council	0	(46)
	<u>(264)</u>	<u>(560)</u>

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

22. RELATED PARTIES (*continued*)

22.3 Other Parties (*continued*)

The following represents amounts due to/(from) the Partnership at 31 March 2025, with its related parties.

	2024/25	RESTATED *
	£'000	2023/24 £'000
CREDITORS		
• Creditors - Related Parties (Revenue and Capital Grants)		
Clackmannanshire Council	(181)	0
East Lothian Council	(104)	0
Falkirk Council	(54)	0
Fife Council	(320)	0
Midlothian Council	(89)	0
Scottish Borders Council	(213)	0
The City of Edinburgh Council	(612)	0
West Lothian Council	(152)	0
	<u>(1,725)</u>	<u>0</u>
• Creditors - Related Parties (Other)		
City of Edinburgh Council	(307)	(25)
Scottish Government	(108)	(4)
West Lothian Council	(1)	0
	<u>(416)</u>	<u>(29)</u>
• Creditors - Other Parties	<u>(871)</u>	<u>(526) *</u>
Total Creditors	<u>(3,012)</u>	<u>(555)</u>
DEBTORS		
• Debtors - Related Parties (Revenue Grants/ Other)		
East Lothian Council	0	2
Falkirk Council	35	4
Fife Council	53	137
Scottish Borders Council	15	2
Scottish Government/ Transport Scotland	1,934	335
West Lothian Council	1	56
	<u>2,038</u>	<u>536</u>
• Debtors - Other Parties	<u>174</u>	<u>205</u>
Total Debtors	<u>2,212</u>	<u>741</u>

* Restated to reduce Creditors - Other Parties by £0.024m for the City Edinburgh Council Holding Account balance.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

23. LEASES

Finance Lease

From 8th February 2016 the Partnership took occupancy of Area 3D (Bridge) in Victoria Quay, Edinburgh under the terms of a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO) with the Scottish Government, which forms part of the Civil Estates Occupancy Agreement (CEOA).

The Partnership signed a new MOTO and is permitted to occupy the space from 8th February 2019 to 7th February 2022 (the Prescribed Term) and so on until ended by either party giving notice under the terms of the CEOA. Both parties will, upon provision of not less than 1 year's prior written notice, have the ability to break this agreement. The lease is accounted for as a Finance lease.

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
• Not later than 1 year	5	0
• Over 1 year	11	0
	<u>16</u>	<u>0</u>

Operating Leases

On 15th December 2023, the Partnership entered an Agreement with Brompton Bike Hire Limited for the provision of two eight-bay Brompton Hire bicycle docks and sixteen hire bicycles over a period of five years at a total cost of £113,564. The full value of £113,564 was paid in 2023/24.

The Partnership currently has a contract with Ricoh UK Ltd to lease an office printer. The minimum term for this contract is 36 months before the Partnership has the option to terminate the lease under no penalty. This contract expires in September 2025.

The Partnership entered a contract with O2 to lease ten SIM cards, effective from 10th February 2024.

The Partnership's expenditure on lease payments during 2024/25 was £24,000 (2023/24 £23,000*).

The minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

	2024/25 £'000	RESTATED * 2023/24 £'000
• Not later than 1 year	24	23
• Over 1 year	62	84
	<u>86</u>	<u>107</u>

* 2023/24 is restated to reflect inclusion of the Agreement with Brompton Bike Hire Limited.

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES

24.1 Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its staff, the Partnership makes contributions towards the cost of post employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until the employees retire, the Partnership has a commitment to make the payments that require to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their future entitlement. As explained in Accounting Policy 1.8, the Partnership is an admitted body to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is administered by the Lothian Pension Fund.

The Partnership participates in:

- A funded defined benefit final salary scheme. This means that the Partnership and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.
- An arrangement for the award of discretionary post retirement benefits upon early retirement - this is an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there are no investment assets built up to meet these pension liabilities, and cash has to be generated to meet actual pensions payments as they eventually fall due.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES *(continued)*

24.2 Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The Partnership recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required to be made is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2024/25 £000	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000	2023/24 £000
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement				
<i>Cost of services:</i>				
Service cost, comprising:				
Current service costs	111		75	
Past service costs	<u>0</u>	111	<u>0</u>	75
<i>Financing and investment income:</i>				
Net interest expense/ (income)	(30)		(32)	
Interest on the effect of the asset ceiling	<u>30</u>	0	<u>31</u>	(1)
Total post employee benefit charged to the surplus on the provision of services		<u>111</u>		<u>74</u>
<i>Other post-employment benefits charges to the Comprehensive Income / Expenditure Statement</i>				
Remeasurement of the net defined liability, comprising:				
Return on pension assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense above	71		(41)	
Actuarial gains and (losses) arising on changes in financial assumptions	(474)		(164)	
Actuarial gains and (losses) arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(4)		(48)	
Restriction in Pension Asset	466		(68)	
Other experience	<u>(28)</u>		<u>369</u>	
		<u>31</u>		<u>48</u>
Total post-employment benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income / Expenditure Statement		<u>142</u>		<u>122</u>
Movement in Reserves Statement				
Reversal of net charges made to the surplus on the provision of services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code.		<u>(31)</u>		<u>73</u>
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:				
Employer's contributions payable to the scheme		<u>142</u>		<u>135</u>
		<u>142</u>		<u>135</u>

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES *(continued)*

24.3 Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Council's obligations in respect of its defined benefit plan is as follows:

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Fair value of employer assets	3,541	3,363
* Restriction in Pension Asset	(1,106)	(610)
Present value of funded liabilities	(2,435)	(2,753)
Net asset/(liability) arising from defined benefit obligation	0	0

24.4 Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme Assets

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	3,363	2,976
Interest income	165	143
Remeasurement gain / (loss):		
Other Experience	0	143
Return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	(71)	41
Contributions from employer	142	122
Contributions from employees into the scheme	36	27
Benefits paid	(94)	(89)
Unfunded benefits paid	0	0
Closing fair value of scheme assets	3,541	3,363

Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities

	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Present value of funded liabilities	(2,753)	(2,329)
Present value of unfunded liabilities	0	0
Opening balance at 1st April	(2,753)	(2,329)
Current service cost	(111)	(75)
Interest cost	(135)	(111)
Contributions from employees into the scheme	(36)	(27)
Remeasurement gain / (loss):		
Change in demographic assumptions	4	48
Change in financial assumptions	474	164
Other experience	28	(512)
Past service cost		0
Benefits paid	94	89
Unfunded benefits paid		0
Closing balance at 31st March	(2,435)	(2,753)

* International Accounting Standard 19 imposes a limit on the maximum amount of surplus which can be recognised on the balance sheet. This adjustment reduced the value of the Pension Asset to the restricted amount for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES *(continued)*

24.5 Fair Value of Employer Assets

The following asset values are at bid value as required under IAS19.

	2024/25		2023/24	
	£'000	%	£'000	%
Equity Securities:				
Consumer *	449	13	397	12
Manufacturing *	426	12	462	14
Energy and Utilities *	198	6	183	5
Financial Institutions *	198	6	198	6
Health and Care *	224	6	217	6
Information technology *	110	3	167	5
Other *	239	7	206	6
Other	0	0	0	0
Sub-total Equity Securities	1,843		1,830	
Debt Securities:				
Corporate Bonds (investment grade) *	0	0	54	2
UK Government *	618	17	452	13
Other *	58	2	58	2
Sub-total Debt Securities	676		565	
Private Equity:				
All *	5	0	17	1
All	600	17	14	0
Sub-total Private Equity	606		31	
Real Estate:				
UK Property *	0	0	0	0
UK Property	133	4	172	5
Overseas Property *	0	0	11	0
Sub-total Real Estate	133		183	
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts:				
Equities *	6	0	0	0
Bonds *	52	1	0	0
Bonds	61	2	86	3
Commodities	0	0	37	1
Infrastructure *	0	0	8	0
Infrastructure	14	0	499	15
Other *	29	1	0	0
Sub-total Investment Funds and Unit Trusts	161		630	
Derivatives:				
Foreign Exchange *	1	0	(1)	(0)
Sub-total Derivatives	1		(1)	
Cash and Cash Equivalents				
All *	121	3	125	4
Sub-total Cash and Cash Equivalents	121		125	
Total Fair Value of Employer Assets	3,541		3,363	

Scheme assets marked with an asterisk (*) have quoted prices in active markets.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES (continued)

24.6 Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Hymans Robertson, the independent actuaries to Lothian Pension Fund, have advised that the financial assumptions used to calculate the components of the pension expense for the year ended 31 March 2025 were those from the beginning of the year (i.e. 31 March 2024) and have not been changed during the year.

The principal assumptions used by the actuary in the calculations are:

Investment returns

- Total returns for the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 2.8%

	2024/25	2023/24
Mortality assumptions - longevity at 65 for current pensioners:		
• Males	21.9 years	22.0 years
• Females	22.8 years	22.9 years
Mortality assumptions - longevity at 65 for future pensioners:		
• Males	22.1 years	22.2 years
• Females	25.6 years	25.7 years
Pension increase rate	2.75%	2.75%
Salary increase rate (see below)	3.45%	3.45%
Discount rate	5.80%	4.85%

Estimation of defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out above. In order to quantify the impact of a change in the financial assumptions used, the Actuary has calculated and compared the value of the scheme liabilities as at 31 March 2025 on varying bases. The approach taken by the Actuary is consistent with that adopted to derive the IAS19 figures.

The principal demographic assumption is the longevity assumption (i.e. member life expectancy). For sensitivity purposes, the Fund's Actuary has estimated that a one year increase in life expectancy would approximately increase the Employer's Defined Benefit Obligation by around 3-5%. In practice the actual cost of a one year increase in life expectancy will depend on the structure of the revised assumption (i.e. if improvements to survival rates predominantly apply at younger or older ages).

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

24. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES *(continued)*

24.7 Analysis of projected amount to be charged to profit or loss for the period to 31 March 2026

	Assets £000	Obligations £000	Net (liability) / asset £000	% of pay
Projected current service cost	0	(80)	(80)	(15.9%)
Past service cost including curtailments	0	0	0	
Effect of settlements	0	0	0	
Total Service Cost	0	(80)	(80)	
Interest income on plan assets	208	0	208	
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	0	(142)	(142)	
Total Net Interest Cost	208	(142)	66	
Total included in Profit or Loss	208	(222)	(14)	

The Partnership's estimated contribution to Lothian Pension Fund for 2025/26 is £136,000.

25. NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Partnership's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks:

- Credit risk - the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Partnership;
- Liquidity risk - the possibility that the Partnership might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments;
- Re-financing risk - the possibility that the Partnership might be requiring to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms;
- Market risk - the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Partnership as a result of changes in such measures as interest rate movements;
- Price risk - the possibility that fluctuations in equity prices has a significant impact on the value of financial instruments held by the Partnership;
- Foreign exchange risk - the possibility that fluctuations in exchange rates could result in loss to the Partnership.

Treasury Management is carried out on the Partnership's behalf by the City of Edinburgh Council. The Council's overall risk management procedures focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and implementing restrictions to minimise these risks. The Council complies with the CIPFA Prudential Code and has adopted the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice.

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Partnership's customers.

The Partnership's surplus funds not immediately required to meet expenditure commitments are held with the City of Edinburgh Council, and the Partnership receives interest on revenue balances on these monies. As the Partnership's surplus funds are held with the City of Edinburgh Council, the counterparty default exposure is effectively nil.

All Partnership invoices become due for payment on issue, and all trade debtors are overdue less than a month. Collateral - During the reporting period the Partnership held no collateral as security.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

NOTES TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

25. NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(continued)*

Liquidity risk

The Partnership is required by statute to provide a balanced budget, which ensures sufficient monies are raised to cover annual expenditure. There is therefore no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. The arrangement with the City of Edinburgh Council ensures sufficient liquidity is available for the Partnership's day to day cash flow needs.

The Council manages the Partnership's liquidity position through the risk management procedures above as well as through cash flow management procedures required by the Code of Practice.

Refinancing risk

The Partnership has only a small level of surplus funds and no long term debt. The refinancing risk to the Partnership relates to managing the exposure to replacing financial instruments as they mature.

As such, the Partnership has no refinancing risk on its liabilities.

The Partnership has no investments with a maturity greater than one year.

Market risk

Interest rate risk

The Partnership is exposed to interest rate movements on its investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on an organisation, depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods.

For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates would have the following effects:

- borrowings at variable rates - the interest expense charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise;
- borrowings at fixed rates - the fair value of the liabilities borrowings will fall;
- investments at variable rates - the interest income credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise; and
- investments at fixed rates - the fair value of the assets will fall.

The Partnership currently has no borrowings. Changes in interest receivable on variable rate investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and affect the General Fund Balance.

However, all investments currently have a maturity of less than one year and the fair value has therefore been approximated by the outstanding principal.

The Partnership's surplus funds are held with the City of Edinburgh Council.

The Council's Treasury Management Team continue to monitor market and forecast interest rates during the year and adjust investment policies accordingly.

Price risk

The Partnership does not invest in equity shares.

Foreign Exchange risk

As at 31 March 2025, the Partnership had no financial assets subject to foreign exchange risk.

The Partnership has no financial liabilities denominated in foreign currencies.

26. AGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Through a Partnership procurement framework contract, the Partnership makes payment for the supply of Bus Passenger Transport Information system ICT equipment and recovers cost from other bodies. Similarly, the Partnership also makes payments to develop and design active travel routes and recovers cost from other bodies. The Partnership has assessed the nature of these transactions to determine if it is acting as a Principal or Agent. Under the Code an Agent is acting as an intermediary, whereas a Principal is acting on its own behalf. In 2024/25, the Partnership entered into agency arrangements with Clackmannanshire Council, Fife Council, Falkirk Council and Scottish Borders Council. The total income received and expenditure incurred of £0.264m is not included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Internal Audit Assurance

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Edinburgh Council Internal Audit team performs one audit annually to provide assurance over the controls established to mitigate SEStran's specific key risks.

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the outcomes of the 2024/25 SEStran internal audit of the People and Place Funding Proposals, progress with the completion of actions agreed as part of previous audits, and to request the Board's input on potential areas for inclusion in the planned 2025/26 audit.

2. BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND OUTCOMES OF 2024/25 IA REVIEW – SESTRAN PEOPLE AND PLACE FUNDING PROPOSALS

2.1 Audit Background

- 2.1 The audit was conducted to review the internal processes and controls surrounding the development and management of the People and Place Plan grant funding. The objective was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the existing control environment and to identify areas for improvement to support sound decision-making and governance. This work aligns with SEStran's November 2024 risk register, particularly in relation to Governance, Operational (project delivery), Financial, Reputational and External (supplier and partnership relationships) risks. While the review excluded technical assessment of individual proposals, its focus on process and control supports the organisation's wider assurance framework.

Audit Scope

- 2.2 The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy of key controls established by SEStran to support management of grant funding proposals and allocations across various delivery partners.

Audit Outcomes

- 2.3 The review provides reasonable assurance that SEStran has a generally sound framework of governance, risk management and control in place to support the administration of People and Place Plan grant funding. While some areas for improvement were identified, particularly related to the design and operational effectiveness of certain key processes, these are not considered to significantly undermine the overall control environment. Addressing them would provide an opportunity to further transparency, financial stewardship, and regulatory compliance.
- 2.4 Areas for improvement identified in the audit include:
- i) a documented application and assessment framework should be introduced to ensure consistency in Local Authority grant awards

- ii) financial sustainability assessments should be conducted before approving third-party grants, with checks applied consistently
- iii) anti-bribery and conflict of interest compliance procedures should be implemented including register maintenance and timely policy reviews
- iv) grant claims should be reconciled with a clear capital / revenue split to better manage project budgets and reduce overspend risk
- v) claims should be supported by compliant documentation with editable formats avoided and VAT inclusion subject to prior approval
- vi) advance claims should have written justification and clear referencing in claim forms by grantee and formal prior approval.

2.5 Several areas of effective practice were also identified as part of the audit and are included in the Executive Summary section of the detailed report.

Progress with audit actions raised in previously completed audits

- 2.6 Two of the eight actions raised in the Financial Sustainability completed in May 2024 have been addressed.
- 2.7 A status update on the remaining six management actions for the Financial Sustainability audit is provided in Appendix 2.

3. 2025/26 INTERNAL AUDIT

- 3.1 The City of Edinburgh Council's 2025/26 Internal Audit annual plan was approved by the Council's Governance, Risk, and Best Value Committee on 27 March 2025. The plan includes allocation of time for completion of one audit for SEStran, which is consistent with the level of assurance provided in prior years.
- 3.2 The most significant areas of risk and potential areas for SEStran 2025/26 annual audit will be discussed with the management team and the Chief Internal Auditor by November 2025. It is proposed that the 2025/26 audit will be completed between January and April 2026.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is requested to:

- note the outcomes of the 2024/25 internal audit of the SEStran People and Place Funding Proposals, including IA findings and recommendations and agreed management actions and implementation dates
- note the progress with completion of management actions from previous audits
- provide input on key risks or any areas of concern that the Board would like Internal Audit to consider including in the 2025/26 audit plan.

Appendix 1: Internal Audit Report – SEStran People and Place Funding Proposals

Appendix 2: Progress with previously raised management actions as at 29 May 2025

Laura Calder

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Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	SEStran is charged an annual fee for provision of the annual IA assurance review. The fee for 2024/25 is £5,000, which remains consistent with the 2023/24 fee applied. Fees will be reviewed in 2025 and where required a revised fee will be agreed.
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None



South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) Internal Audit Report

People and Place Funding Proposals

14 May 2025

OO2402

Overall Assessment	Reasonable Assurance
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This Internal Audit review is conducted for the SEStran under the auspices of the 2024/25 internal audit plan. The review is designed to help the SEStran assess and refine its internal control environment. It is not designed or intended to be suitable for any other purpose and should not be relied upon for any other purpose. The City of Edinburgh Council accepts no responsibility for any such reliance and disclaims all liability in relation thereto.

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

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

Engagement conclusion and summary of findings

There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place to support the administration of grant funding. While some areas for improvement were identified, particularly related to the design and operational effectiveness of certain key processes, these are not considered to significantly undermine the overall control environment. Addressing them would provide an opportunity to further transparency, financial stewardship, and regulatory compliance.













The following improvement actions were noted:

- a documented application and assessment framework should be introduced to ensure consistency in Local Authority grant awards
- financial sustainability assessments should be conducted before approving third-party grants, with checks applied consistently
- anti-bribery and conflict of interest compliance procedures should be implemented including register maintenance and timely policy reviews
- grant claims should be reconciled with a clear capital / revenue split to better manage project budgets and reduce overspend risk
- claims should be supported by compliant documentation with editable formats avoided and VAT inclusion subject to prior approval
- advance claims should have written justification and clear referencing in claim forms by grantee and formal prior approval.

Areas of effective practice

- clear eligibility, scoring, and assessment criteria have been established for third-party funding applications and consistently applied throughout the application assessment process
- key programme delivery risks have been proactively identified and documented, with effective escalation and management through SEStran's risk management framework
- robust financial monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure timely tracking and reporting of funding proposals in line with the programme delivery plan
- effective oversight arrangements enabled identification and correction of errors in grant claims.

Audit Assessment

Audit Area	Control Design	Control Operation	Findings	Priority Rating
1. Grant Application Assessment, Approval and Monitoring			Finding 1 – Assessment of Local Authority Grant Applications	Medium Priority
			Finding 2 – Financial Sustainability Assessment	Medium Priority
2. Governance, Risk Management, and Fraud Prevention			Finding 3 – Non-Compliance with Anti-Bribery and Conflict of Interest Declaration Requirements	Medium Priority
3. Financial Management			Finding 4 – Deficiencies in the Grant Claim Reconciliation Process	Medium Priority
			Finding 5 – Non-compliance with Grant Claim (Payment) Process	Medium Priority
			Finding 6 – Process of Advance Grant Claims	Medium Priority

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

Background and scope

Transport Scotland introduced the People and Place Programme in December 2023 to increase active travel (walking, wheeling, and cycling) through behavioural change projects. The programme encouraged Regional Transport Partnerships like SEStran to collaborate with local authorities and other delivery partners to deliver measurable improvements in active travel behaviour across the region in coordination with the Regional Transport Strategy and local plans. Transport Scotland outlined four key themes for People and Place Programme: schools and young people, workplaces, developing accessible and inclusive communities, and capacity and capability building within the public sector and community-based organisations.

The programme included funding of £5.3m for SEStran in financial year 2024-25, aimed for distribution across different regional projects that deliver in line with the programme’s key objectives. The funding of £5.3m was divided into 40% for revenue expenditure, 60% for capital investment, and includes £2.5million provided to local authorities to deliver on their local priorities in line with the regional plan.

SEStran developed a strategic approach to achieve programme objectives through a People and Place delivery plan which considered local authorities’ priorities and Regional Transport Strategy. The plan also included a list of funding proposals to be delivered through a combination of third-party delivery partners and local authorities. The SEStran Partnership Board noted the plan in March 2024 and approved the eligibility criteria, scoring criteria and assessment process for the grant fund to support plan delivery through third parties.

Scope

The objective of this review was to assess the adequacy of key controls established by SEStran to support management of grant funding proposals and allocations across various delivery partners.

Alignment to SEStran Risks

- Governance
- Operational (Project Delivery)
- Financial
- Reputational
- External (Supplier and Partnership Relationships).

Limitations of Scope

The following area was specifically excluded from the scope of our review:

- technical assessment of individual funding proposals/projects and their alignment to the overall programme objectives.

Reporting Date

Testing was undertaken between 3 March 2025 and 28 March 2025. Audit work concluded on 8 April 2025, and the findings and opinion are based on the conclusion of work as at that date.

Findings and Management Action Plan

Finding 1 – Assessment of Local Authority Grant Applications

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

As part of the People and Place Programme, grant applications were invited from third-party organisations and, in accordance with the Grant Standing Orders, SEStran collaborated with local authorities in relation to the grants awarded to them. While a clearly defined and documented application process, including assessment criteria and submission guidelines, is in place for third-party applicants, no equivalent application procedure exists for local authority (LA) applicants.

In addition, there is no standardised application form or template available to guide LA applicants through the submission process. Instead, the SEStran team conducted one-to-one meetings with individual LA applicants to explain the application process and programme objectives.

There is no documentation to demonstrate that grant applications were assessed by a panel of officers, which is essential for ensuring transparency, independence, and segregation of duties. Unlike third-party applications, there was no scoring mechanism used to evaluate LA applications, resulting in a lack of clarity around selection and rejection criteria.

While brief notes were provided for rejected applications, they were not sufficient to justify the decisions made. Additionally, there was no documentation to evidence final approval decisions, such as panel minutes or meeting minutes etc.

For the internal Travel Know How and Go e-bike projects, there was no evidence to confirm that a formal internal assessment and approval process was conducted, similar to other projects. This lack of documentation limits the transparency, consistency and accountability of the selection and approval process.

Risks

Operational (Project Delivery)

- the absence of a clearly defined and documented process for assessing LA grant applications increases the risk of biased or inconsistent decision-making, potentially resulting in unfair or inequitable allocation of funds
- reliance on informal, one-to-one meetings instead of a structured and transparent application and assessment process increases the likelihood of subjective interpretation of application requirements and criteria
- lack of documented assessment and approval for projects directly handled by SEStran may lead to reduced transparency, non-compliance, inconsistency and lack of accountability in project selection and implementation.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Assessment of Local Authority Grant Applications

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
1.1	SEStran should develop and implement a formal application process specifically for Local Authority	Risk accepted.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
	(LA) grant submissions. This process should include clear guidance on application requirements, assessment criteria, submission deadlines, and supporting documentation expectations. A standardised application form or template should be made available to ensure consistency and help applicants understand how to align their proposals with programme objectives.	It is felt that the current approach is appropriate for grants given to LAs. As a Partnership of LAs, SEStran will continue to work with each LA with respect to grant awards to them, as per the Grant Standing Orders. Given the existing demand on LA teams, introducing a new application process for them, where they would be competing against other LAs, is not felt conducive to effective delivery, and would be a reversion to the previous funding model which Transport Scotland have asked RTPs to move away from.			
1.2	To promote transparency, fairness, and accountability, all LA grant applications should be evaluated by a formally appointed assessment panel. Detailed documentation, including meeting minutes, scoring records, and rationale for decisions should be maintained to demonstrate that assessments were conducted objectively and independently.	Do something different. In line with the above, a formal application process and assessment will not be put in place. The keeping of detailed `records of decisions, signed off by the Partnership Director, has already been improved for 25/26 with longer timelines and this will be continued in future years.	Partnership Director, SEStran	Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025
1.3	Any significant changes to approved grant projects, including the addition of new activities or project components, should be subject to a formal reassessment and approval process.	Do something different. A more formalised change control process and form will be introduced for 25/26, to ensure consistent records are kept of changes to grant awards – recording request details and approval in one location. All grant variations will continue to be signed off in line with the Grant Standing Orders as in 24/25. It should be noted that all grant award			30/09/2025

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
		variations will continue to be presented to the Board as in 24/25.			
1.4	SEStran should adopt the same application assessment and grant approval process for its internal projects as is applied to projects delivered through local authorities.	<p>Do something different.</p> <p>In line with the above, a formal application process and assessment will not be put in place. The keeping of detailed records of decisions, signed off by the Partnership Director, has already been improved for 25/26 with longer timelines and this will be continued in future years. Internal projects will continue to be subject to the internal Business Plan process.</p>			30/09/2025

Finding 2 – Financial Sustainability Assessment

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

According to the SEStran Grant Standing Orders, the financial sustainability of third-party applicant organisations should be assessed prior to the awarding of any grants. However, for all of our sample of 9 organisations, no such assessment was carried out before the grant offer was made. Instead, financial probity checks were conducted subsequent to the grant offer, by the Council's Finance team.

The results of the financial probity checks performed by Finance were received by SEStran on 21 May 2024. However, the grant funding agreements were signed prior to this date, indicating that the agreements were finalised before the outcomes of the checks were known.

In addition, out of the sample of 9 third-party delivery partners, financial probity checks were only conducted for 8 of them. One delivery partner was not included in this check, due to an administrative error.

Risks

Financial

- grant funds may be allocated to financially unstable organisations, increasing the risk of project failure or misuse of funds
- inconsistent application of financial probity checks undermines the integrity of the due diligence process.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Financial Sustainability Assessment

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
2.1	In compliance with the People and Place Plan Grant Fund Application Guidance, all third-party applicants should undergo a financial sustainability assessment prior to final grant offer.	Accept recommendation. Due to compressed timelines and the established nature of the external partners worked with in 24/25, to avoid additional delays to funding awards, financial sustainability checks were carried out at the same time as awards were made. Going forward, with more appropriate timelines, these checks will be made prior to grant award in line with the Grant Standing Orders.	Partnership Director, SEStran	Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025

2.2	SEStran should ensure that financial probity checks are completed for all selected applicants without exception to ensure completeness and consistency.	Accept recommendation. One organisation was erroneously missed from the financial sustainability checks carried out in 24/25. For 25/26 a post decisions checklist has been put in place to ensure this does not reoccur.			30/09/2025
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Finding 3 – Non-Compliance with Anti-Bribery and Conflict of Interest Declaration requirements

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

As per the Anti-Bribery Policy, each employee is required, at the point of commencing employment with SEStran, and annually thereafter to confirm that they have read and understood the requirements of this Policy and related Anti-Bribery Procedure by placing their signature on an Anti-Bribery Agreement form. According to the Anti-Bribery Policy, all employees who engage with external suppliers as part of their work or responsibilities are required to complete the Conflicts of Interest declaration form annually or for specific procurement exercises.

Several non-compliances with this requirement were noted:

- **Incomplete Anti-Bribery Compliance Forms:** 3 of the 7 forms sampled lacked line manager sign-off (for attestation), and 1 form was missing the employee's signed date
- **Missing Conflict of Interest Declarations:** 2 of the 7 sampled staff members had not signed the required declarations. Another form was partially completed.

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption policy requires Partnership Board members and employees to declare any possible conflicts of interest and to record them in a register. Although a conflict of interest register is maintained for Partnership Board members, no such register exists for SEStran employees.

In accordance with the Anti-Bribery policy, the procedure and associated policy should be reviewed annually by SEStran, to reflect organisational changes, best practice, operational experience and legislative updates to maintain its effectiveness. The Anti-Bribery Policy was last updated in March 2023. The associated Anti-Bribery Procedure and the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy have not been reviewed since October 2017.

Risks

- **Governance** – failure to comply with anti-bribery and conflict of interest policies increases the risk of undetected conflicts, fraudulent behaviour, and bribery, potentially resulting in biased decisions, misused funds, and reputational or financial harm.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Non-Compliance with Anti-Bribery and Conflict of Interest Declaration requirements

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
3.1	SEStran should ensure all Anti-Bribery compliance forms and Conflict of Interest declarations are fully completed and signed by both employees and line managers.	Accept recommendation. Anti-bribery compliance forms will be updated for all employees.	Partnership Director, SEStran	Business Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025

3.2	A formal conflict of interest register for all SEStran employees should be maintained and regularly updated.	A conflict of interest register will be established and maintained.			30/09/2025
3.3	The Anti-Bribery Procedure and Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy should be reviewed and updated, at a regular frequency to ensure continued relevance and compliance.	The Anti-Bribery Procedure and Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy were reviewed in 2023 but required no changes. Unfortunately, this was not included in the report to P&A Committee. These policies will be included in the next policy review cycle.			30/09/2025

Finding 4 –Grant Claim Reconciliation Process

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

Prior to processing grant claims, a reconciliation is carried out at the overall project level without distinguishing between capital and revenue elements. This practice has affected the accuracy and completeness of financial records and increased the risk of misallocation.

Several instances were noted where claims were incorrectly processed under the wrong budget category:

- **‘Always to Walk’ project:** A total of £35,000 was claimed under Capital budget in Quarter 1 (Q1) when it should have been claimed under Revenue budget. However, this error was not detected during the claim processing and was paid out of Capital budget. This error continued and, as a result, in Q2 the capital budget was exceeded by £7,872. However, it was identified and corrected in Q3 accordingly.
- **Community Active Travel Programme-School’ project:** In Q1, a claim of £7,000 as Management cost and another £7,000 as overhead cost was made

under the Capital budget, but which ‘should have been claimed under Revenue. However, this error was not recognised prior to the payment but later was discovered and corrected in the Q3 claim.

- **‘I Bike Schools’ project:** The Q3 claim was made amounting to £20,000 related to a Revenue expenditure which was incorrectly ledger coded as a Capital claim in the accounting instructions given on the claim form. This resulted in a mismatch between the books of accounts and SEStran records, later rectified by reallocating £18,000 to Revenue and £2,000 to Capital.

Risks

Financial – weaknesses in the grant claim reconciliation process may lead to incorrect budget allocations and overspending, increasing the risk of funding shortfalls and financial mismanagement.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Grant Claim Reconciliation Process

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
4.1	SEStran should ensure that all grant claim reconciliations are reviewed and recorded with clear separation between Capital and Revenue budgets before processing payments.	Accept recommendation. This issue was recognised by SEStran Officers in Q3 and a revised process put in place to ensure reconciliation was being made against revenue and capital budgets. This process will be enhanced in 25/26 with this check being carried out on the grant claim form itself in addition to the programme budget tracker.	Partnership Director, SEStran	Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025

Finding 5 – Non-compliance with Grant Claim (Payment) Process

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

A review of claims made in arrears identified several deviations from the established People and Place Plan Grant Claim Process.

Every claim should be supported with adequate evidence of expenditure. During the review of claim payments, it was identified that a proforma invoice was submitted as evidence of expenditure instead of submitting final invoices by a Local Authority amounting to £22,500 in their Q2 claim that was made in arrears. This did not meet the requirement for final invoices and is non-compliant with the grant claim process.

Delivery partners are allowed to provide itemised lists, purchase ledger extracts or internal invoices as evidence of expenditure for their internal charges, but with either the signature of a relevant officer or bearing the organisation logo. However, following exceptions were noted:

- the delivery partner who conducts the 'Community Active Travel Programme' provided a Profit and Loss statement in PDF format, but it does not carry any signature or organisation logo. Some internal invoices were noted with the organisation's logo, but these were submitted in Word or Excel, which are editable and are less secure
- similarly, a Local Authority submitted a timesheet in Excel format in their Q2 claim.

Value Added Tax (VAT) cannot be included in the claims. However, if the delivery partner is ineligible to reclaim VAT on expenses incurred as part of the grant funded project, depending on the circumstances, SEStran may allow them to include VAT in their claim. The 'Community Active Travel Programme' delivery partner included VAT in all their grant claims., However, there was no evidence of internal prior approval being documented to support the decision to allow the inclusion of VAT in the grant claims.

Risks

Financial – non-compliance with the grant claim process increases the risk of payments being made based on insufficient or unverifiable documents (evidence of expenditure), potentially resulting in unauthorised or inappropriate disbursements.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Non-compliance with Grant Claim (Payment) Process

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
5.1	All grant claims should be supported by supporting evidence in line with the People and Place Plan Grant Claim Process:	Accept recommendation. The one instance identified of a proforma invoice on a claim was found to be an error on behalf of the submitting organising that was not identified by SEStran, and an	Partnership Director, SEStran	Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proforma invoices or quotations must not be accepted for arrears-based claims; only final invoices should be considered • all electronic documents used as supporting evidence must be in non-editable formats (e.g., PDF), and either signed by a relevant officer or clearly display the organisation's logo • inclusion of VAT in claims must be supported by independent verification of VAT registration status and approved internally before being allowed. 	<p>invoice has subsequently been provided. Project team will review the claim guidance as part of the 25/26 programme preparation to ensure these are implemented fully.</p> <p>Grant claim procedures have been updated for 25/26 to include that internal ledgers and timesheets should be in pdf format.</p> <p>VAT status will be recorded on the grant claim form for 25/26, with each line clearly marked as inclusive/exclusive of VAT to ensure visibility. Evidence of VAT status will continue to be requested, but procedure updated to ensure this is in the form of a letter from the organisation. There are no plans to independently verify VAT statuses at this time.</p>			
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Finding 6 – Process of Advance Grant Claims

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

While grant claims are typically paid quarterly in arrears, the People and Place Plan Grant Claim Process allows for advance payments in exceptional cases, specifically for major capital expenditure where the delivery partner cannot cover costs upfront. Such advance payment requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. According to the Grant Claim process, to proceed with such request, the grantee (delivery partner) is required to submit a supplier quotation, expected payment date, and a written justification explaining why a claim in arrears is not feasible. Advance payments must also be followed by appropriate expenditure evidence.

The delivery partner of Community Active Travel Programme submitted a grant claim in Q2 totalling £84,255.40, of which £74,891.30 was for capital expenditure claimed in advance. This included £51,038.30 for adaptive and e-bikes (based on proforma invoices) and £23,583 for staffing costs (via internal invoices).

However, SEStran did not obtain a written justification from the delivery partner for requesting an advance, nor was there formal approval prior to processing the payment. While an email from the delivery partner was received, it referred only to budget allocations and cash flow considerations, and not a clear request for an advance.

Additionally, the delivery partner did not explicitly indicate on the claim form that a part of the claim was for advance payment. Further, the current claim form lacks a designated section to differentiate between advance claims and arrears claims.





Risks

Financial - non-compliance with the Grant Claim Process increases the risk of unauthorised disbursements, misclassification of payments, and financial misstatements.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Process of Advance Grant Claims

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
6.1	A written justification should be obtained from the delivery partner when requesting an advance payment, clearly stating the reasons for not claiming in arrears. Approval should be secured before processing any grant claim as an advance.	Accept recommendation. The 25/26 grant claim form has been updated with a specific section to identify which lines on a grant claim are in advance so that this is clear throughout the approval chain.	Partnership Director, SEStran	Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran	30/09/2025

Appendix 1 – Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions

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

Overall Assurance Ratings	
Substantial Assurance	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable Assurance	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited Assurance	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

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

Appendix 2 – Areas of Audit Focus and Control Objectives

Audit Areas	Control Objectives
Grant Application Assessment, Approval and Monitoring	Clear procedures for submission and processing of applications, including processing timeframes and communication protocols, have been established and communicated.
	Eligibility, scoring and assessment criteria have been defined for funding applications and are consistently applied across all delivery partners to ensure their proposals align with the delivery plan.
	Processes and procedures have been established to record the evaluation, scoring and approval of grant funding applications and sign off the approved funding agreements.
	Effective processes are in place to monitor and evaluate the performance of funded projects to ensure the intended programme outcomes are achieved.
Governance, Risk Management, and Fraud Prevention	Effective governance arrangements exist to support senior management monitoring and Committee/Board oversight of grant management processes, including clear roles and responsibilities for decision-making and approval.
	Robust controls are in place to mitigate applications processing risks of bribery, fraud, conflicts of interest, and inappropriate use of funds.
	Key risks in delivery of programme objectives are identified, recorded in project risk register, and escalated/managed through SEStran risk management processes.
Financial Management	Financial controls are established to ensure funding awards do not exceed available allocated funding and payment controls are in place to prevent duplicate, fraudulent or unauthorised payments.
	Processes are in place to ensure timely and accurate disbursement of funds, aligned with contractual terms and project milestones.
	Financial monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure accurate tracking and reporting of funding proposals in line

Appendix 2 – 2023/24 Internal Audit – OO2301 SEStran Financial Sustainability – Implementation Status

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Due Date	Status	Management Update
1.1	A financial planning procedure document should be developed that includes key reporting milestones and roles and responsibilities.	A financial planning procedure will be developed.	31 October 2024	Outstanding	Draft procedure document has now been developed.
1.2	Scenario planning exercises should be performed on key budgetary assumptions, as part of the annual financial planning cycle. This should be included in the financial planning procedures and results should be reported along with financial plans for approval.	A scenario planning procedure will be included in the wider financial planning procedure. It will describe how scenarios and sensitivities will be selected.	31 October 2024	Outstanding	Draft developed and currently being tested as part of the 25/26 planning.
1.3	The identification of efficiency savings should be included as a step within the financial planning procedures. Once identified, the achievement of these savings should be monitored and reported.	The requirement to identify and realise efficiency savings will be included in the financial planning procedure and undertaken each year as part of the process.	31 October 2024	Outstanding	Draft procedure document has now been developed.
1.4	The identification of lessons learned from the annual financial planning cycle should be included within the procedures document. These should then be reviewed prior to the next planning cycle and improvements made, where appropriate.	A lessons learned process will be included in the financial planning procedure. A lesson learned process will be included in the financial planning procedure.	31 October 2024	Outstanding	Draft procedure document has now been developed.

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Due Date	Status	Management Update
3.1	SEStran should develop a central log of all identified potential funded projects. This log should include the deadline for applications and assist in monitoring progress made in preparing these.	A log of all applications for funding – formal or otherwise – will be created and maintained on a project-by-project basis.	31 October 2024	Outstanding	In place and reviewed/updated fortnightly at SEStran team meetings as part of 'ACTIONS' Spreadsheet. Reported to PaSDOS, P&A and Board.
5.1	The implementation of risk mitigation actions should be regularly monitored to ensure risks are effectively managed/mitigated.	A central log of all actions is being created and will include actions from the Risk Log. In order to ensure that agreed actions are rapidly progressed, the Actions Log will be reviewed and updated by action owners on a weekly basis and reviewed by the Partnership Director at Team meetings on a fortnightly basis.	30 June 2024	Outstanding	In place and reviewed/updated fortnightly at SEStran team meetings as part of 'ACTIONS' Spreadsheet. Reported to PaSDOS, P&A and Board.

Partnership Director's Update

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Partnership Board with brief updates on a number of matters that are not covered in separate papers or presentations but which will be of interest to Board Members.
- 1.2 This update includes the following sections:
- 2: Regional Bus Strategy
 - 3: Financial Planning Procedure
 - 4: Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
 - 5: Council Requisitions
 - 6: Strategic Stakeholder Liaison Group
 - 7: Strategy Work
 - 8: Potential Railway Stations at Newburgh and Winchburgh
 - 9: People and Place Visits
 - 10: Flat Bus Fare Pilot
 - 11: Reduction in Car Use

2. REGIONAL BUS STRATEGY

- 2.1 Feedback from stakeholders including Board members, local authorities, bus operators and the Integrated Mobility Forum working group has been used to refine the policies and options presented to the Board in December. These will now form the basis of the public survey to be launched in late July.
- 2.2 It is essential that all stakeholders promote and publicise the survey – the higher and clearer the response rates, the more likely we are to deliver our objective – a world class regional bus network.
- 2.3 We are still on track to present the draft Regional Bus Strategy to the Partnership Board in September 2025, and to publish it shortly thereafter.

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCEDURE

- 3.1 The SEStran management response to a number of the risk management actions in the 2023/24 Internal Audit was to devise a Financial Planning Procedure.
- 3.2 The risk management actions were as follows:
- A financial planning procedure document should be developed that includes key reporting milestones and roles and responsibilities
 - Scenario planning exercises should be performed on key budgetary assumptions, as part of the annual financial planning cycle. This should be included in the financial planning procedures and results should be reported along with financial plans for approval

- The identification of efficiency savings should be included as a step within the financial planning procedures. Once identified, the achievement of these savings should be monitored and reported
- The identification of lessons learned from the annual financial planning cycle should be included within the procedures document. These should then be reviewed prior to the next planning cycle and improvements made, where appropriate
- The Partnership's Reserves Policy should be reviewed to ensure the level of unallocated general fund held remains appropriate. Consideration should be given to current strategic, operational and financial risks. Once reviewed this should be reported to the Partnership Board

3.3 The Financial Planning Procedure has been drafted for discussion between the SEStran team and our Finance colleagues. It outlines the approach to financial planning required to ensure that the organisation remains financially viable by implementing robust controls while retaining the ability to adapt quickly to changing conditions. The procedure applies to all financial planning activities within the organisation, including

- Budgeting and Forecasting
- Cash Flow Management
- Revenue Growth Strategy
- Cost Control and Efficiency
- Risk Management

3.4 It is anticipated that the Financial Planning Procedure will be presented to the September meeting of the Partnership Board for approval. In the meantime, a copy of the draft report is available on request.

4. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1 Partnership Board Members will be aware that SEStran established and led a project designed to ensure that regional partners fully investigated the benefits of a collaborative approach to the procurement of electric vehicle charging infrastructure prior to making a decision to take a unilateral approach.

4.2 This was required to address concerns that individual local authorities may be unattractive to potential tenderers for reasons of population or geography, and that some may be left without a adequate EV charging facilities if they chose or were forced to go to the market on their own.

4.3 SEStran worked closely with the Scottish Futures Trust, the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal's Workforce Mobility Manager, Transport Scotland, and transport consultancy Urban Foresight to build a case for consideration by relevant Directors from each of the region's local authorities, with the exception of East Lothian Council. Dumfries and Galloway Council also took part in the exercise.

4.4 In October 2024, the partners all signed up to a collaborative procurement exercise, and the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) agreed to become the lead authority. SEStran continued to chair the Steering Group, but has now stepped back to allow CEC to take full control of the project.

- 4.5 CEC has established a task and finish working group to address key issues prior to publishing the strategic procurement document. In addition, a Memorandum of Agreement is being developed to support collaboration through to the Inter Authority Agreement being signed prior to the award of the contract.
- 4.6 The programme recently issued the following press release:
- South of Scotland's eight local authorities – City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, and West Lothian – have jointly launched a new Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy to deliver a high-quality, accessible, and sustainable public charging network across the region.
 - This collaborative strategy responds to the rapid growth in EV adoption, the need to replace ageing infrastructure, and the phasing out of early government funding. It aligns with Scotland's national goal to end the sale of new, fully petrol and diesel cars by 2030 and supports a just transition to net zero transport.
 - By coming together as a regional group, we'll deliver:
 - ⚡ A unified regional approach: We're working together to procure a single network operator through a competitive process, ensuring consistent service standards, fair tariffs, and equitable access across urban and rural communities.
 - ⚡ Network expansion: Nearly 2,000 new charge points will be installed between now and 2030, building on the 700+ already in place. This will be supported by an estimated £20 million in private investment, alongside £6 million in public sector funding.
 - ⚡ Fair and inclusive access: The network will be geared to deliver accessibility for all users, including those without off-street parking, and our strategy ensures that infrastructure is designed to meet the needs of disabled drivers and underserved communities.
 - ⚡ Economic and social benefits: The selected charge point operator will be expected to deliver wider community benefits, including job creation, apprenticeships, and partnerships with local schools and colleges.
 - ⚡ Transition from ChargePlace Scotland: With the existing national ChargePlace Scotland ending in 2026, the new charge point operator will manage the transition to a regionally managed network, meaning continuity and reliability for users.
 - This regional strategy represents a significant step forward in delivering a cleaner, greener, and more connected transport future for the South of Scotland.
 - Having engaged the market in March 2025, we expect to commence the formal procurement process in summer 2025 to select a new charge point operator.
- 4.7 Although we have achieved our objective set when we established this project, we will continue to provide ad hoc updates to the Board when merited by milestones, progress etc.

5. COUNCIL REQUISITIONS

- 5.1 As noted in the Annual Report 2024/25 and the Business Plan 2025/26, SEStran is leading and delivering a wide range of projects and strategies to underpin delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy.
- 5.2 These have included a number of initiatives including:
- The People and Place programme
 - Travel to Healthcare
 - Regional Bus Strategy
 - Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan
 - Thistle Assistance
 - GoSEStran Mobility as a Service app (project now closed)
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Collaborative Procurement
 - Realtime Passenger Information system and signs
 - Bike Sharing Programme
 - Regional Cycling Network
 - Winchburgh Railway Station
 - Campaign for Newburgh Railway Station
- 5.3 In 2025/26, this work is being funded by:
- Scottish Government Block Grant and Council Requisitions: £147k
 - Underspend from the 2024/25 Projects Budget: £264k
 - Movement from Reserves: £51k
- 5.4 Our current funding, excluding funding for the People and Place Programme, which is ringfenced for a particular purpose, comes from 2 main sources: Transport Scotland's block grant, and Council Requisitions.
- 5.5 Transport Scotland's annual grant remained unchanged for over a decade before being reduced by 5% in 2024/25, reflecting wider Scottish Government budget cuts. This reduced funding level has continued into 2025/26, with a real risk of further reductions in 2026/27 and beyond.
- 5.6 Council requisitions have declined by 10% over the past decade.
- 5.7 Although we carried forward a significant underspend in its 2024/25 Projects budget, there were a number of reasons for this and robust measures have been adopted to ensure that the 2025/26 Projects budget is substantially spent. This will mean a much reduced carryover in 2026/27.
- 5.8 In summary, funding for projects in 2026/27 will be at a reduced level, and this will impact our ability to deliver the Regional Transport Strategy and provide such a high level of value to our partner local authorities.
- 5.9 We therefore propose to bring a paper to the September meeting of the Partnership Board laying out the case for an increase in Requisitions. The case will be built in discussion with our partners during the intervening period.
- 5.10 Invitations are invited from Board members to contact the Partnership Director after this meeting and indicate an interest in being involved in this work.

6. STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER LIAISON GROUP

- 6.1 SEStran has historically held quarterly Chief Officer Liaison Group meetings, which were designed to facilitate region-wide exchange of ideas and updates on plans, committee reports etc.
- 6.2 These meetings were discontinued in 2024 because, over time, they had become more of a one-way flow of information from SEStran to partners. Given that many of the attendees also had direct involvement in many of the projects that were being discussed, it was felt that there was limited value in the discussion.
- 6.3 The intervening time has been used to consider the purpose of the meetings, and to develop a mutually beneficial approach to engagement. In future, a variety of engagement techniques will be used including:
- Annual workshops to align regional and local plans
 - Quarterly meetings in advance of Board meetings to consult on draft Board papers
 - Six-monthly 1-2-1 meetings
- 6.4 The first workshop will take place in late July 2025, and the first quarterly meeting will take place before the September meeting of the Partnership Board.

7. STRATEGY WORK

- 7.1 The Business Plan for 2025/26 includes initial work on developing strategies on Interchanges, Rail and Freight. This work is currently being scoped out, and relationships with the Regional Bus Strategy and Regional Transport Delivery Plan, are being mapped out. This mapping will also include a 10-15 year integrated transport road map that will be discussed with partner authorities at the workshop referenced in 5.3 and 5.4.

8. POTENTIAL RAILWAY STATIONS AT NEWBURGH AND WINCHBURGH

- 8.1 The Programme for Government 2025/26 includes a commitment to consider “the outcomes of local and regional proposals for new stations on Scotland’s railway network, for example at Newburgh and Winchburgh, including assessing the case for investment, alignment with our rail investment strategy, public value and contribution to government priorities.”
- 8.2 SEStran working with Fife Council has been supporting the Newburgh Train Station Campaign since 2018 after a successful funding application to the Transport Scotland Local Rail Development Fund and has promoted the development of a Case for Change and full Transport Appraisal. The Case for Change was approved by Transport Scotland, and they are still considering the final detailed Appraisal and supporting addendum submitted in December 2024.
- 8.3 As a result of a question raised in the Scottish Parliament by Mark Ruskell MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport visited Newburgh on 16th May 2025. She met with members of the Campaign and enjoyed a presentation

on the potential benefits to the area of having a railway station. The event was also attended by Willie Rennie MCP, Murdo Fraser MSP and Claire Baker MSP.

- 8.4 The Cabinet Secretary had informed Mr Ruskell that Transport Scotland officers would submit a report for her consideration by the end of May, but Transport Scotland's Head of Strategy and Analysis has indicated that they are not yet in a position to make a final recommendation. It is anticipated that they will make a decision in the near future.
- 8.5 SEStran is a member of the Winchburgh Railway Station Steering Group, and attends the regular meetings between the developer, their transport consultant, West Lothian Council, Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, Network Rail and Transport Scotland.
- 8.6 The need for a station has long been accepted by Transport Scotland and Network Rail, and work is ongoing to develop a business case and to identify and secure the required funding.
- 8.7 The Steering Group issued a joint communication in late April 2025, noting that:
- The Outline Business Case and detailed Planning Application remain on track for submission
 - Winchburgh Developments Ltd, supported by their engineering consultants SWECO and SYSTRA, has completed updated passenger demand forecasts
 - Network Rail has now completed design work to Planning Application stage and provided construction cost estimates, benchmarked against recent rail projects
 - Further opportunities are being explored to ensure efficient delivery of the station
 - Work to identify and assess a range of potential funding routes is ongoing, with various options remaining under active consideration
- 8.8 Updates on both stations will be provided to the Board as and when they become available.

9. PEOPLE AND PLACE VISITS

- 9.1 The People and Place active travel behaviour change programme is now in its second year. This meeting of the Partnership Board will receive a presentation from transport consultants, Urban Foresight, who have assessed the effectiveness of the programme in 2024/25. In addition, an update on progress in 2025/26 is included in the Projects and Strategy Performance report at agenda item B3, and a paper on grant awards at B4.
- 9.2 Since the last meeting of the Partnership Board, there have been two significant visits to projects funded by SEStran through the programme.
- 9.3 A delegation from Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council, the South of Scotland Destination Alliance, and SEStran visited various infrastructure and behaviour change projects in the Peebles area on 20th May 2025.

- 9.4 The Delegation included Bettina Sizeland, Transport Scotland's Director of Bus, Accessibility and Active Travel, who leads the team responsible for all active travel funding. Bettina emailed the organiser following the event: "What has been done in the Borders is truly impressive and it is exciting to see you on the cusp of opening up greater opportunity. What really shone through for me was your strong sense of vision, your teamwork and collaboration. It was lovely to meet some of your local residents and learn how they are making most of the opportunity."
- 9.5 On 9th June 2025, Alison Irvine, the Chief Executive of Transport Scotland, visited Grangemouth High School to view the Active Travel Hub that has been established there by Forth Environment Link (FEL). She was joined on the visit by the school's Head and Deputy Head Teachers, FEL, colleagues from Transport Scotland, and SEStran.
- 9.6 The visit was highly successful, especially time spent interacting with children both in the meeting room and watching them cycling and scooting in the playground. The hub is one of a number that FEL have set up in schools, and Ms Irvine declared that it was "proof that the regional model is working."
- 9.7 The Cabinet Secretary for Transport is keen to visit another active travel project in the SEStran region, following visits to Edinburgh infrastructure and behaviour change projects in 2024, and the SEStran team is engaging with her team to identify a suitable itinerary.

10. FLAT BUS FARE PILOT

- 10.1 In 2024, Transport Scotland published a 'Fair Fares Review' designed "to make recommendations to realise the Scottish Government's vision for a future for public transport which is more accessible, available and affordable, with the costs of transport shared more evenly across government, business and society, in line with the First Minister's Policy Prospectus and in support of the National Transport Strategy's vision that "we will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors".
- Any comments about the length of the previous sentence should be directed to Transport Scotland.
- 10.2 One of the more eye-catching commitments in the review was "We will develop a proposal for a bus flat fares pilot for an area-based scheme to provide flat fares on bus travel, or reduced fares on zonal integrated travel for consideration in future budgets".
- 10.3 There has been no real movement since the Review was published, but the Flat Fares Pilot is included in the Programme for Government for 2025/26, and has funding of £3m attached.
- 10.4 The timescales and selection process have not yet been specified, but it appears unlikely that the pilot will begin before 2026. Transport Scotland has not yet identified internal resource to scope out and manage the pilot.

- 10.5 It should be noted that there is lots of interest across the country in being the pilot area, so there is likely to be intense competition when the scheme is formally announced.

11. REDUCTION IN CAR USE

- 11.1 The Partnership Board has previously discussed the Scottish Government's former commitment to reduce car kms by 20%, and Members will be aware that the policy was being reviewed by Transport Scotland and COSLA following a report by Audit Scotland earlier this year.
- 11.2 Transport Scotland and COSLA published 'Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland: A Renewed Policy Statement' on 12th June 2025' (use [this link](#) or see Appendix 1).
- 11.3 The document renews their commitment to reducing car use in Scotland, lays out the case for change, the approach they will take to setting revised targets and developing a road map, and the next steps.
- 11.4 Further information will be provided to Partnership Board Members when details of the required consultation are made available.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The Partnership Board is asked to note the contents of this report.

Brian Butler
Partnership Director
13 June 2025

Appendix 1: Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland: A Renewed Policy Statement

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland: A Renewed Policy Statement

A Renewed Policy Statement

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Foreword

Our shared ambition to reduce car use, and the amount of kilometres travelled in Scotland by car, was motivated by our collective desire and commitment to tackle the climate emergency, and to encourage more people to travel more sustainably for short and longer journeys.

There are wider benefits too. If people choose to walk, wheel or cycle in their own neighbourhoods, that helps to make those communities safer and less polluted. Fewer cars on our roads means that buses can get to their destinations faster, helping to make public transport more attractive. HGVs and trade and delivery vehicles also benefit from less congestion.

There is a real appetite for positive changes to be made, and for meaningful engagement on this policy. The case for change is still compelling. Better and more affordable access to public transport and active travel routes will help reduce inequalities and eradicate child poverty. Reducing congestion on our roads will support growth of the economy. Reducing the 12.99% of carbon emissions generated by cars will help tackle the climate emergency. Making public transport and active travel infrastructure more efficient and effective will help to improve Scotland's public services.

While we remain wholeheartedly committed to reducing our reliance on cars in a fair way, we have also been frank in our assessment of the challenges surrounding the 20% target and the need to revise it. The UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) in its recent Scotland's Carbon Budgets Advice for the Scottish Government indicates that Scotland would now need a 6% car use reduction by 2035 in line with its proposed meeting of carbon budgets. Advice from the CCC on how we might reduce transport emissions to meet our statutory climate change targets has now been published and we have commissioned further evidence to inform the revision of our car use reduction target together with other emission reduction measures.

This shared policy statement sets out our approach and identifies opportunities to go further and apply lessons learned, to demonstrate our commitment to reaching net zero by 2045. This includes conducting a 'regulatory check' for existing local road user charging powers under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 to ensure that local authorities have all the powers they need to make change happen.

However, we are also acutely aware that Scotland is largely a rural, sparsely populated country, and that we will always need vehicles, including private cars, in some capacity to enable people, goods and services to get around, to, and from Scotland and beyond. Our policy approach will necessarily be a regional and differentiated one

which takes into account place-specific measures to enable positive change in rural and island communities.

For decades now, we have all experienced the benefits that car use can provide – now we need to agree collectively and as a nation, that there can be benefits from reducing our car use. We must work together, as national and local government, to realise them.



Fiona Hyslop MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Transport



Councillor Gail Macgregor

Environment & Economy Spokesperson

Introduction

The Scottish Government and COSLA remain fully committed to reducing our reliance on cars in a way which is fair and equitable for all of Scotland's communities. This is a key policy in helping us deliver across all of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) priorities and outcomes.

In 2019, [Scotland declared a global climate emergency](#). [Research commissioned by Transport Scotland](#) in 2021 concluded that it would not be possible to reach net zero emissions through a transition to electric vehicles alone, and that changes in people's behaviour to reduce overall car use will also be required. Car use remains the largest emitter within the transport sector with 39% of total transport emissions and 12.99% of Scotland's overall emissions¹, so reducing car use is deemed essential for the transport system to be de-carbonised, therefore Scotland's [Climate Change Plan update](#) included a target to reduce car distance travelled in Scotland.

In 2022, we published a [draft route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030](#). The route map was aimed predominantly at national, regional, and local stakeholders to facilitate a collaborative approach to meeting the target, and intended to raise awareness of the need for change and empower people to switch to more sustainable travel modes in Scotland.

A key piece of feedback was that the use of kilometres (km) for the headline target was distracting from the overarching policy aim, when the majority of the general public use imperial measurement units such as miles when referring to car use. That is one of the reasons why the policy has been changed to remove reference to 'car km' and refer instead to 'car use'. This intends to separate out the policy aim and the measurement while making the language more accessible.

The development of the target was informed by the statutory emissions target of net zero by 2045 and the interim target to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030. Following the passage of the [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#), we will now set out our carbon budgets through secondary legislation taking into account the latest advice on [Scotland's Carbon Budgets](#) from the Climate Change Committee. This means that the 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 target is no longer statutory, which allows the opportunity to revise the approach to car use reduction in Scotland with a longer term lens.

Audit Scotland, in their [Sustainable Transport Audit report](#), called for the Scottish Government to clarify its commitment to reducing transport emissions through the car km target, and to set out how this aligns with the new carbon budget approach towards its climate change policy.

The publication of this policy statement is the first step in our renewed approach to achieving sustainable car use reduction in Scotland. In this document, we reaffirm our commitment to this policy outcome, setting out the current national context, the societal benefits to pursuing this ambition, and our overarching approach to the policy. Following receipt of the necessary evidence this summer, we will develop a new, longer-term target for reducing car use and set out our approach to delivery of this target alongside key stakeholders.

Key trends and the need for change

In 2023 (the most recent year available), transport accounted for 33% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, and cars accounted for 39% of all transport emissions, which equates to 12.9% of total Scottish emissions².

The proportion of car km driven, and overall journeys made by car, was consistently growing over time until 2019. After a steep fall in 2020 due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, annual car km rose sharply again and are now 4% below³ the 2019 baseline, meaning we are off-track to achieving a 20% reduction by 2030. This is visualised in **Figure 1** below.

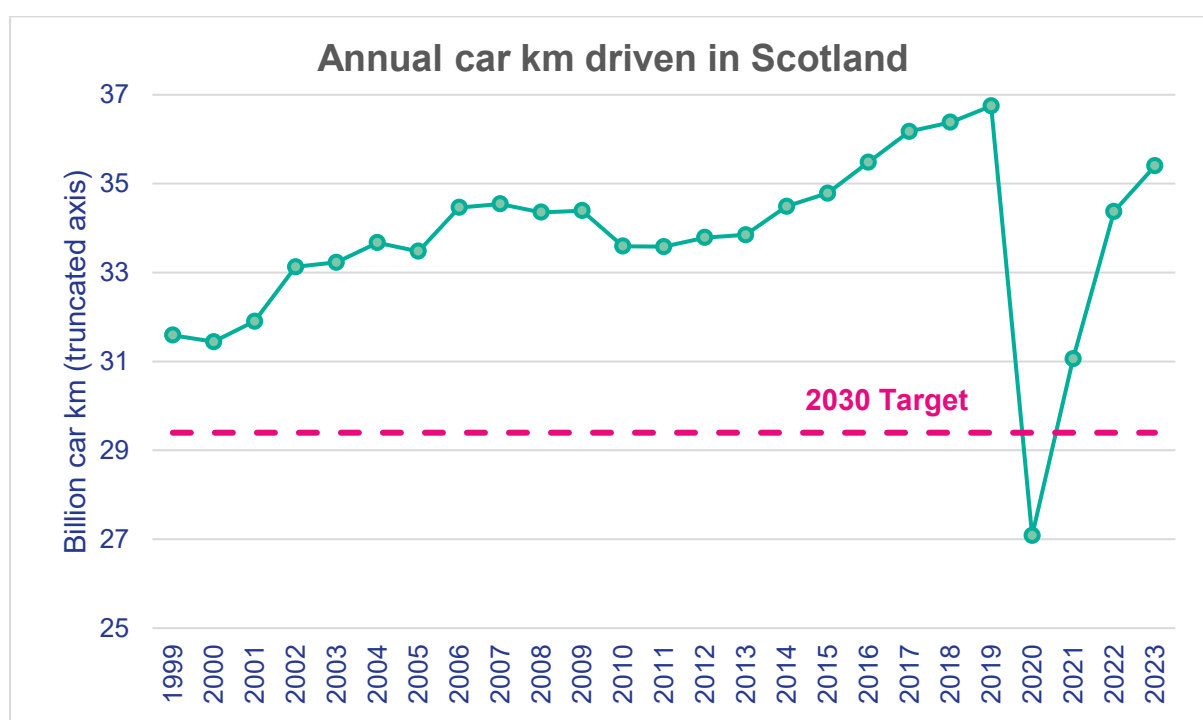


Figure 1: Car km driven in Scotland each year between 1999 and 2023

Prior to the pandemic, road traffic had been following a steadily increasing trend with total road traffic increasing by 10% in the 10 years up to 2019. There were 3.1 million motor vehicles licensed in Scotland in 2023. Having increased slightly from 2022, this is the highest level recorded. There is a demonstrable trend between 2019 and 2023 where longer journeys account for a significant proportion of total car km travelled, despite making up a much smaller portion of all trips. In 2023, shorter journeys of up to 10km accounted for 61% of all trips but only 15% of total car km driven in Scotland, while longer journeys of more than 50km accounted for just 5.5% of all trips but 38% of total car km driven⁴. The purposes of journeys have largely remained consistent over time, commuting (27%) and shopping (25%) remain the most common reasons for car or van trips⁵.

Of those journeys which are made by public transport, bus is by far the most commonly used. In 2023-24, 74% of public transport journeys were made by bus, 18% by rail, 6% by air, and 2% by ferry⁶.

It is clear that, at present, we live in a society which is motonormative^{7 8} and increasingly dependent on private car use⁹. The complexity of travel behaviour, the interdependencies between transport, planning, and environmental systems, and broader economic factors present challenges in achieving a shift away from car dependency¹⁰.

Policy environment

To achieve a modal shift, we need to take action in line with the principle of Triple Access Planning¹¹. This supports the key priorities set out in the [National Transport Strategy](#) (NTS2) and is complemented by the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy which promotes walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, and shared transport above private car use.

This will support a wide range of national outcomes in [Scotland's National Performance Framework](#), the second [Strategic Transport Projects Review \(STPR2\)](#), and other national plans such as [the fourth National Planning Framework \(NPF4\)](#), [Infrastructure Investment Plan](#), [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#), and the [Transport Just Transition Plan](#).

It is evident that additional work is needed to strengthen our approach to sustainable transport demand and develop solutions that support a just transition away from car reliance for all communities. The Scottish Government continues to call for a collaborative four-nation approach with the UK Government who have key levers of power and responsibility for motoring taxation reform, including Fuel Duty, Vehicle Excise Duty, and VAT rates, to support the just transition to net zero.

The independent Climate Emergency Response Group has called for an acceleration of the shift from cars to active, public, and shared transport¹², the Climate Change Committee highlight significant gaps in our transport policy pathway to our emissions targets¹³, and Audit Scotland indicate 'minimal progress' on reducing car use has been made¹⁴. Behaviour change takes time and progress towards car use reduction remains challenging. It is clear now that we need to revise the level of ambition set out in the draft route map and consider the scale of the change required, alongside the transition to electric vehicles and the contribution to emissions reduction but also wider just transition and NTS outcomes.

In the [2024 Climate Change Monitoring Report](#) the Scottish Government indicated for the first time that we are 'off track' in achieving a 20% reduction in car use by

2030. With 2030 approaching, current trends indicate car use is increasing rather than in decline. As a result, achieving the original target of a 20% reduction is highly unlikely. We will now therefore be revising this target, drawing on advice from the Climate Change Committee and other relevant evidence to establish a revised, longer-term target which is aligned with the timelines for the Climate Change Plan and supports our 2045 net zero target.

We will revise the existing car use reduction target, informed by the advice of the Climate Change Committee and other relevant evidence, to develop a new, longer-term target which will support our 2045 net zero target.

The need for change

The original policy intent for car use reduction was embedded in emissions reduction pathways, and this remains at the core of our renewed commitment to this policy outcome. The Climate Change Committee's recent advice continues to demonstrate that car use reduction from mode shift can contribute to emissions reduction¹⁵. Whilst electrification accounts for a large majority of emissions reductions required from car use, this alone not sufficient¹⁶ to meet our net zero targets. In addition, there are wider co-benefits to pursuing a reduction in car use in Scotland. These are set out below.

Reducing inequalities

The current transport system drives inequalities by prioritising car ownership at the expense of other transport modes. A lack of reliable transport alternatives means that some people cannot easily access key services that others with a car can. This can push people into poverty as they need to own a car they cannot afford. For example, in 2023 car access increased with household income, as did the number of cars available per household: 44% of households with an annual income up to £10,000 had access to one or more cars, compared to 96% of households with an annual income of more than £50,000 and frequency of driving also increased with household income¹⁷. A lower percentage of disabled people possess a driving licence (56% vs 78%), and a lower percentage have household access to a car (56% vs 80%)¹⁸. Lower income households, minority ethnic communities, women, older, and disabled people are less likely to own or use a car, however, the negative effects of car use – air and noise pollution, road danger, community severance, and congestion – fall disproportionately on these same groups^{19 20}. We also know bus is the mode of public transport most used by lower income groups.

Reducing car use in Scotland will therefore make it possible to re-prioritise space and investment in accessible streets and public spaces to ensure inclusive and affordable access by walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport for those who do not have access to cars.

Encouraging a wellbeing economy

The efficient and reliable movement of people and goods is essential to achieve inclusive economic prosperity. However, high volumes of traffic and inefficient road space allocation leads to congestion, which can have a significant negative impact on the economy^{21 22 23}. Reduced traffic congestion leads to smoother traffic flow for essential services such as public transport and emergency vehicles, improving overall efficiency.

Modal shift can have economic benefits at a local and regional level. Evidence suggests that businesses significantly overestimate the number of customers travelling by car^{24 25 26 27 28}, and that investment in public realm improvements, including those to encourage walking, wheeling, and cycling, can deliver significant benefits to businesses. For example, evidence suggests people who make a journey by walking tend to spend more than people arriving by car^{29 30 31}, and that businesses experience higher footfall after the introduction of pedestrianization^{32 33} or active travel measures³⁴. Analyses carried out in the United Kingdom and in European cities have demonstrated significant economic benefits from interventions of this kind^{35 36 37 38 39 40}.

Any introduction of measures to disincentivise car use, such as local or regional road user charging, or workplace parking licensing, could also bring economic benefits due to their significant revenue-raising potential which must be re-invested in measures that support delivery of the area's Local Transport Strategy^{41 42}.

Improving health and wellbeing

There are widespread health and wellbeing benefits to a modal shift, these include improved air quality and reduced noise; increased physical activity; reduced negative economic and social impacts of congestion; a reduction in road casualties; and opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to interact in improved areas of civic space.

As well as tailpipe emissions from internal combustion engine vehicles, significant air pollution also occurs from tyre and brake wear^{43 44}, which will remain regardless of any shift to electric vehicles (EVs). An estimated 1,800-2,700 premature deaths are attributed to air pollution in Scotland each year⁴⁵. Car use also contributes to

thousands of road casualties⁴⁶ and reduces opportunities for active travel, with physical inactivity leading to nearly 3,000 deaths in Scotland annually⁴⁷.

Modal shift also allows for re-allocation of road space used by private vehicles to more space-efficient modes of travel such as walking, wheeling, and cycling, which creates more green and open spaces for communities to enjoy. This contributes positively to health and wellbeing⁴⁸.

Our approach to enabling car use reduction

Changing behaviours

We are utilising behaviour change tools to inform our approach. We know that it is not enough to simply ask car users to change their behaviour. Individual behaviour change happens in the context of the social and material environments in which people live⁴⁹. We need to provide people with the capability, opportunity, and motivation⁵⁰ to choose between positive behaviours, to change the way they access goods, services, amenities, and social connections. This will support people to adopt better ways of living by creating a social and material context where reduced car use is a normal, easy, attractive, and routine behaviour to adopt. Our approach recognises that behaviours are interlinked^{51 52 53}, that the required behaviour change will need to be part of wider co-ordinated action from both national and local government, and that a wide range of interventions are necessary to support a national behavioural shift^{54 55}.

The wider societal dis-benefits of using private vehicles mean that our policy of reducing car use includes all types of private car, including electric vehicles. Switching from petrol or diesel to private ownership of zero-emission cars is likely to be the optimal solution only where more sustainable travel options are unavailable. It will be important to incentivise sustainable modes such as bus, rail, and active travel, with bus representing a particularly large share of public transport journeys. At the same time, we recognise that there is a high level of car dependency in rural areas^{56 57}, and car use will remain a facet of rural life. Local authorities can further incentivise the switch to EVs where sustainable travel behaviours and alternatives to car use are not possible, while ensuring people who rely on a car as a mobility aid are not impacted.

It is the role of government, in collaboration with other key stakeholders, to create a policy landscape of both transport and non-transport policies that enable the four sustainable travel behaviours, set out in **Figure 2** below, to be adopted by people each time they plan a trip.

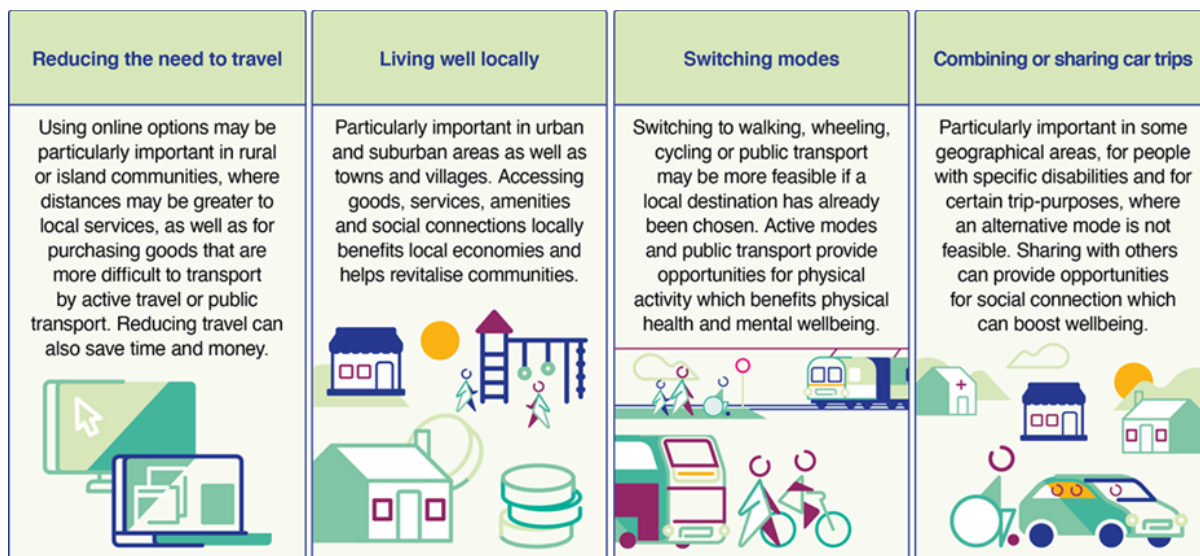


Figure 2: The four sustainable travel behaviours

Creating an enabling environment

Our aim is to empower people to choose a transport option that contributes to reducing emissions while also fitting their circumstances and travel needs. We recognise an enabling environment is created through cross-sectoral working and decision making, to enable people to reduce their car use via a combination of policy measures.

It will be important to ensure people are incentivised to use sustainable transport to enable a modal shift away from private cars, alongside the recognition that measures to discourage car use are also required. We know that there are many reasons that people currently choose to drive private cars, including convenience, comfort, reliability, a feeling of freedom, the car as a status symbol, and low cost. This means that on their own, policies which incentivise people to use other options are unlikely to be sufficient to meet the scale of reduction required.

We remain committed to working with key partners including regional transport partnerships (RTPs) to support measures which encourage active travel and accompany greater investment in public transport for a fairer and greener transport network. As part of our commitment, the Scottish Government will take forward a Regulatory Check of existing discretionary powers for local road user charging schemes under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, which was brought into statute by a previous Parliament. While a number of the necessary technical regulations to give effect to this power were made, initial scoping identified that further regulations must be put in place to enable local authorities and RTPs to enforce schemes.

Given the passage of time since the existing regulations were brought into statute, the Scottish Government will take the opportunity to check whether these remain fit for purpose. Once the necessary regulations and guidance are in place, it will be a decision for local authorities or RTPs whether and how to implement schemes.

We will undertake a regulatory check of existing Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 powers for discretionary local road user charging schemes to allow local authorities and/or regional transport partnerships the option to implement these.

Collaborative approach

A collaborative approach will be required to achieve a modal shift. This means the Scottish Government needs to work in partnership with local authorities, RTPs, and operators to support fair measures which encourage active travel and public transport use. Considering the unique challenges and circumstances for each area and how those can be overcome is key to building a fairer and greener transport system. Local authorities and RTPs are best placed to make decisions that take account of their local needs and circumstances, and we support them in doing so. This will also require working with businesses to recognise opportunities where they can promote mode shift within their workforce.

We have formed a working group through the National Transport Strategy Delivery Board, to take forward the consideration of the approach to a delivery plan (or delivery plans), and what these should involve. Membership includes representatives from Transport Scotland, COSLA, SCOTS, RTPs, and Scottish Government climate change leads. We expect this group to report by the end of 2025. Any delivery plan(s) will be place-based and experience-specific, taking into account the varied circumstances facing people in Scotland's different regions and localities. We will ensure that delivery plans consider the importance of bus as an alternative for car use and how we can continue to prioritise bus measures.

This policy statement is a collaboration of national, regional and local government and we will continue this cooperation to develop place-based and experience-specific delivery plans to support reduced car use and alternative transport options.

To support our behaviour change approach, we are committed to further public engagement to increase awareness and recognition of the need for change. This will include a new place-based and experience-specific communication and engagement campaign on car use reduction at a national and local level.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Government continues to call for a collaborative four-nation approach with the UK Government who have key levers of power and responsibility for Fuel Duty and Vehicle Excise Duty reform to support the just transition to net zero.

Along with a broad coalition of partners, we will drive a national communication and engagement campaign and set out a positive vision around how reducing car use can deliver outcomes for public health, air quality, and the environment.

Next Steps

This document marks the continuation of our joint commitment to car use reduction in Scotland with a renewed policy statement. The Scottish Government and COSLA will continue to work in partnership with our key local, regional, and national stakeholders to ensure a holistic approach is taken. In this document, we have made four key commitments which will guide our strategy on car use reduction as we move forward. These are set out again below.

1. We will revise the existing car use reduction target, informed by the advice of the Climate Change Committee and other relevant evidence, to develop a new, longer-term target which will support our 2045 net zero target.
2. We will undertake a regulatory check of existing Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 powers for discretionary local road user charging schemes to allow local authorities and/or regional transport partnerships the option to implement these.
3. We will work with key stakeholders at national, regional, and local level to develop place-based and experience-specific delivery plans to support reduced car use and alternative transport options.
4. Along with a broad coalition of partners, we will drive a national communication and engagement campaign and set out a positive vision around how reducing car use can deliver outcomes for public health, air quality, and the environment.

Glossary and List of Abbreviations

A number of abbreviations and technical terms are utilised throughout this document. Below, these have been set out alongside a brief definition to aid in the reading of this document for those who may not have the requisite background knowledge of these issues.

Climate Change Committee: An independent, non-departmental public body, formed under the Climate Change Act 2008 to advise the UK and devolved governments on emissions targets and to report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

CCPu: The 2020 [update to Scotland's climate change plan](#) for the period 2018 – 2032.

Climate Emergency Response Group: A collective of like-minded climate leaders spanning Scotland's private, public and third sectors, delivery organisations and membership bodies. The group draws on its wide-ranging expertise and experience to inform and influence the Scottish Government's response to the climate emergency by providing practical, workable solutions that can be implemented – not in the future – but now.

COSLA: The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. The umbrella organisation for Scotland's 32 local authorities.

Decarbonisation: refers to the process of significantly reducing or eliminating carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases from the earth's atmosphere. Decarbonisation is the process which countries need to go through to achieve net zero targets.

Demand Management: Traffic Demand Management (referred to in this paper as Demand Management) is the process of improving transport efficiency to reduce congestion and make better use of transport infrastructure. Policies to support this could include road user charging, for example 'congestion charging' in certain areas or the introduction of toll roads. Other examples include parking management, road space reallocation, traffic calming measures, or reduced speed limit zones.

Electric Vehicles: An electric vehicle is a vehicle that is propelled partly or fully by electricity. Unlike petrol or diesel fuelled cars, electric vehicles do not emit CO₂, so they are also sometimes referred to as zero emission vehicles or ZEVs.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The release of gases that have a negative impact on the planet's ability to balance incoming and outgoing energy, therefore altering the climate⁵⁸. As the most dominant greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide (CO₂), greenhouse gas emissions are sometimes referred to as "carbon emissions". However, other greenhouse gases are also contributing to climate change, particularly nitrous oxide and methane⁵⁹.

Just Transition: A just transition is both the outcome – a fairer, greener future for all – and the process that must be undertaken in partnership with those impacted by the transition to net zero. Just transition is how we get to a net zero and climate resilient economy by 2045, in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice.

Modal Shift: Encouraging a switch from private car travel to more sustainable modes like walking, cycling, and public transport. This shift aims to reduce transport-related emissions, improve air quality, and create more sustainable transport systems.

Net Zero (Emissions): A situation in which any greenhouse gas emissions put into the atmosphere are balanced out by the greenhouse gases removed from the atmosphere, so that the "net" effect is zero emissions. Scotland has committed to 'net zero' emissions by 2045. To achieve this, we must reduce the emissions we produce to a minimum and capture any greenhouse gases we cannot avoid emitting through initiatives like tree planting.

NTS2: The [second National Transport Strategy for Scotland](#), which sets out an ambitious vision for Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years.

RTPs: Regional Transport Partnerships. RTPs bring together local authorities and other key regional stakeholders to take a strategic approach to transport in each region of Scotland. All local authorities in Scotland are members of a regional transport partnership. Some RTPs are also responsible for the delivery of transport services. In particular Strathclyde Partnership for Transport owns and operates the Glasgow subway and major bus stations across the west of Scotland.

STPR2: The [Strategic Transport Projects Review 2](#). This provides an overview of transport investment, mainly infrastructure and other behavioural change recommendations, that are required to deliver the National Transport Strategy priorities and objectives of the Review. This is a key component of Scotland's journey to net zero emissions and will, in conjunction with existing commitments and other policy ambitions, enable a reduction in transport emissions as well as, addressing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing.

Triple Access Planning: A holistic approach to planning that considers accessibility through land use (spatial proximity), transport (physical mobility) and digital accessibility.

VED: Vehicle Excise Duty. Commonly referred to as road tax. An annual tax paid by owners of vehicles driven or kept on public roads. The tax applies to vehicles in the whole of the UK. How much a vehicle owner pays in VED depends on a number of factors, including the type of vehicle owned, when it was first registered, or its environmental performance. Certain vehicles are exempt from paying VED. For instance, vehicles used by someone receiving the enhanced mobility element of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Fully electric vehicles became liable for VED from 1 April 2025.

Wellbeing Economy: An economy in which citizens' wellbeing drives economic prosperity, stability, and resilience, and vice-versa. The wellbeing of people and the planet is at the heart of policymaking, ensuring that growth is equitable and sustainable ⁶⁰.

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Governance Scheme Review

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the amendments made to the Governance Scheme documents attached to this report at Appendix 1.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 SEStran, as a statutory body, requires to ensure that it has appropriate governance arrangements in place which enable lawful and transparent decision making. The SEStran Governance Scheme forms a collection of all of the key documents giving effect to those arrangements. When amending the Contract Standing Orders last year, it was noted that there were a number of minor areas where the remaining elements of the SEStran Governance Scheme could be updated and the purpose of this report is to approve the amendments and adopt the new scheme of governance.

3. MAIN REPORT

- 3.1 The SEStran Scheme of governance consists of the following documents:

Part 1 – Standing Orders;
Part 2 – List of Committee Powers;
Part 3 – List of Officers Powers;
Part 4 – Approved Financial Rules;
Part 5 – Contract Standing Orders;
Part 6 – Procurement Strategy;
Part 7 – Grant Standing Orders.

- 3.2 Part 5 – the Contract Standing Orders and Part 7 the Grant Standing orders were updated last year. As part of the review, it was noted that there were a number of minor issues in the following documents which would benefit being tidied up:

Part 1 – Standing Orders;
Part 3 – List of Officers Powers;
Part 4 – Approved Financial Rules;
Part 7 – Grant Standing Orders.

The detail of the changes are set out in the appendix to this report.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that the amendments to

Part 1 – Standing Orders;
Part 3 – List of Officers Powers;
Part 4 – Approved Financial Rules;
Part 7 – Grant Standing Orders

are approved.

Brian Butler
Partnership Director
13 June 2025

Appendix 1: Summary of changes to the Governance Scheme

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

Appendix 1 – Summary of the Key Changes

Amendments to Part 1 Standing Orders		
Existing Provision	Changes to the Standing Orders	Rationale behind the change
<p>There is reference throughout to the appointment of a “solicitor”. The implication is that the solicitor is an in-house solicitor or a solicitor who is perhaps from a local authority who would effectively act as an in-house solicitor.</p> <p>There is an obligation on the Partnership Director to procure the appointment of an in-house solicitor.</p>	<p>The standing orders have been amended to remove the concept of a “solicitor” to one of “Legal Adviser”. The definition of “Legal Adviser” has been amended to enable any “legal person” to be appointed. This could be a legal firm or could be in an in-house solicitor.</p>	<p>The Partnership/Partnership Director has taken the view that the current legal needs of the organisation are best met by the appointment of an external legal firm. As a result, the various documents which refer to “solicitor” and the “Solicitor’s” role in respect of the SEStran Scheme of Governance requires to be updated. The proposed updates enable flexibility to ensure that if at a point in the future SEStran does decide that it wishes an in-house solicitor or a different mechanism of obtaining legal advice the documents would not require to be updated again.</p>
Paragraph 6.1 (7) Appointment of Members	Each constituent council of the Partnership shall:-	This is simply to make it clear that there is an absolute obligation on the Council to appoint the members initially – thereafter they are able to substitute members. This is a minor tidy up only.
Paragraph 6.1 (8) Appointment of Members	As soon as possible after making the first appointment of councillor members each constituent council of the Partnership shall intimate in writing to the Secretary of the	This is simply to make it clear that it is the Secretary of the Partnership who should be advised of the persons appointed to avoid confusion with the Secretary of the relevant Council. This is a minor tidy up only.

	Partnership, the names of those persons appointed.	
Paragraph 6.5 Secretary of Partnership	<p>6.5. 6.5. (1) The Partnership shall appoint a Secretary, and a Treasurer, any of whom may also be an officer of one of the constituent councils.</p> <p>(2) The Partnership Director shall ensure that the Partnership has appropriate legal advice as may be required to support the partnership in delivering its functions. In this regard the legal support can be through appointing external legal support or through the appointment of a legal adviser or solicitor.</p>	<p>This has been amended as set out above to ensure that that the Partnership Director is required to ensure that appropriate legal advice is available but to allow flexibility about how this is provided.</p> <p>The definition of “Estates Functions Officer” has also been removed. There are insufficient property interests to merit a separate appointment. Therefore, this has been removed and consequential changes have been made.</p>
Paragraph 6.6 Meetings and Quorum	<p>6.6. (1) The Partnership shall hold such meetings as it shall consider necessary for it to carry out its functions at such place or places as it may from time to time fix. Reference is made to paragraphs 7 to 41 for further provisions relating to meetings.</p>	This is amended as a cross-referencing error.

Paragraph 6.6 Meetings and Quorum	(6) For the avoidance of doubt, meetings may be held “in person” or remotely by way of appropriate digital media or on a hybrid basis (a combination of in-person and remotely).	This is an update to allow for in person and hybrid meetings by any form of technology.
Paragraph 13 – Order of Business	<p>The business of the Partnership at ordinary meetings will normally take place in the following order:-</p> <p>1 the Chairperson or in their absence one of the Deputy Chairpersons or in absence of the Chair a member appointed in accordance with paragraph 6.4 (4) shall take the chair.</p>	This is to enable the meeting to be commenced by a Deputy or another member if the Chair is unable to be at the meeting.
Paragraph 28 - Method of Voting	28 (1) In a meeting of the Partnership or any Committee, the vote on any matter will be taken by calling the roll or by way of a show of hands.	This is to enable any vote to be taken by a show of hands to avoid a roll call for every vote.
Paragraph 38 – responsibility of the proper officer	38. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 43(2) where the Treasurer has been appointed as the Proper Officer, the Partnership Director shall be the Proper Officer for the Partnership for	This was amended as paragraph 80 was not the correct cross reference and also more information was included so that it was clear for what purposes the Partnership Director had been appointed as the Proper Officer.

	<p>the purposes of sections 190 (the service of legal proceedings – where legal proceedings are appropriately served if served on the proper officer), 191 (for signing and dealing with any claims on behalf of SEStran regarding sequestration/liquidation) and 193 (authentication of documents). The Partnership Director shall ensure that they takes appropriate advice from the appropriate officer or Legal Adviser to the Partnership.</p>	
Paragraph 52 – Debt Recovery	<p>52. The Treasurer may after consultation with the Partnership Director , settle or authorise the Legal Adviser to settle or compromise any action of payment where the amount compromised does not reduce the amount recovered by more than £5,000.</p>	<p>This has been amended to reflect the appointment of a Legal Adviser</p> <p>The value for settlements have also been increased to make it consistent with a claim for compensation which is already at £5,000.</p>
Paragraph 58 – Property Register	<p>58. The Partnership Director shall be responsible for ensuring that there is an up-to-date register of all land and heritable property owned by or leased by the Partnership, whether in its own right or in trust and will ensure that all</p>	<p>This is to deal with the fact that there is no Estates Functions Officer appointed but still maintains the obligation to maintain a register.</p>

	such property is readily identifiable at any time.	
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Amendments to Part 3 – List of Officer Powers

Existing Provision	Changes to the List of Officer Powers	Rationale behind the change
Interpretation	“Legal Adviser” means a solicitor who has been instructed by the Partnership Director to carry out the legal functions of the Partnership;	This is to reflect the changes in the Standing Orders in respect of the appointment of a Legal Adviser.
Paragraph 1.4.4 – Rules regulating the use of Delegated Powers	If an officer is in any doubt as to whether they should make use of delegated powers then they should seek guidance from their line manager, and if the line manager is in doubt, then they can consult with the Partnership Director and shall also have regard to SEStran’s policies in relation to Whistleblowing, Conflict of Interest and Anti-Bribery and corruption.	This has been amended to deal with the fact that there is no “in-house” solicitor and it would not necessarily be appropriate to refer this to an external legal adviser at least in the first instance. The policies set out have escalation processes which are relevant in these circumstances.
Paragraph 2.1 – Urgent Matters	If a decision which would normally be made by the Partnership requires to be made urgently between meetings of the Board, to take, in consultation with the Chairperson (whom failing, a Deputy Chairperson), action subject to the matter being reported to the next meeting of the Partnership. Where such	There is no need for this to be included as it would be inappropriate to consult with the solicitor to be consulted in every circumstance before taking action – whether legal action or not.

	action involves incurring expenditure, the Treasurer shall be consulted.	
Paragraph 2.2 – Appointments and 2.5 Performance Appraisal and Pay Scalesw	<p><u>Appointments</u> to appoint officers within expenditure levels.</p> <p><u>Performance Appraisal and Pay Scales</u></p> <p>Within agreed expenditure levels, and subject to existing terms and conditions, carry out such performance appraisals and implement such performance related pay schemes as from time to time may be appropriate.</p>	The proposal is to remove the reference to staffing to reflect the position that the Partnership Director has the operational responsibility for establishing the staff and structure required provided that they do so in accordance with the relevant budget constraints set by the Partnership.
Paragraph 2.6 – Other Personnel Matters	<p>The addition of the following wording</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the authorisation of overtime, leave, acting up etc. <p>For the avoidance of doubt, the examples given in the above list in 2.6(b) are not exhaustive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) can authorise the appointment of sessional, temporary, and agency staff where there is an allocated budget. 	The intention behind these additions is to delegate the operational responsibility for staffing matters to the Partnership Director in accordance with the relevant budget constraints set by the Partnership.

Paragraph 2.9 Contracts	<p>2.9 <u>Contracts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to exercise the power to purchase goods, services (including specialist support services) or works for Sustran in accordance with the provisions in the Contract Standing Orders. (b) subject to compliance with Contract Standing Orders, the power to appoint consultants/specialist advisers as appropriate. (c) the management of the tender process in terms of the Contract Standing Orders. 	This is simply to update the delegation and to link it with the delegations set out in the Contract Standing Orders.
Paragraph 2.10	In addition to the delegations set out in this List of Officers Powers, each officer including the Partnership Director and the Treasurer or other specific officer mentioned shall be entitled to exercise the powers conferred on them as set out in the SEStran scheme of delegation.	This has been amended as the purpose of this paragraph is to pull in any other delegations whether in the Standing Orders, Contract Standing Orders or Grant Standing Orders. However, this approach would mean that everytime those documents are changed it may have a knock on effect here. We have proposed that this is made more general to avoid that cross referencing issue. No additional powers have been granted.

Paragraph 3 – Delegations to the Partnership Director	The Partnership Director is authorised:-	We have removed the reference to the fact that the powers should not ordinarily be delegated further. This sentence conflicts with paragraph 7 which specifically allows delegation to the Senior Partnership Manager.
Para 3.4	to terminate on behalf of Sustran any contract which Sustran is entitled to terminate under the appropriate conditions of contract and where he/she is satisfied that it is in the interests of Sustran to do so and following consultation with the Legal Adviser	This reflects the change to the term Legal Adviser.
Para 3.10	Where a claim for compensation has been submitted to Sustran then it must be assessed by the Legal Adviser or by Sustran's claim handlers to determine whether Sustran has any legal liability to meet the claim. In those cases where Sustran has no legal liability, the Partnership Director may decide that the circumstances giving rise to the claim merit the making of an ex gratia payment. The Partnership Director is authorised to make such payments up to the value of £5,000. Such payments require to be made in consultation with the Legal Adviser.	This reflects the change to the term Legal Adviser.

Para 5.6	to authorise bad debts to be written off in accordance with Standing Order 53.	This is to correct an incorrect cross reference
Para 6 – Legal Adviser	<p>6. <u>LEGAL ADVISER</u></p> <p>6.1 The Legal Advisor may on instruction from [the Partnership Director]:</p> <p>6.1(a) carry out legal procedures necessary to implementing any matters delegated to the Partnership Officers.</p> <p>6.1(b) sign missives and other conveyancing documents and to sign notices and orders in connection with compulsory purchase orders.</p> <p>6.2 The Partnership Director may instruct the Legal Advisor to:</p> <p>6.2(a) engage private legal firms or engage counsel when appropriate and it is in Sestran's interest.</p> <p>6.2(b) start, defend and appear in any legal or tribunal proceedings or any inquiry when appropriate and it is in Sestran's interest, where there has been clear instruction from the Partnership Director.</p>	<p>This is to reflect the change to Legal Adviser.</p> <p>Also to make it consistent with the amendment to the standing orders to change the value for te settlement of any action of claim up to £5,000</p>

	6.2(c) settle any action or claim against Sustran up to the level of £5,000. This power to be exercised in consultation with the Treasurer.	
Para 7 - Partnership Operational Contingency Plan	<u>In absence of the Partnership Director, all of the matters delegated to the Partnership Director in the SEStran Scheme of Governance may be exercised by the post holders identified in this table as the "Delegated Level"</u>	This is to reflect that there are other matters delegated to the Partnership Director Through the SEStran Scheme of Governance including the Contract Standing Orders and the Grant Standing Orders. The reason for including this is to ensure that if the Partnership Director is absent, operational business can continue.

Amendments to Part 4 – Approved Financial Rules

Existing Provision	Changes to the Approved Financial Rules	Rationale behind the change
Para 39	The Partnership Director shall consult with the Treasurer regarding the terms of any indemnity which may be required. The Treasurer shall consult with the Legal Advisor and Insurance Manager regarding the relevant insurance requirements.	This is to reflect the change to Legal Adviser.

Amendments to Part 7 – Grant Standing Orders

Existing Provision	Changes to the Grant Standing Orders	Rationale behind the change
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Para 6.6	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.	The cross reference for 10.4.1 or 140.5.1 is incorrect. This has been amended to reflect the approvals which should be in line with the thresholds in 6.4.1 and 6.5.1 above. The use of the wording above was to avoid changing this paragraph if the Grant Standing Orders are updated.
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TRANSPORT TO HEALTH: LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board the literature review of Transport to Health (TtH), which will precede a SEStran Transport to Health Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 SEStran has considered Transport to Health for some time, with the [2005 Transport \(Scotland\) Act](#) placing a duty on Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) to address access to healthcare in their Regional Transport Strategies. This was strengthened further in the 2019 [Transport \(Scotland\) Act](#).
- 2.2 Accordingly, SEStran's most recent Regional Transport Strategy contains some baseline data for and a commitment to improve connectivity to healthcare. SEStran's regional bus strategy, which is still in development, will also consider the role of the bus in accessing healthcare services.
- 2.3 At a national level in Scotland, Transport to Health has achieved more attention in recent years following a report from the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) in 2019, which found that little progress had been made following an Audit Scotland report in 2011 recommending major improvements to the way older and disabled people accessed healthcare.
- 2.4 In late 2024, several years after the pandemic underscored the importance of accessible and reliable transport to healthcare services, the Scottish Government responded to the MACS report with its Transport to Health Delivery Plan. Among other things, the delivery plan strengthens calls on RTPs to meet with local NHS boards to discuss access to healthcare as well as developing regional plans for transport to healthcare. SEStran is well-placed to deliver these commitments, having established an informal learning network with the region's four health boards in early 2024. We continue to liaise with Transport Scotland and the Primary Care Directorate to highlight RTPs' role in driving change in TtH. Transport to Health is complex as it falls partially within the remit of many agencies and bodies, given the nature of health service delivery, not to mention the complexities of the transport sector. It is therefore often seen as 'someone else's duty', with no clear responsibility holder.
- 2.5 This low base of current provision but increasing political profile offers SEStran an opportune moment to develop a Transport to Health strategy for the south east of Scotland. It is necessary to understand what's happening, and not happening in our region, what we can learn from further from afield and engage our health boards and other key players in a shared vision.

- 2.6 From strengthening our network in this area, we have learnt that there is a lack of leadership and direction, leading to missed opportunities to collaborate, make efficiencies or cost savings, or call for better policy direction at a national level.
- 2.7 Before heading into a Case for Change for a strategy, we have undertaken a wide-ranging review of the existing academic research, policy landscape and data that already exists.

3. THE LITERATURE REVIEW

- 3.1 The website link to the literature review (Appendix 1 of this document) can be found here:
<https://sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Literature-Review-Final.pdf>
- 3.2 The main findings of the review are:

Baseline data

- 2% of all journeys in the SEStran region are taken to access hospitals or other healthcare services. This works out at around 18-20 million journeys per year.
- Most journeys to GPs and hospitals in Scotland are by car. Bus is the most common public transport mode for accessing these services. There is a lack of data around how people access other types of healthcare such as pharmacies or dental practices.
- Transport is a frequently cited reason for people missing healthcare appointments. Around 130,000 hospital appointments are missed in the SEStran region each year, but it is difficult to say how many directly relate to poor transport options.

Challenges

- Transport connectivity. Many people do not have convenient transport options to reach healthcare, especially those without access to a car. The challenges are different for rural and urban areas.
- Cost of transport. While cost of transport is often cited as a barrier, there is not enough evidence for the SEStran region specifically.
- Additional barriers faced by disabled people. Extra challenges travelling to healthcare include lack of consistent information and support for carers, inaccessibility of vehicles and cost, amongst others.
- Organisational and policy-related barriers. There is insufficient attention and cooperation between agencies and bodies to coordinate Transport to Health. There is not a clear 'responsibility holder' for TtH amongst boards, authorities, third sector and public transport operators, creating coordination challenges.

Opportunities

- Policy changes. Increased political attention at a national level offers a chance to improve cooperation on delivering Transport to Health.
- Digital transport technologies. New technologies can be applied to improve services, such as setting appointment times based on the patient's journey time.
- Virtual provision of some services. By holding some appointments over the phone or by video call, some journeys to healthcare do not need to take place. However, the majority of patients still need in-person care.

3.3 The gaps in data identified by the review are:

- Transport mode share for different types of journeys to healthcare services in the SEStran region. The last Scottish Household Statistics *Transport and Travel* report to capture this information was in 2011 at a national scale, but even then, it does not appear to have been provided at the RTP or local authority level, potentially due to sample sizes.
- Car and public transport distances to other types of primary care. Analysis carried out using Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation data has focused on access to GP services and hospitals in the SEStran region. While important, other types of healthcare are not captured by this analysis, such as pharmacies and dental practices.
- Alternative modes of transport to healthcare sites. While the 2023 SHS asks how people get to the GP and asks people who always drive to the GP if they can use any other modes of transport, it does not ask about other types of healthcare service. It also does not provide a breakdown of the data for the SEStran region. Another insight missing from the data is how many people own a car but choose to take another mode of transport to healthcare.
- Quantifying the scale of the parking problem at hospital sites. At the moment there is plenty of anecdotal evidence around parking issues at NHS sites. Further research could attempt to quantify on a more rigorous basis how long patients spend trying to find parking and what implications this has.
- Transport cost barriers to accessing healthcare services. There is little research examining the cost of transport specifically, as opposed to transport more generally, as a barrier to accessing healthcare in a Scotland or UK context.
- Quantifying the cost to the NHS of transport-related missed appointments in the SEStran region. While the reasons for missing appointments are complex, if transport can be pinpointed as a reason for particular missed appointments, this could provide motivation for the NHS to fund transport services.
- People who avoid booking healthcare appointments altogether. Inherently a difficult phenomenon to capture, understanding how many people are put off by poor transport from booking appointments could provide further basis for a Transport to Health strategy.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 To continue this work, we plan two key actions; namely to solidify our Shared Learning Network with our Health Boards, Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS Scotland Assure by agreeing a Terms of Reference, and beginning a TtH strategy with this group as key stakeholders in this work.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Partnership Board is asked to:
- Note the findings of the review
 - Offer any suggestions on how to fill data gaps
 - Share Transport to Health efforts with their networks
 - Agree to SEStran continuing this work into a TtH Strategy in the coming years

Rachael Murphy
Strategy Manager

Appendix 1: Literature Review

Policy Implications	Progressing the strategy will deliver policies for the region in Transport to Health.
Financial Implications	This work is budgeted for within the SEStran project budget.
Equalities Implications	Improved and joined up regional direction for transport to health would have a positive impact for all. With that said, particular consideration will be needed to make sure strategy actions are appropriate for under-served groups like disabled people and those facing transport poverty. A thorough EqIA process will be needed here.
Climate Change Implications	More joined up transport to health, and a shift to sustainable modes will address climate change challenges

Travelling to health appointments

A literature review



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Key points

This literature review provides an overview of the evidence and policy context relating to Transport to Health in the SEStran region. The review will feed into the intended development of a SEStran Transport to Health strategy Case for Change in 2025/26.

Baseline data

- 2% of all journeys in the SEStran region are taken to access hospitals or other healthcare services. This works out at around 18-20 million journeys per year.
- Most journeys to GPs and hospitals in Scotland are by car. Bus is the most common public transport mode for accessing these services. There is a lack of data around how people access other types of healthcare such as pharmacies or dental practices.
- Transport is a frequently cited reason for people missing healthcare appointments. Around 130,000 hospital appointments are missed in the SEStran region each year, but it is difficult to say how many directly relate to poor transport options.

Challenges

- *Transport connectivity.* Many people do not have convenient transport options to reach healthcare, especially those without access to a car. The challenges are different for rural and urban areas.
- *Cost of transport.* While cost of transport is often cited as a barrier, there is not enough evidence for the SEStran region specifically.
- *Additional barriers faced by disabled people.* Extra challenges travelling to healthcare include lack of consistent information and support for carers.
- *Organisational and policy-related barriers.* There is insufficient attention and cooperation between agencies and bodies to coordinate Transport to Health.

Opportunities

- *Policy changes.* Increased political attention at a national level offers a chance to improve cooperation on delivering Transport to Health.
- *Digital transport technologies.* New technologies can be applied to improve services, such as setting appointment times based on the patient's journey time.
- *Virtual provision of some services.* By holding some appointments over the phone or by video call, some journeys to healthcare do not need to take place. However, the majority of patients still need in-person care.

Research gaps

The review identified several research gaps, including how people in the SEStran region (rather than Scotland overall) travel to healthcare services and what alternative modes of transport people could use.

Scope

For the purposes of this review, 'Transport to Health' refers to how non-emergency patients and service-users travel to primary and secondary healthcare services in line with the remit provided by the Scottish Government's 2024 Transport to Health Delivery Plan.¹

While this literature review is not formally part of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process, it seeks to cover material that can be incorporated into the STAG process at a later stage. Accordingly, the focus will be on identifying transport-related barriers to accessing healthcare, and opportunities to improve the system.

The discussion of patients within this report should be taken to include carers accompanying the patient.

Methodology

A high-level literature review was carried out based on an initial reading list compiled by SEStran. Further literature was identified through citation searching of these documents and a separate search was carried out in Google Scholar using key words to identify relevant academic literature. A qualitative thematic analysis was applied to the literature to identify the key challenges and opportunities relating to Transport to Health. Additional quantitative analysis was undertaken using publicly available datasets to provide baseline data to contextualise the scale of these challenges and opportunities relating to Transport to Health in the SEStran region. Research gaps were identified through these qualitative and quantitative analyses.

Priority was given to using sources and literature that focused on the SEStran region. Where relevant, or where SEStran-specific data did not exist, evidence from out with the region was also examined, whether at a Scotland, England, UK or other geographical/political level.

Background

SEStran has considered Transport to Health for some time, with the 2005 Transport (Scotland) Act placing a duty on Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) to address access to healthcare in their Regional Transport Strategies.² This was strengthened further in the 2019 Transport (Scotland) Act. Accordingly, SEStran's most recent Regional Transport Strategy contains baseline data for and commitments to improve connectivity to healthcare.³ SEStran's regional bus strategy, which is still in development, will also consider the role of the bus in accessing healthcare services.⁴

At a national level in Scotland, Transport to Health has achieved more attention in recent years following a damning report from the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) in 2019,⁵ which found that little progress had been made following an Audit Scotland report in 2011 recommending major improvements to the way older and disabled people accessed healthcare.⁶

In late 2024, several years after the pandemic underscored the importance of accessible and reliable transport to healthcare services, the Scottish Government responded to the MACS report with its Transport to Health Delivery Plan.⁷ Among other things, the delivery plan calls on RTPs to meet with local NHS boards to discuss access to healthcare as well as developing regional plans for transport to healthcare. SEStran is well-placed to deliver these commitments, having established an informal learning network with the region's four health boards in early 2024.

Transport to Health is complex as it falls partially within the remit of many agencies and bodies, given the nature of health service delivery, not to mention the complexities of the transport sector. It is therefore often seen as 'someone else's duty', with no clear responsibility-holder.

This low base of current provision but increasing political saliency offers SEStran an opportune moment to develop a Transport to Health strategy for the south east of Scotland. First and foremost, the focus should be on those who stand the most to gain: healthcare users. However, there are also major potential upsides for the wider NHS as a whole, as this review will discuss.

← Patient & Visitors Car Park

Drop Off & Ambulances Only

Hospital Main Entrance →

Minor Injuries Unit →

GP Out of Hours Service →

Recreation Hall ↑

Deliveries ↑

Literature review

The literature review is structured into four sections:

- Baseline data
- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Research gaps

It is followed by a discussion of potential next steps and recommendations.

Baseline data

Data relating to three categories have been explored to provide context for this literature review:

1. **Healthcare journeys:** quantifying the number of journeys to health that take place in the SEStran region
2. **Mode shares:** understanding what types of transport modes people use to access healthcare
3. **Missed appointments:** exploring the impact of transport and other factors on missed appointments

The SEStran region covers four NHS Scotland health boards: Borders, Fife, Forth Valley and Lothian. All except Forth Valley sit entirely within the SEStran region. NHS Forth Valley covers three local authority areas: Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling. Stirling is the only one of these three not within the SEStran region. While Stirling only accounts for 31% of the NHS Forth Valley population,⁸ and most of NHS Forth Valley's hospital sites are located within Falkirk or Clackmannanshire, this caveat should be borne in mind when figures for the four health boards are presented below and elsewhere in this report.

1. Healthcare journeys

To understand the scale of Transport to Health in the SEStran region, and therefore implications of relevant literature, it is useful to first outline how many journeys are taken for health purposes. Two sources for estimating this, using existing data, are discussed below and are summarised in table 2.

Source 1: Scottish Household Survey – Transport and Travel statistics 2023

The latest Scottish Household Survey (SHS) found that 2% of all journeys in the SEStran region are taken to access a hospital or other healthcare services.⁹ This is the same proportion as for Scotland as a whole. The SHS reports that Scottish adults in 2023 took an average of 1.59 journeys per day, of which 0.04 journeys were for visiting a hospital or other healthcare facility.¹⁰ Extrapolated to the adult population of

the SEStran region, this implies 20,136,378 journeys annually are taken for healthcare purposes, out of a total of 800,421,041 annual journeys.¹¹

The SHS only records journeys reported by adults. As under 16-year-olds are excluded from the survey, the 20 million figure is almost certainly an underestimate of the number of healthcare journeys, although some adult respondents to the survey may have included journeys escorting a child in their responses to the journey to healthcare category. There is a separate category in the SHS for 'Escorting someone else', which comprises a further 1.8% of journeys in Scotland (2% in the SEStran region), or an average of 0.03 journeys per day per Scottish adult. However, this figure will capture much more than just escorting children to healthcare locations.

Source 2: Combined NHS healthcare figures

Another approach is to examine different types of healthcare appointments in the region and extrapolate journey numbers from these figures. While it will not capture all journeys to healthcare, e.g. for private GP appointments, it can provide more nuance about what type of healthcare people are travelling to. Three types of primary care and one type of secondary care are explored below.

For primary care, in the four NHS health boards covering the SEStran region, there were just over 6.5 million in-person appointments with GPs and clinicians between October 2023 and September 2024.¹² Between April 2023 and March 2024, there were over 530,000 primary eye examinations.¹³ In the two years up to the end of December 2024, nearly 1 million registered patients accessed NHS primary dental care.¹⁴ The breakdown for each of these figures can be found in appendix items 1, 2 and 3.

As a proxy for secondary care, there were just under 1.5 million outpatient appointments at NHS hospitals in the four health boards between October 2023 and September 2024.¹⁵ Just over 50% of these appointments were in NHS Lothian hospital facilities.¹⁶ The breakdown for these figures can be found in appendix item 4.

There are various caveats to the calculations above, as discussed in the respective footnotes. However, they provide a basis for understanding how many journeys to different types of healthcare location occur within the SEStran region. Assuming each appointment (or in the case of dentistry, patient) represents one return journey between the patient's home and the healthcare location, the breakdown is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Different types of healthcare journeys annually in the SEStran region

Type of appointment	Number of journeys (rounded)
GP or other clinician	13 million
Hospital outpatients	3 million
NHS-funded eye exam	1 million
NHS dentistry	1 million
Total	18 million

Travelling to pharmacies is another type of transport to primary healthcare services. In 2024, there were over 32 million prescriptions dispensed across the four SEStran health boards.¹⁷ This figure is excluded from the calculation of journeys above as many people pick up their prescription while visiting a hospital or immediately after seeing a GP or collect multiple prescriptions at the same time. However, it is worth noting that journeys to the pharmacy are likely to be an under-considered aspect of transport to health, especially as people are being encouraged to go to their pharmacist rather than GP for minor conditions.¹⁸

Table 2 summarises the two methods for estimating the number of healthcare journeys that take place within the SEStran region. It should be noted that both show ‘snapshots’ of recent time periods, rather than long-term averages. However, the fact the figures are close to each other suggests that 18-20 million is a reasonable benchmark for the number of transport to health journeys being taken annually in the SEStran region.

Table 2: Comparison of estimates of Transport to Health journeys annually in the SEStran region

Rounded figure	Source	Caveats
20 million journeys	Extrapolated from Scottish Household Survey Transport and Travel statistics 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure based on a national percentage applied to the population size of the SEStran region. Only the adult population.
18 million journeys	Combined NHS figures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GP and clinician appointments Hospital outpatients Eye tests Active dental patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excludes private healthcare. Some NHS Forth Valley figures are for people living outwith the SEStran region. Excludes journeys to pharmacies.

2. Mode shares

The latest SHS Transport and Travel statistics do not provide a breakdown of mode used by those reporting journeys to healthcare services. However, the survey asks people how often they use a car for certain activities, one of which is seeing a GP. Across Scotland, 77% reported always or sometimes using a car when visiting their GP, as shown in table 3.¹⁹ When those who always used a car were asked how easily they could see their GP without a car, 64% said that it would be very or fairly difficult, shown in table 4.²⁰

Table 3: How often people use a car for certain activities, answers for 'To see GP' (SHS 2023)

How often do you use a car to see your GP? (n=2,030)	
Never make that type of journey	4%
Always use a car	57%
Sometimes use a car / sometimes use another means of transport e.g. walk or bus	20%
Never use a car / always use another means of transport e.g. walk or bus	19%

Table 4: How easily people can do certain activities without a car (those who always use a car), answers for 'To see GP' (SHS 2023)

How easy would it be to see your GP without a car? (n=470) ²¹	
Very easy	4%
Fairly easy	20%
Neither easy nor difficult	11%
Fairly difficult	31%
Very difficult	33%

Older versions of the SHS looked at transport to health in more detail. Excerpts are shared in tables 5 and 6.^{22,23} It should be noted that a number of relevant events and trends have occurred since these surveys took place, including the coronavirus pandemic, increasing car ownership and the closure or merging of local GP services.

Table 5: Access to services that respondents thought were very or fairly convenient, entries for 'Hospital outpatients' (SHS 2019)

Demographic category	% convenience
Large urban areas	60%
Other urban	66%
Small accessible towns	54%
Small remote towns	71%
Accessible rural	52%
Remote rural	46%
Holds full driving licence	63%
Does not hold full driving licence	55%
All (n=9,640)	60.3%

Table 6: Normal travel mode to a dentist/GP surgery/hospital outpatients dept. (SHS 2011)

Location	Walk	Car/van (drive)	Car/van (passenger)	Cycle	Bus	Rail	Other	Sample size
Dentist	31%	46%	8%	0%	11%	1%	2%	7,440
GP surgery	37%	41%	9%	0%	9%	0%	3%	8,106
Hospital outpatients	9%	48%	18%	0%	18%	1%	6%	3,984

The different SHS tables paint a picture of the car being the dominant transport mode for accessing healthcare services across Scotland and suggest that it has become more so in the past 15 years. This would reflect the increase in the number of car kilometres travelled on Scotland's roads over the same time, a trend highlighted by Audit Scotland's 2025 report noting the lack of progress towards Scotland's target of reducing car kilometres travelled by 20% by 2030.²⁴

The SHS data presented in tables 3-6 is not broken down by local authority or region,²⁵ which represents a research gap for the purposes of SEStran's Transport to Health strategy. Nonetheless, ad hoc surveys carried out within the region match the national patterns. For example, a survey of patient journeys to Forth Valley Royal Hospital over three days in 2018 found that 87% of non-emergency patients arrived at the hospital by car (as a driver or passenger), followed by 9% by bus, 1% walking and 3% other.²⁶ Another survey of rural healthcare users in Fife also asked about how people access healthcare services. While the sample size was relatively small (around 100 people), over 80% of respondents reported getting to hospital appointments by car (as a driver or a passenger) and over 90% took the car to GP appointments.²⁷

A 2024 survey interviewed bus users in the SEStran region and found that 6% of passengers were travelling to or from a medical or other appointment. The different journey purposes are shown in table 7.²⁸ When broken down into age groups, 18% of passengers over the age of 65 were travelling for medical or other appointments, with far fewer work journeys. Just 5% of 16-25s and 26-64-year-olds were travelling for healthcare purposes. A similar pattern can be observed for payment methods, with 13% of passengers travelling using a free bus pass stating that they were travelling to attend a medical or other appointment, compared to 3% of fare payers.

Table 7 Bus passenger journey purposes in the SEStran region (2024 Your Bus Journey survey)

Journey purpose	% of journeys (n=601)
Commuting for work	31%
Visiting friends or relatives	15%
Shopping trip	14%
Leisure trip	14%
Medical or other appointments	8%
Education commute	4%
Business travel	2%
Something else	13%

The dominance of car use to access healthcare services is mirrored by high levels of car ownership. 75% of households in the SEStran region have access to a private car, according to the SHS, slightly above the rate for Scotland as a whole.²⁹ The figure varies across council areas, from 86% and 85% in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders respectively, to City of Edinburgh at 63%. Table 8 shows the reported levels of car ownership across the eight councils.³⁰

Table 8 Car ownership in the SEStran region

Council area	0 cars	1 car	2 cars	3+ cars
Clackmannanshire	17%	47%	28%	8%
East Lothian	17%	45%	29%	10%
City of Edinburgh	37%	44%	17%	2%
Falkirk	20%	45%	28%	8%
Fife	21%	46%	26%	7%
Midlothian	15%	50%	29%	7%
Scottish Borders	15%	46%	31%	8%
West Lothian	24%	40%	28%	8%
<i>SEStran average</i>	25%	45%	24%	6%
<i>Scotland average</i>	27%	44%	24%	6%

It should also be noted that there is a small but relevant cohort of people who are deemed to be trapped in ‘forced car ownership’. These households, principally in urban areas, feel compelled to retain cars despite worsening financial circumstances. Authors of a 2018 study into forced car ownership in Glasgow concluded that “[a]ccessibility is not just about proximity, but also the quality, frequency and viability of the public transport and land use system to provide an alternative to car ownership”.³¹

3. Missed appointments

As well as examining journeys to health that *do* take place, it is also relevant to consider Transport to Health journeys that *do not* take place due to lack of convenient transport provision. The reasons for missed healthcare appointments are complex and often involve multiple factors relating to the patient or the healthcare system. However, transport is frequently cited as a reason for missing or not attending healthcare appointments.³² It is therefore useful to understand the scale of the problem within the SEStran region, as any reduction in missed appointments through better Transport to Health provision could result in improved outcomes for both patients and the NHS, as discussed later in this review.

Between October 2023 and September 2024, there were around 138,000 missed outpatient appointments at hospitals in the four health boards covering the SEStran region.³³ This equates to a missed appointment rate of 9%, against a national rate of 8%. A breakdown of outpatient numbers and non-attendances can be found in appendix item 4. There is a strong correlation between missed healthcare appointments, including those in a hospital setting, and worsened patient health outcomes.³⁴

Non-attendance data is not routinely collated at a GP practice, eye-test or dentist level in Scotland. However, a large cohort study carried out using the practice records of over 800,000 patients registered at GPs in Scotland between 2013 and 2016 offers some insights. Researchers found that just over 12% of appointments were recorded as not attended during the three-year period, meaning over 1.6 million appointments

were missed.³⁵ By contrast, the NHS in England estimates that around one in 20 GP appointments are missed.³⁶ The Scottish cohort study also broke down missed appointment rates at a patient level for the time period examined, with 54% of patients missing no appointments and 46% missing one or more appointments. 19% of patients missed three or more appointments. Table 9 presents more relevant findings from some of the analyses carried out using the cohort dataset.

Table 9: Serial missed appointments in NHS primary care – Scottish cohort study

Demographic and practice factors relating to missed appointments³⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients who live in areas of high deprivation were more likely to miss appointments. • Patients aged 16-30 and over 90 were more likely to miss multiple appointments. • Practices in rural areas were less likely to experience missed appointments than practices in urban areas. • Urban practices in affluent areas appeared to be less well-equipped to support people who miss multiple appointments.
Missed appointments and mortality or morbidity³⁸
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a strong correlation between missing appointments and having multiple long-term healthcare conditions, particularly for those with mental health conditions. • The risk of dying was significantly higher among patients that missed two or more appointments. For patients with only physical conditions, the risk of death was three times higher and for mental health conditions it was eight times higher.
Likelihood of missed GP appointments resulting in secondary care³⁹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients who missed GP appointments were more likely to miss hospital appointments. • Patients who missed GP appointments had higher levels of hospital outpatient and inpatient care. • Contrasting with other studies, patients who missed GP appointments were no less likely to require emergency treatment than patients who do not miss GP appointments.

The findings presented in Table 9 show the serious implications of missed appointments at a primary care level on patient outcomes. In another paper, the researchers who carried out the cohort study reflected on the reasons these appointments were missed. Transport was cited as a key reason for missing appointments, among other factors such as lack of flexibility offered to patients over appointment time, poor communication from GPs' surgeries and the complicated lives that many of these patients led, impacted by a lack of resources to overcome these barriers.⁴⁰ The authors urged a focus on each patient's needs to address these barriers, rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. The need to tailor support to help a patient overcome barriers to attending healthcare, including transport-related issues, is a common theme in academic research exploring missed healthcare appointments.⁴¹

There is little academic research examining the cost of transport specifically, as opposed to transport as a whole, as a barrier to accessing healthcare in a Scotland or UK context. A 2005 Transportation Research Board paper examined transport

interventions for patients suffering from one or more of 12 chronic or preventative medical conditions, ranging from heart disease and diabetes, to prenatal care and cancer screening.⁴² The study found that while spending money on non-emergency patient transport would cause short-term expense for healthcare providers, it would be highly cost-effective in terms of improving patients' quality of life and life expectancy. As the study was not a longitudinal one, the authors could not definitively state the long-term savings to be expected by providing transport to mitigate barriers to accessing healthcare. However, they suggested that the cost savings could be significant by avoiding the need for more expensive care further down the line.

The TRB study showed the benefits of evaluating transport and healthcare on a condition-by-condition basis, while recognising that many patients suffer from multiple conditions. Such an approach could potentially be applied to NHS Scotland's own analysis of potentially preventable admissions to identify certain groups of healthcare users to target for Transport to Health support.⁴³

It is clear that transport is one among a number of key factors that can impact whether or not people attend healthcare appointments. Transport-related challenges are discussed in the following sections, whether related to missed or successfully attended appointments.



Challenges:

Following the thematic analysis carried out for this literature review, four themes were identified as being challenges to accessing Transport to Health services:

- **Transport connectivity**
- **Cost of transport**
- **Additional barriers faced by disabled people**
- **Organisational and policy-related barriers**

Transport connectivity

Analysis of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) health deprivation data by Audit Scotland suggests that most of the population in the SEStran region is within a 30-minute drive of a GP surgery, and by public transport the journey times rise to a maximum of one hour. However, these averages mask large variations, with rural areas tending to have longer journey times.⁴⁴ The analysis does not include other types of primary healthcare, such as pharmacies or dental practices.

Research by Stantec for the Case for Change document for SEStran's Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) found that 16% of the region's population live in areas where there is a strong correlation between areas of high health deprivation according to the SIMD, and areas with poor public transport connectivity to hospitals. This equates to almost 260,000 people. 15% of the population live in areas with some correlation between these metrics, and 69% of the population are not classed as having a correlation between high health deprivation and poor health connectivity. The RTS analysis is summarised in table 10.⁴⁵

Table 10: SEStran population categorised by correlation between health deprivation (SIMD) and access to hospitals using public transport (SEStran RTS Case for Change)

Transport connectivity	Population	%
Tier 1 (low correlation)	1,105,299	69%
Tier 2 (medium correlation)	246,600	15%
Tier 3 (high correlation)	257,171	16%
Total	1,609,070	

Of the people living in places deemed to have a high correlation between health deprivation and poor public transport connectivity, the vast majority lived in urban areas, as shown in table 11.⁴⁶

Table 11: Land classification for people living in areas where a high correlation between health deprivation (SIMD) and access to hospitals using public transport was identified (SEStran RTS Case for Change)

Land classification	Population	% ⁴⁷
Large Urban Area	91,252	35%
Other Urban Area	114,994	45%
Small Town	23,937	9%
Rural	26,988	10%
Total	257,171	

Large urban areas and other urban areas respectively comprise 35% and 45% of the tier 3 areas where there is poor public transport connectivity to hospitals, slightly more than the proportions of the population that these types of area account for in the total population of the SEStran region: 33% for large urban areas and 43% for urban areas. The slightly higher proportion of people in tier 3 areas challenges the perception that better public transport provision in urban areas would lead to improved connectivity to hospitals. Conversely, people living in small towns and rural areas make up 12% of the SEStran population, but only 9% and 10% of the tier 3 population respectively. The postcodes these households live in are shown on figure 1, which is reproduced from the Case for Change document.⁴⁸

While based on a very different population sample and research parameters, a 2005 report for the Transportation Research Board found that 80% of people in the US who missed healthcare appointments due to being ‘transportation disadvantaged’ lived in urban areas, with the remainder living in rural areas.⁴⁹ This partly reflects the proportion of people living in urban areas, but as with SEStran, points to a need to understand the different challenges people living in rural and urban areas face in taking journeys to access healthcare.



Figure 1: Connectivity to Healthcare map (SEStran RTS Case for Change)

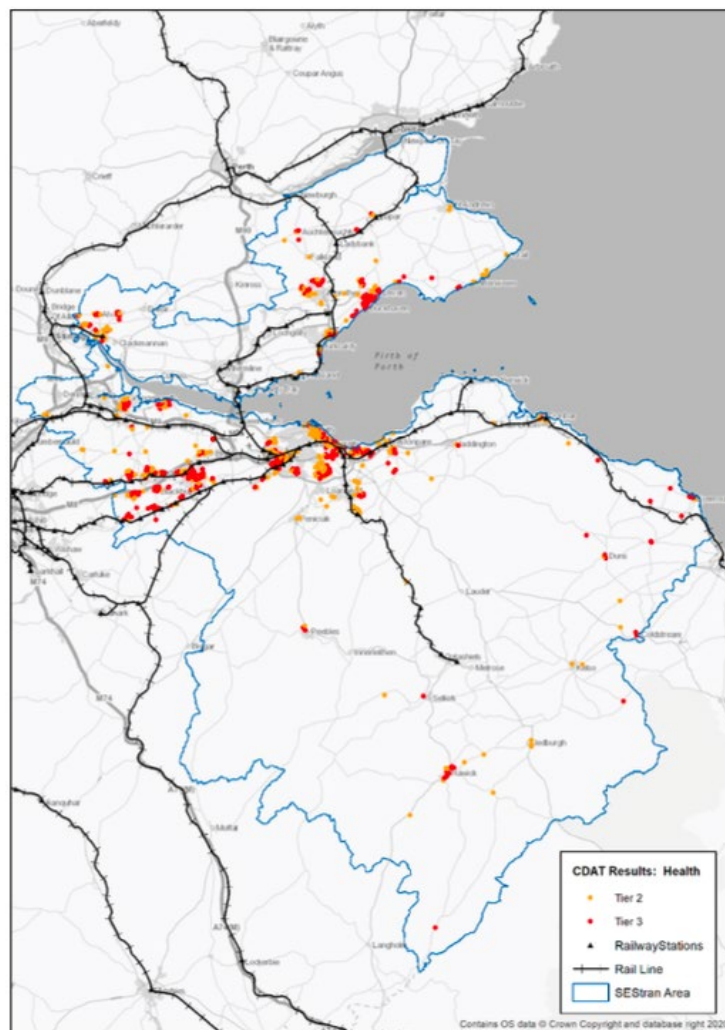


Figure 2.16 CDAT Connectivity to Healthcare

With car being the dominant mode for Transport to Health journeys, parking is an important consideration. Primary care facilities are often located within mixed urban environments, for example local high streets. Accordingly, parking will not always be within the control of the healthcare provider. At a secondary care level, parking is free at NHS hospitals in Scotland.⁵⁰ This has had unintended consequences, such as non-hospital users treating car parks as park and ride sites, and some hospitals now employ car parking attendants to try to monitor usage.⁵¹ The head of UrbanTide, an Edinburgh-based business that carried out a pilot to improve rural patient transport, spoke of patients in Fife leaving two hours earlier than they would normally do to try and secure parking.⁵²

Given the issues with parking at hospitals there could be much to be gained from encouraging those who are able to use other modes of transport. While it is unclear how many people in the SEStran region have no alternative but to drive to hospital, a survey carried out in 2024 for NHS in England found that around 62% of patients who had driven to the hospital in the past year thought that there was an alternative mode of transport they could have used, with bus being the most-selected alternative.⁵³ It is

also unclear how many people own a car but choose to take another mode of transport, and if so, why.

For the 25% of households in the SEStran region without a private car, non-car options for Transport to Health are essential. Households in the most-deprived areas of Scotland are more likely to have multiple and complex health needs and yet are least likely to own a car.^{54,55} With bus being a major public transport mode for most people across the region, it has a key role to play in increasing access to healthcare, whether primary or secondary. The Case for Change for SEStran's Bus Strategy found that 96% of the region had a bus stop within easy walking distance, although this figure is just 15% in the Scottish Borders council area.⁵⁶

Analysis from the RTS showed that many urban areas or small towns in the SEStran region have very poor connectivity, with long journey times either caused by having to change or congestion.⁵⁷ Edinburgh is the natural starting and ending point for many journeys that take place across the region. However, the lack of orbital routes bypassing Edinburgh can make it challenging, including for those trying to access healthcare services that are not located in Edinburgh city centre. The lack of convenient bus options means that even those who have free bus passes may find the services they are entitled to use for free are not convenient.

Cost of transport

Many initiatives around tackling transport-related barriers to accessing healthcare attempt to address the costs of Transport to Health. For example, in England, where parking at NHS hospitals is not typically free, some pilot programmes found that offering free parking or reserving parking spaces for households deemed at risk of missing appointments was an effective way of reducing missed appointment rates.⁵⁸ A similar result was found when those without a car were offered free public transport or taxis to the hospital. These pilots were aimed at cohorts deemed to be at higher risk of missing appointments, such as parents accompanying children, and those from low-income households. With hospital parking in Scotland being free, car-based Transport to Health costs are unlikely to be perceived to be a major barrier to accessing healthcare, at least for hospital appointments. While car ownership is not free, it is often not taken into account by the user, as it is a 'sunk cost' compared to public transport or parking costs, which are taken at face value.⁵⁹

NHS boards typically only reimburse travel costs for those in receipt of certain benefits for journeys to hospital, and not for journeys to GP surgeries or other healthcare sites. The 2019 MACS report criticised the reimbursement process for being complex and requiring patients to pay for the costs up front and then be paid back.⁶⁰ It also noted that many healthcare professionals are unable to point patients in the direction of suitable advice around accessing transport to health.

Around 48% of SEStran's population is eligible for age-related free bus travel.⁶¹ The key concessionary groups are people aged under 22, above 60, and some disabled people. Any cost barriers for those using public transport to travel to healthcare appointments are therefore more likely to be felt by the other 52% of the population who are not eligible for age-related free bus travel. There are also people who have not taken up their free bus pass. The SEStran region has the highest rates of the RTPs

in Scotland for uptake of over 60s bus passes.⁶² The rate for under-22s is more variable, which possibly reflects the scheme only having been introduced in 2022.⁶³

Data from the 2024 Your Bus Journey survey for the SEStran region suggest that free bus pass holders are much more likely to be travelling by bus to attend a healthcare appointment, at 13% of passengers, compared to 3% of paying passengers.⁶⁴ Because the survey only interviewed bus users, it is not clear whether cost of bus travel is a factor for those who decide not to travel by bus.

Costs will also be borne by those using rail to travel to healthcare, as it is not covered by the same concessionary schemes, although far fewer people in the SEStran region travel by train than by bus.⁶⁵ Journey costs will compound significantly for anyone taking multi-modal journeys involving rail and bus, due to the lack of easy to use inter-modal or smart ticketing systems in Scotland.

Additional barriers faced by disabled people

The MACS report drew attention to the additional barriers faced by disabled people in accessing transport to health and social care. These include many of the barriers mentioned above, particularly around connectivity, as well as further recommendations around door-to-door access to healthcare services.⁶⁶ The report highlighted inconsistencies with patient escort rules in transport services, including those delivered by the Scottish Ambulance Service and community transport providers.⁶⁷ It pointed out that not providing free transport for a carer to accompany the patient can be a false economy, leading to greater costs for the healthcare service. The report emphasises that many of the problems experienced by disabled people are also experienced by older people.⁶⁸

The report was particularly scathing about the lack of consultation with disabled people's organisations, and the lack of subsequent action once consultation had taken place:

“...it has been noted that the views of people with direct lived experience are often used to illustrate a point, rather than to shape agendas, explain or increase understanding of the key issues relating to public transport and service provision failures. It is not always clear what impact involving people with direct lived experience has on policy and practice.”⁶⁹

A further point that the report made was that many disabled people have blue badges to allow them to park their car within a convenient distance of hospital entrances. However, blue badge spaces are often not monitored, or they are oversubscribed.⁷⁰

Several of the points made in the MACS report are echoed in a 2025 meta-review of international evidence relating to disability, travel and inequalities.⁷¹ The review finds that disabled people are less likely to be independent and more likely to be unemployed, partly due to transport difficulties. The study also found that a higher proportion of disabled people's trips are to healthcare compared to the wider

population, as barriers mean that disabled people make far fewer trips for recreation and to cultural activities.

Organisational and policy-related barriers

A common theme throughout the literature is the lack of cooperation around Transport to Health. This criticism extends to health bodies, public authorities and transport operators. A review of the Department for Transport (DfT)-funded Total Transport pilot projects to improve transport to health and social care services in a number of locations in England found that lack of senior buy-in was a recurring reason for projects not achieving their goals.⁷² A related barrier identified in the Total Transport projects was not knowing who to contact in each organisation, given the complexity of health service delivery in England.

In the Scottish context, HITRANS, the RTP for the Highlands and Islands, commissioned a scoping exercise in 2024 in advance of developing a health and transport strategy. The consultant's draft report recommended only proceeding with developing the strategy where there was sufficient senior level buy-in from health boards.⁷³ This echoes the difficulties that a project funded by the UK DfT to improve rural transport to access healthcare had in Fife, which found that despite significant potential cost savings to the NHS from the project, and benefits to patients, there was a "lack of a problem owner within the NHS to action the new intelligence created".⁷⁴

The lack of ownership is echoed at the national policymaking level. None of the cabinet secretaries or ministers for transport or health has a function listed within their portfolio that clearly relates to Transport to Health. This does not mean that the issue is not being taken seriously, as the 2024 Transport to Health Delivery Plan indicates. However, it does suggest that the interconnected nature of Transport to Health means that it is at risk of being seen as 'someone else's problem' at multiple levels of decision-making.

A further challenge related to the delivery of Transport to Health is the lack of powers public bodies have over bus routes. Operators are largely free to set routes in line with what they deem to be their commercial interest, bar a handful of subsidised routes.⁷⁵ This can result in operators reducing services to healthcare locations. A recent example outwith the SEStran region was Stagecoach changing the calling points and frequency of a popular bus route linking Perth Royal Infirmary to Ninewells hospital in Dundee.⁷⁶

The spatial planning system is another policy-related challenge to the delivery of Transport to Health, with increasing numbers of car-dependent new developments being built without public amenities.⁷⁷ This means that many people have no option but to use a car to access healthcare services, even at the primary level.



Opportunities

Three main themes were identified through the literature review as being opportunities for improving Transport to Health services:

- **Policy changes**
- **Digital transport technologies**
- **Virtual provision of some services**

Policy changes

The Scottish Government's 2024 Transport to Health delivery plan provides a clear mandate to SEStran and other RTPs to develop their own transport to health strategy, while taking care not to duplicate existing efforts. Commitment 19 states: "The Scottish Government will support Regional Transport Partnerships to develop their own plans around Transport to Health".⁷⁸

The only sustained example in Scotland of a regional strategy encompassing Transport to Health has been the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) for the NHS Grampian area. NHS Grampian covers three local authority areas: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. Nestrans, the RTP for north east Scotland, and NHS Grampian first developed the HTAP in 2007 and 2008, with the latest version covering 2024-2029.⁷⁹ Tactran, the RTP for Stirling, Perth & Kinross, Angus and Dundee developed an HTAP in 2011.⁸⁰ However, a search of current strategy documents suggests that Tactran's HTAP is no longer a current strategy, at least in a standalone format.

Nestrans' HTAP takes a broad view of transport and public health, dividing its strategy into two themes, transport and public health and access to health and social care. The former includes travel as a means to improve health (e.g. active travel), as well as avoiding harm from transport (e.g. road safety, air pollution). The latter addresses patient, and to a lesser extent, visitor travel to healthcare. The latest version of the strategy considers staff travel more than previous versions did.⁸¹ The different aspects covered are summarised in table 12 and compared with SEStran's plans.

Table 12: Health and transport themes covered by Nestrans' HTAP and SEStran's proposed Transport to Health (TtH) strategy

	Transport and public health		Access to healthcare sites	
	Transport as a means to better health	Avoiding transport-related harms	Patient (and visitor) travel	Staff travel
Nestrans HTAP 2024-2029	X	X	X	X
SEStran TtH strategy (proposed)			X	

Broadening the scope of SEStran's Transport to Health strategy to include some of the other aspects of transport and health mentioned in table 12, particularly staff travel, could be tempting, given that many staff and patients will travel to healthcare locations using the same modes of transport. However, there are key differences, notably that for most patients, healthcare is occasional, and the journey is derived from the need to treat a healthcare issue that they are suffering from. Conversely many staff will be travelling on a daily or very regular basis, with their journey derived from their employment at that site.

HITRANS' draft report on health and transport stated that as staff travel to work is largely within the control of NHS bodies, there was less interest from potential stakeholders in including this as part of a HITRANS HTAP.⁸² Many NHS boards already take staff travel seriously as they seek to reduce scope 3 carbon emissions from their operations. Scope 3 carbon emissions do not include patients travelling 'under their own steam' to healthcare sites, although some NHS organisations elsewhere in the UK do this voluntarily.⁸³ It is also easier for NHS bodies to promote non-public schemes to staff, such as carpooling or tax-related cycle to work schemes, which are not applicable to the general public.

Given the clear direction from the Scottish Government's delivery plan, which does not reference staff travel explicitly, and the scale of the existing challenges as outlined in this literature review, there is more than enough for a SEStran Transport to Health strategy to address, without broadening its remit any further. However, there is no reason why future editions of the strategy could not be expanded to incorporate further transport and health considerations, as the evolution of the NHS Grampian HTAP shows.

A further policy-related opportunity that could benefit a regional Transport to Health strategy is the development of SEStran's Regional Bus Strategy.⁸⁴ The Bus Strategy is at its Case for Change stage and offers the chance to reconsider how the dominant public transport mode is delivered in the region, including bus as means of Transport to Health. The Bus Strategy presents a chance to address some of the challenges identified earlier in this report, including long journey times, multi-modal ticketing and fare costs.

Digital transport technologies

Improvements in digital technologies for transport open up a range of potential tools to improve Transport to Health. Table 13 summarises three recent pilots or research projects that have been delivered in the SEStran region and the potential technological opportunities demonstrated.

Table 13: Recent digital transport technology pilots and research projects in the SEStran region

<p>GoSEStran MaaS pilot, 2022-2024</p> <p>Mobility as a Service (MaaS) brings together multi-modal journey planning and payment in one digital system. Typically accessed through a phone app, MaaS aims to present users with options for ‘door-to-door’ sustainable transport journeys. Funded by Transport Scotland’s MaaS Investment Fund, SEStran’s pilot ran from 2022 until 2023, and was extended until 2024 with further funding through Smarter Choices, Smarter Places. Alongside other MaaS pilots taking place elsewhere in Scotland at the same time, the SEStran pilot aimed to address rural transport poverty and MaaS integration with digital demand responsive transport (DDRT) services.⁸⁵</p> <p>The evaluation report for GoSEStran notes that the length of the pilot was not long enough to evidence long-term behaviour change, given the need to deliver an app and the complexities of transport procurement.⁸⁶ There was not an explicit Transport to Health focus for the GoSEStran MaaS pilot. However, with sufficient investment and political will, the technology explored could be applied to patient transport, including for those whose journeys are being paid for by the NHS, to ensure more reliable transport connections to healthcare services.</p>
<p>Scottish Borders bus network review, 2022-2024</p> <p>In 2022, the Scottish Borders council commissioned a bus network review through the Workforce Mobility Project, funded by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The project incorporated existing and new datasets to analyse transport demand patterns, with Borders General Hospital being a key trip generator for the region.⁸⁷ A DDRT pilot ran at the same time and fed into the review.⁸⁸ The findings of the review led to changes to the bus network in the Scottish Borders to better match patterns of demand.</p> <p>The use of novel insights, such as mobile phone data to map travel patterns, and DDRT journey data, could be applied to other healthcare sites within the SEStran region, to optimise the provision of Transport to Health services.</p>
<p>UrbanTide rural transport accelerator trial, 2024-2025</p> <p>One of the projects funded by the DfT as part of its 2024-2025 Rural Transport Accelerator Fund was led by UrbanTide, an Edinburgh-based company. UrbanTide’s adapted its uMove technology to build a prototype tool for NHS patient travel in Fife, incorporating over 150 datasets, including travel times, NHS service availability, journey options, accessibility and highlighting appointment availability to suit the journeys.⁸⁹</p> <p>While the window to deliver the pilot was short, the trial identified some key barriers to overcoming the deployment of this sort of technology to improve Transport to Health in a rural setting. The pilot allowed the company to develop its product to be ready to be rolled out in a real-world healthcare setting. The company estimates that a health board adopting uMove would pay for itself within 12-24 months, due to cost savings associated with missed appointments no longer occurring.⁹⁰</p>

The examples in table 13 all show the potential for digital technologies to improve the delivery of Transport to Health in a SEStran setting. While some of the technology is in its infancy, it opens up the possibility to tailor Transport to Health to the needs of patients, particularly those with additional support needs.

Other technological advances tested elsewhere could also offer opportunities. For example, a trial using machine learning at Imperial College Hospital in London identified the characteristics of patients most likely to miss appointments. It found that targeting the top 10% of the patient population who are identified as likely to miss an appointment could address as much as 29% of missed appointments in certain departments.⁹¹ Such an approach could allow for personalised support, including transport measures, to be offered to patients identified as most at risk of missing appointments.

Virtual provision of some services

In line with the 'Avoid-Shift-Improve' framework for reducing carbon emissions from transport,⁹² it is reasonable to consider whether the need for some Transport to Health journeys could be averted altogether. In some cases, particularly at a primary care level, services can be provided virtually, either over the phone or via video call.

Across the four SEStran health boards in October 2023-September 2024, almost 2 million GP or other clinician appointments were held virtually, accounting for 23% of the total.⁹³ NHS Lothian had the highest proportion of virtual appointments, at 25%, compared to the lowest, NHS Borders, at 15%. The proportion also varied according to who the appointment was with, with 31% of GP appointments being done virtually across the four health boards, compared to 11% of appointments with other types of clinicians. The breakdown for these figures is included in appendix item 1.⁹⁴

It should be noted that the virtual provision of services will not be appropriate for many patients. A 2023 paper found that remote triage services, as tested in primary care settings in England, could benefit some patients, such as those who struggle to attend appointments due to travel times or work commitments.⁹⁵ However, the authors cautioned that a blanket move towards using remote triage could exacerbate healthcare inequalities for other groups that struggle to access care, including those unable to afford reliable phone or internet connections, or older patients.

Research gaps

The literature review has identified a number of research gaps relating to Transport to Health in the SEStran region. Undertaking further work to address these areas could provide useful insights for the development of a Transport to Health strategy for the south east of Scotland. Research gaps are discussed in turn below:

- **Transport mode share for different types of journeys to healthcare services in the SEStran region.** The last SHS Transport and Travel report to capture this information was in 2011 at a national scale, but even then, it does not appear to have been provided at the RTP or local authority level, potentially due to sample sizes.
- **Car and public transport distances to other types of primary care.** Analysis carried out using SIMD data has focused on access to GP services and hospitals in the SEStran region. While important, other types of healthcare are not captured by this analysis, such as pharmacies and dental practices.
- **Alternative modes of transport to healthcare sites.** While the 2023 SHS asks how people get to the GP and asks people who always drive to the GP if they can use any other modes of transport, it does not ask about other types of healthcare service. It also does not provide a breakdown of the data for the SEStran region. Another insight missing from the data is how many people own a car but choose to take another mode of transport to healthcare.
- **Quantifying the scale of the parking problem at hospital sites.** At the moment there is plenty of anecdotal evidence around parking issues at NHS sites. Further research could attempt to quantify on a more rigorous basis how long patients spend trying to find parking and what implications this has.
- **Transport cost barriers to accessing healthcare services.** There is little research examining the cost of transport specifically, as opposed to transport more generally, as a barrier to accessing healthcare in a Scotland or UK context.
- **Quantifying the cost to the NHS of transport-related missed appointments in the SEStran region.** While the reasons for missing appointments are complex, if transport can be pinpointed as a reason for particular missed appointments, this could provide motivation for the NHS to fund transport services.
- **People who avoid booking healthcare appointments altogether.** Inherently a difficult phenomenon to capture, understanding how many people are put off by poor transport from booking appointments could provide further basis for a Transport to Health strategy.

Next steps and recommendations

This literature review has summarised some of the key baseline data, challenges and opportunities relating to Transport to Health in the SEStran region and, where relevant, beyond. It has also discussed some of the research gaps that could be addressed to provide further evidence for the development of a SEStran Transport to Health strategy.

In line with the STAG process, it is expected that SEStran will undertake the development of a formal Case for Change for a regional Transport to Health strategy in 2025/26, including engagement with organisational and public stakeholders. The issues outlined in this report can provide SEStran with a basis for shaping the avenues of inquiry for the stakeholder engagement process. In particular, this is an opportunity for SEStran to address some of the research gaps identified above.

This review can also act as a body of evidence by which to assess whether barriers and opportunities identified by stakeholders in the engagement process are perceived or actual, as recommended by the STAG process.⁹⁶



Appendices

Appendix item 1: GP and clinician appointments, October 2023 – September 2024

Geography	HCPGroup	Total	In-person	Virtual	% Physical	% Virtual
NHS Borders	GPs	319,022	244,347	74,675	76.6%	23.4%
NHS Borders	Other Clinicians	315,990	295,619	20,371	93.6%	6.4%
NHS Borders	Total	635,012	539,966	95,046	85.0%	15.0%
NHS Fife	GPs	1,040,927	769,257	271,670	73.9%	26.1%
NHS Fife	Other Clinicians	755,269	674,302	80,967	89.3%	10.7%
NHS Fife	Total	1,796,196	1,443,559	352,637	80.4%	19.6%
NHS Forth Valley	GPs	743,876	539,158	204,718	72.5%	27.5%
NHS Forth Valley	Other Clinicians	510,597	423,086	87,511	82.9%	17.1%
NHS Forth Valley	Total	1,254,473	962,244	292,229	76.7%	23.3%
NHS Lothian	GPs	3,107,147	2,064,912	1,042,235	66.5%	33.5%
NHS Lothian	Other Clinicians	1,692,056	1,523,436	168,620	90.0%	10.0%
NHS Lothian	Total	4,799,203	3,588,348	1,210,855	74.8%	25.2%
SEStran	GPs	5,210,972	3,617,674	1,593,298	69.4%	30.6%
SEStran	Other clinicians	3,273,912	2,916,443	357,469	89.1%	10.9%
SEStran	Total	8,484,884	6,534,117	1,950,767	77.0%	23.0%
Scotland	GPs	17,431,959	12,454,165	4,977,794	71.4%	28.6%
Scotland	Other Clinicians	12,142,030	10,775,800	1,366,230	88.7%	11.3%
Scotland	Total	29,573,989	23,229,965	6,344,024	78.5%	21.5%

Source: [PHS: General Practice In-hours Activity Visualisation As at 31 January 2025](#)

Appendix item 2: NHS-funded primary eye examinations, April 2023 – March 2024

NHS board	Number of patients examined
Borders	34,477
Fife	122,426
Forth Valley	98,599
Lothian	278,893
Total	534,395

Source: [PHS: Ophthalmic workload statistics as at year ending 31 March 2024](#)

Appendix item 3: Registered patients accessing NHS dental care, January 2022 – December 2024

NHS board	Number of patients
Borders	70,638
Fife	201,791
Forth Valley	191,506
Lothian	515,648
Total	979,583*

*To gain a figure for one year, this two-year total was divided in half.

Source: [PHS: NHS dental data monitoring report Quarter Ending December 2024](#)

Appendix item 4: NHS hospital outpatients, October 2023 – September 2024

Location	Type of activity	Stays/ Attendances	Missed appointments	Missed appnt. rate
NHS Borders	All outpatients	104,206	9,766	9%
NHS Fife	All outpatients	341,535	29,171	8%
NHS Forth Valley	All outpatients	286,033	31,145	10%
NHS Lothian	All outpatients	735,596	68,071	8%
<i>SEStran health boards</i>	<i>All outpatients</i>	<i>1,467,370</i>	<i>138,153</i>	<i>9%</i>
Scotland	All outpatients	4,075,084	378,455	8%

Source: [PHS: Acute hospital activity and NHS beds information \(quarterly\) Quarter ending 30 September 2024](#)

References

- ¹ [Scottish Government: Transport to Health Delivery Plan](#)
- ² [Transport \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- ³ [SEStran: Regional Transport Strategy](#)
- ⁴ [SEStran: Regional Bus Strategy](#)
- ⁵ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#)
- ⁶ [Audit Scotland: Transport for health and social care](#)
- ⁷ [Scottish Government: Transport to Health Delivery Plan](#)
- ⁸ [NRS: Mid-2023 population estimates](#)
- ⁹ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) LA tables, LA17
- ¹⁰ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) Travel diary tables, TD3a
- ¹¹ Daily figure is based on a seven-day weighting ([SHS 2023: Methodology and fieldwork outcomes](#)). To obtain an annual figure, the daily figure is multiplied by 365 and by the population aged 16 and above of the eight local authorities that make up the SEStran region. Population figures are mid-2023 estimates ([NRS: Mid-2023 population estimates](#)).
- ¹² The true number is likely to be greater, as this figure excludes other appointments, such as administrative interactions or appointments with students. It should also be noted that some people may schedule an appointment with both a GP and another type of clinician at the same visit. [PHS: General Practice In-hours Activity Visualisation As at 31 January 2025](#), Physical versus virtual appointments
- ¹³ [PHS: Ophthalmic workload statistics as at year ending 31 March 2024](#), Figure 1c: Percentage of population examined by health board, Table
- ¹⁴ The figure for two years is halved to give a figure for one year. The figure is likely to be less than the actual total as it does not include non-registered patients. [PHS: NHS dental data monitoring report Quarter Ending December 2024](#), Data tables, Table 10
- ¹⁵ As with the figures for primary care, this is likely to be an underestimate of the number of planned hospital journeys as only the number of outpatients has been used; there will be further planned interactions such as inpatients admitted for scheduled surgery. [PHS: Acute hospital activity and NHS beds information \(quarterly\) Quarter ending 30 September 2024](#), Time trend (location comparison)
- ¹⁶ Some patients will travel into the SEStran region for healthcare who do not live in the SEStran region, and likewise some patients will travel outwith the SEStran region for specialist care. Further exploration of the figures would be needed, however a cursory review suggests that the flows of patients outwith their health board area are not significant for the purposes of this literature review.
- ¹⁷ [PHS: Monthly prescribing activity data for December 2024](#), download for SEStran health boards
- ¹⁸ [NHS Inform: NHS Pharmacy First Scotland](#)
- ¹⁹ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) Social tables, Table 57
- ²⁰ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) Social tables, Table 58
- ²¹ Due to rounding, percentages add up to 99%
- ²² [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2019](#) p.55
- ²³ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2011](#) tables 34, 35 & 36
- ²⁴ [Audit Scotland publication: Sustainable transport](#)
- ²⁵ Even if it were, the sample sizes for each area would not be large enough to make reliable comparisons.
- ²⁶ Forth Valley Royal Hospital: Travel & Parking Characteristics 2018 Survey Report (supplied), p.17
- ²⁷ DfT Rural Transport Accelerator report (supplied), p.25 of PDF
- ²⁸ Transport Focus: Your Bus Journey SEStran Full Year Report for 2024 (supplied), pp.18-19 of PDF
- ²⁹ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) LA tables, LA4
- ³⁰ Due to rounding, some percentages add up to 99% or 101%
- ³¹ Curl, Angela, et al. 'Household Car Adoption and Financial Distress in Deprived Urban Communities: A Case of Forced Car Ownership?' *Transport Policy*, vol. 65, July 2018, pp. 61–71. *ScienceDirect*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2017.01.002>.
- ³² Parsons, Joanne, et al. 'Which Patients Miss Appointments with General Practice and the Reasons Why: A Systematic Review'. *British Journal of General Practice*, vol. 71, no. 707, June 2021, pp. e406–12, <https://bjgp.org/content/bjgp/71/707/e406.full.pdf>
- ³³ [PHS: Acute hospital activity and NHS beds information \(quarterly\) Quarter ending 30 September 2024](#), Time trend (location comparison)

- ³⁴ Wilson, Rebecca, and Yvette Winnard. 'Causes, Impacts and Possible Mitigation of Non-Attendance of Appointments within the National Health Service: A Literature Review'. *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, vol. 36, no. 7, Jan. 2022, pp. 892–911. *Emerald Insight*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHOM-11-2021-0425>.
- ³⁵ Ellis, David A., et al. 'Demographic and Practice Factors Predicting Repeated Non-Attendance in Primary Care: A National Retrospective Cohort Analysis'. *The Lancet Public Health*, vol. 2, no. 12, Dec. 2017, pp. e551–59. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(17\)30217-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30217-7).
- ³⁶ [NHS England: Missed GP appointments costing NHS millions](#)
- ³⁷ Ellis, David A., et al. 'Demographic and Practice Factors Predicting Repeated Non-Attendance in Primary Care: A National Retrospective Cohort Analysis'. *The Lancet Public Health*, vol. 2, no. 12, Dec. 2017, pp. e551–59. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(17\)30217-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30217-7).
- ³⁸ McQueenie, Ross, et al. 'Morbidity, Mortality and Missed Appointments in Healthcare: A National Retrospective Data Linkage Study'. *BMC Medicine*, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan. 2019, p. 2. *Springer Link*, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-018-1234-0>.
- ³⁹ Williamson, Andrea E., et al. "Missingness" in Health Care: Associations between Hospital Utilization and Missed Appointments in General Practice. A Retrospective Cohort Study'. *PLOS ONE*, vol. 16, no. 6, June 2021, p. e0253163. *PLoS Journals*, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0253163>.
- ⁴⁰ Lindsay, Calum, et al. 'Understanding the Causes of Missingness in Primary Care: A Realist Review'. *BMC Medicine*, vol. 22, no. 1, June 2024, p. 235. *Springer Link*, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-024-03456-2>.
- ⁴¹ For example: [Parsons et al., 2021](#), and [Sung et al., 2024](#).
- ⁴² Transportation Research Board and National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Providing Non-Emergency Medical Transportation*. Transportation Research Board, 2005. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, <https://doi.org/10.17226/22055>
- ⁴³ NHS National Services Scotland (NSS): Potentially Preventable Admissions (supplied)
- ⁴⁴ [Audit Scotland publication: Sustainable transport](#)
- ⁴⁵ [SEStran: RTS Case for Change report](#) p.27 of PDF
- ⁴⁶ [SEStran: RTS Case for Change report](#) p.27 of PDF
- ⁴⁷ Due to rounding, percentages add up to 99%
- ⁴⁸ [SEStran: RTS Case for Change report](#) p.26 of PDF
- ⁴⁹ Transportation Research Board and National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Providing Non-Emergency Medical Transportation*. Transportation Research Board, 2005. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, <https://doi.org/10.17226/22055>, p.34 table 4-1
- ⁵⁰ [Scottish Government submission to Petitions Committee of 20 February 2024](#)
- ⁵¹ [NHS Lanarkshire: Parking test of change to begin at Hairmyres and Motherwell Health Centre](#)
- ⁵² [UrbanTide LinkedIn post: Missed appointments cost the NHS £1 billion every year](#)
- ⁵³ [Transport Focus: Travelling to NHS locations](#)
- ⁵⁴ [PHS: Health inequalities: How large are health inequalities in Scotland?](#)
- ⁵⁵ [TS: Transport and Travel in Scotland 2023](#) Social tables, table 18b
- ⁵⁶ [SEStran: RTS Case for Change report](#) p.39 of PDF
- ⁵⁷ SEStran: Regional Bus Strategy Case for Change report (supplied), p.58 of PDF
- ⁵⁸ [NHS England: Free transport reduces 'was not brought' rates for children at Midlands trust & NHS England: Narrowing inequalities in waiting lists in Leicester](#)
- ⁵⁹ Gössling, Stefan, et al. 'The Lifetime Cost of Driving a Car'. *Ecological Economics*, vol. 194, Apr. 2022, p. 107335. *ScienceDirect*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2021.107335>.
- ⁶⁰ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#) pp.5-6
- ⁶¹ Figures extrapolated from [NRS: Mid-2023 population estimates](#) table 1
- ⁶² SEStran: Regional Bus Strategy Case for Change report (supplied), p.66 of PDF
- ⁶³ [Scottish Government: Free bus pass scheme costs and uptake: FOI release](#)
- ⁶⁴ Transport Focus: Your Bus Journey SEStran Full Year Report for 2024 (supplied), p.19 of PDF
- ⁶⁵ [SEStran: RTS Case for Change report](#) p. 37 of PDF
- ⁶⁶ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#) p.30
- ⁶⁷ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#) p.27
- ⁶⁸ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#) p.3
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- ⁷⁰ [MACS report: Transport to Health and Social Care](#) p.29

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- ⁷¹ Mindell, Jennifer S., et al. 'A Meta-Review of Literature Reviews of Disability, Travel and Inequalities'. *Journal of Transport & Health*, vol. 41, Mar. 2025, p. 101961. *ScienceDirect*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2024.101961>.
- ⁷² [DfT December 2017 Total Transport: feasibility report & pilot review](#) p.9
- ⁷³ [HITRANS Health & Transport Action Plan – Scoping Review Draft September 2024](#) p.13
- ⁷⁴ DfT Rural Transport Accelerator report (supplied), p.20 of PDF
- ⁷⁵ [Scottish Government: Cabinet and Ministers](#) Accessed March 2025
- ⁷⁶ [The Courier: Stagecoach releases new timetable in 'victory' for Perthshire after bus cuts furore](#)
- ⁷⁷ [Scottish Housing News: Medical bodies call on housing developers to help ease health facility shortage](#)
- ⁷⁸ [Scottish Government: Transport to Health Delivery Plan](#) p.8
- ⁷⁹ [Nestrans Health and Transport Action Plan: 2024-2029](#)
- ⁸⁰ [Tactran Health & Transport Action Plan 2011](#)
- ⁸¹ [Nestrans: Documents – Travel Awareness](#)
- ⁸² [HITRANS Health & Transport Action Plan – Scoping Review Draft September 2024](#) p.10
- ⁸³ Tennison, Imogen, et al. 'Health Care's Response to Climate Change: A Carbon Footprint Assessment of the NHS in England'. *The Lancet Planetary Health*, vol. 5, no. 2, Feb. 2021, pp. e84–92. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(20\)30271-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30271-0).
- ⁸⁴ SEStran: Regional Bus Strategy Case for Change report (supplied)
- ⁸⁵ [TS: Mobility as a Service \(MaaS\) Investment Fund Evaluation Final Report](#) p.8
- ⁸⁶ [GoSEStran MaaS project Final Report](#) p.49
- ⁸⁷ [Workforce Mobility Project: The Scottish Borders Bus Network Review](#)
- ⁸⁸ [Workforce Mobility Project: Berwickshire Demand Responsive Transport Trial](#)
- ⁸⁹ [UrbanTide: UrbanTide awarded £150k in government funding to develop uMove Rural](#)
- ⁹⁰ DfT Rural Transport Accelerator report (supplied), p.18
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- ⁹² [TUMI: Sustainable Urban Transport: Avoid-Shift-Improve \(A-S-I\)](#)
- ⁹³ [PHS: General Practice In-hours Activity Visualisation As at 31 January 2025](#), Physical versus virtual appointments
- ⁹⁴ NB GP attendance figures are experimental and therefore caution should be exercised when comparing health boards. For more details see: [PHS: General Practice in-hours activity visualisation Methodology and metadata](#)
- ⁹⁵ Parsons, Jo, et al. 'The Changing Face of Missed Appointments'. *British Journal of General Practice*, vol. 73, no. 728, Mar. 2023, pp. 134–35. *bjgp.org*, <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp23X732249>
- ⁹⁶ Perceived barriers can still be a form of barrier as experienced by passengers (in this case patients), but it is useful to understand why these perceived barriers exist. See [Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance - Managers Guide](#) section 3.2

This report was prepared for SEStran
by Tyne Consulting.
April 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Partnership Board with an update of the SEStran communications and marketing work that has been taking place over the last eight months. It also includes an overview of the recent Thistle Assistance marketing campaign and People and Place case study videos.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Effective and impactful communications and marketing is needed to support the work of SEStran, including realising the ambitions of the Regional Transport Strategy 2035.
- 2.2 A key objective of the communications and marketing officer role is to raise awareness of both SEStran's work and the organisation. In the last eight months, targeted communications and marketing activity has taken place to begin to achieve this objective.

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

- 3.1 During the last eight months we have focussed our SEStran-wide marketing and communications work on:
- LinkedIn – growing our followers
 - A monthly newsletter to raise awareness of our work with stakeholders
 - Developing website content
 - Developing a SEStran blog
 - Creating topic factsheets
 - 2024/25 Annual Report
- 3.2 Alongside this, work has also taken place to promote Thistle Assistance and to create People and Place case study videos.
- 3.3 **LinkedIn**
LinkedIn is our primary social media channel as this is the channel the majority of our stakeholders use. To grow followers, it is important to post on LinkedIn regularly. We now post a minimum of three times a week. Posts use relevant hashtags and link to our website for more information.
- 3.4 Since October 2024:
- The number of people following SEStran has grown by 62% (from 656 to 1,065 followers).
 - Our LinkedIn posts are reaching **315%** more people.
 - There's been a **475%** increase in the number of people clicking on our posts.

Our LinkedIn page can be viewed here:
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/sestran/>

3.5 **Newsletter**

In December 2024, we launched our monthly e-newsletter. We began by sending it to all members of our Partnership Board and the forums. We are now working to grow and develop this audience. The newsletter contains short pieces of information about relevant important topics with links to the website for more information. It is an important tool to help raise awareness of our work and the impact it is having, as well as a way for us to keep people up to date with our work.

3.6 The open rate of the newsletter is high amongst partner organisations but is currently lower with Partnership Board members.

3.7 To grow the readership of the newsletter we have recently begun promoting it on LinkedIn. So far, this has resulted in 39 new readers.

3.8 Our newsletter click through rate to our website is 41%. This means that 41% of the people who open the newsletter then click through to read further information on our website. The most recent newsletter can be view here: [May news from the team at SEStran](#)

3.9 **Website**

Work has been ongoing to improve the content on the website. Improvements include:

- A series of new People and Place pages
- Improved top menu navigation
- More links to content added to the home page
- Work to improve search engine rankings
- New page layout options

3.10 **Blogs**

To provide more context and detail about areas of our work, we have created a new blog feature on our website. This allows content focussing on specific topics which can be used on social media and in the newsletter. The helps us to promote our organisation and employees as experts in the transport sector whilst also growing our audience.

3.11 We have so far published five blogs on our website:

- [Our ambitions and intentions for 2025/26](#)
- [Good transport is essential for accessible healthcare](#)
- [How we are looking at our organisational climate footprint](#)
- [Celebrating 20 years of regional transport partnerships in Scotland](#)
- [Building better connections: People and Place in 2025/26](#)

The blogs can be found in the news section: sestran.gov.uk/news/. News is pulled onto our homepage which helps us keep our homepage dynamic.

3.12 **Factsheets**

We are developing a programme of topic-based factsheets to explain areas of our work. These are promoted on social media and in the newsletter and can be used by Partnership Board members to share with colleagues / constituents to help improve understanding of our work.

We have so far produced two factsheets:

- [The SEStran region in numbers](#)
- [All about buses](#)

3.13 Annual Report 2024/25

The 2024/25 Annual Report will be ready to be published very soon, having been approved at the March Board meeting. It is significantly shorter this year and has been written and designed to be easier to read and digest. The final version will be made available to Board members as soon as it's available.

3.14 We will promote the Annual Report on social media, in our newsletter and on our website.

3.15 Thistle Assistance digital marketing campaign

Thistle Assistance is our initiative to help people feel safer and more confident using public transport. It is a free card or app that can be personalised to show public transport staff what extra support might be needed.

3.16 During 2024/25, take up of the card and app had been low, so to tackle this, we ran a marketing campaign. Historically, we have tried various print and broadcast approaches, however, given the popularity of digital media, we chose to take a digital marketing approach. Digital media campaigns are good as, compared to traditional marketing channels, it is easier to measure impact and success.

3.17 The campaign ran from 21 March to 30 April 2025 and focussed on improving awareness and take-up of Thistle Assistance.

3.18 We ran digital ads on:

- Meta (Facebook and Instagram): these were targeted by audience interests and were video and static image ads
- Newspaper websites, targeted by audience interests: these were video ads
- Apple app store
- Google search results (based on key words and search query phrases)

3.19 The campaign was actively monitored and designed to be dynamic. At the midpoint we noticed that the Apple app store and Google search ads were not performing as well as the Meta ads, so we moved their remaining spend over to Meta, to maximise their success.

3.20 The campaign worked very well, with most card requests and app downloads came from the Facebook ads.

- 3.21 **Results:** 21 Mar to 30 Apr compared to preceding period (9 Feb to 20 Mar):
- Card requests: 3,376 vs 131 (**2,477%** increase).
 - App downloads: 1,784 vs 34 (**5,147%** increase).
- 3.22 **Website views:** 21 Mar to 30 Apr compared to 9 Feb to 20 Mar:
- www.thistleassistance.com: 23,586 vs 2,580 (**814%** increase).
 - www.thistleassistance.com/get-the-card: 9,325 vs 261 (**3,472%** increase).
 - www.thistleassistance.com/get-the-app: 3,788 vs 138 (**2,644%** increase).
 - www.thistleassistance.com/card-request-complete: 3,728 vs 99 (**3,665%** increase).
- 3.23 **Meta results**
- 4,463,093 impressions (advert appearing for someone to see)
 - 25,765 link clicks
- 3.24 **Newspaper websites ads**
- 34,976 completed views of video.
- 3.25 **Feedback**
The success of the campaign was further validated by positive comments on Facebook.
- Comments on Meta included:
- “Just got mine this morning but not had the opportunity to use it yet. It’s a very useful idea for all of us with limited mobility.”
 - “Applied for card. It will be a great help for me. Thank you.”
 - “I used mine and the drivers were all very good and gave me time to sit down etc which they didn’t do before.”
- 3.26 The results of this marketing activity have been very encouraging, and we are using the learnings to inform our plans for the marketing aspect of the Thistle Assistance programme in 2025/26.
- 3.27 **People and Place case study films**
We have produced three People and Place case study films showcasing projects in the Scottish Borders Council area, East Lothian Council area and City of Edinburgh Council Area. Alongside this, we also produced a general introduction film.
- 3.28 Here are links to the films:
- [Walk It](#) – Scottish Borders Council
 - [Folding bike hire](#) – East Lothian Council
 - [Thistle Outdoors](#) – City of Edinburgh Council
 - [Introduction to SEStran’s People and Place work](#)

These films have been featured on our social media channels, in our newsletter and on the website. They have also been shared by the relevant local authorities and community groups. On the SEStran

LinkedIn page, these videos have so far been viewed almost 3,000 times.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Partnership Board is asked to:

- Note the communications and marketing activity that has taken place
- Provide, where appropriate, commentary on the above report
- Note the availability of the newsletter and social media channels and share with others where appropriate

Sarah Junik

Communications and Marketing Officer

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

Appointments

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report seeks the Board's approval to appoint the nominated Clackmannanshire Council representative to the Performance and Audit Committee and to provide an update on Non-Councillor Board membership.

2. APPOINTMENT TO PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 2.1 Due to changes to the portfolio of Cllr Fiona Law, Cllr Scott Harrison was appointed by Clackmannanshire Council as her replacement on the Partnership Board.
- 2.2 Cllr Scott Harrison has now been nominated to join the Performance and Audit Committee.
- 2.3 Members should note that each constituent council must have one representative to sit on the committee. Current membership is as follows:
- Cllr Russell Imrie
 - Cllr John McMillan
 - Cllr Stephen Jenkinson
 - Cllr Jenny Linehan
 - Cllr Tom Conn
 - Cllr Paul Garner
 - Cllr Derek Glenn
 - Cllr Scott Harrison (Pending)
 - Doreen Steele
 - John Scott
 - Callum Hay
 - Simon Hindshaw

3. NON-COUNCILLOR MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

- 3.1 The Board is asked to note the resignation of Non-Councillor Members Kate Sherry and Geoff Duke. The current term of the remaining Non-Councillor Members will end in March 2026. Therefore, in consultation with the Chair, it was agreed that as the next recruitment exercise will commence in September, the 2 vacancies will roll over until then.
- 3.2 The Partnership Director would like to put on record his thanks to both Kate and Geoff for all their contributions to the Board and to wish them success in their future roles.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- 4.1 Approve the appointment of Councillor Harrison to the Performance and Audit Committee; and
- 4.2 Put on record its thanks to both Kate Sherry and Geoff Duke for all their contributions to the Board, and to wish them success in their future roles; and
- 4.3 Note that recruitment of Non-Councillor Board Members will begin in September 2025 in order to align with the end of the current term in March 2026

Andrew Ferguson
SEStran Consultant
13 June 2025

Policy Implications	None
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

Consultation responses between March and June 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on SEStran's response to consultations between March and June of this year, with particular focus on the Just Transition Plan (JTP).
- 1.2 In terms of the List of Officer Powers the JTP response was submitted by the Partnership Director as there was insufficient time to put the matter to Board members. The Chair was consulted prior to the response's submission.
- 1.3 All other consultation responses were informed by policies from the Regional Transport Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND ON JUST TRANSITION PLAN

- 2.1 The Scottish Government consultation on its proposed Just Transition Plan asked for views by 19th May. The Consultation Paper can be accessed [here](#).
- 2.2 In its own words, the Paper sought to 'identify the key challenges and opportunities the transport sector currently faces in making a just transition.' Whilst it is difficult to disagree with much of what it says, the Paper by its own admission doesn't completely address how the Plan's aims will be achieved – or whether those aims are the complete answer to achieving a Just Transition.

3. JUST TRANSITION PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSE – KEY POINTS

- 3.1. Some key points in SEStran's response include:
 - The Plan's draft outcomes should include content on technical innovation being at the heart of delivering a Just Transition; public sector organisations e.g. health sector working together more effectively; using data more effectively – and bringing together existing and evolving data sets; the need for clear policy, backed up by legislation where necessary, to reduce the uncertainty around the transition and encourage investment.
 - SEStran's Regional Transport Strategy complements the Plan and its delivery, and the collaborative work with Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, will accomplish some of the Plan's aims.

- JTP should be front and centre of thinking for local authorities and all relevant public, third sector and community organisations. They should all be encouraged to carry out an audit of their current objectives and activities to see how they fit with the JTP. Moreover, compliance with the JTP should be seen as an important part in the formation of policy from the outset. In the same way that EqlA is required in policy development, the JTP should be factored at the same time.
- In Scotland we could leverage tools like the Carbon Assessment Playbook, developed for use in England & Wales ([Carbon Assessment Playbook](#)), to enhance its transport decarbonisation efforts linked to the just transition approach.
- Design of new developments taking into account creation of new transport ‘deserts’ is key. The link between the aspirations of the JTP and land use planning needs to be strengthened. The JTP should also align with Triple Access Planning (TAP), which integrates physical mobility, spatial proximity, and digital connectivity to create a sustainable and equitable transport system.
- There needs to be a much greater focus on the barriers faced by people accessing health. The whole issue of transport to health is a huge area that needs leadership and co-ordination at the TS level to progress.
- The focus (or over reliance) on passenger car EVs as the solution (key driver of change), whilst initially appropriate, could become a weakness. The full spectrum of mobility should be considered, car, bus, LGV/HGV, train/tram, plane and ship.
- We agree that costs shared through taxation and incentives, such as reduced costs, which support low-carbon choices will support a just transition, and are a logical extension of the ‘polluter pays’ principle expressed in existing environmental legislation.
- Increasingly the transport sector will be supported by new technologies including AI and VR, as well as the digitisation of travel information. Jobs in this sector should be considered a part of the transport workforce and upskilling of those involved in software development, as well as developing the digital skills of operators, needs to be incorporated into the priority action.
- As regards monitoring and evaluation, some of the indicators for the outcomes need further thought.

4. OTHER RESPONSES

Consultation title	Response theme	Date entered
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EV public charging network implementation plan	We responded in line with the regional collaboration which represents 7 or our 8 LAs, highlighting the need for further guidance on some aspects of LAs' powers and their inclusion in planning and designing the network.	14th March
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025-28	We referred to relevant aspects of the RTS relevant to the Fire & Rescue Service.	2nd April
The City of Edinburgh Council Supplementary Guidance (SG) on Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery	We recommended that City of Edinburgh Council and its legal advisers decide how to proceed in terms of ensuring that the substance of the document is enforceable and not at risk of challenge.	13th April
The City of Edinburgh Council City Plan 2040	We shared documents that could be helpful in shaping CEC's next City Plan.	2nd May
Scottish Government: Community Wealth Building Scotland	We advocated for sufficient resource for local authorities should they have increased responsibility to deliver further on community wealth building.	27th May
Scottish Government: Climate change duties - draft statutory guidance for public bodies: consultation	We advocated for guidance on double reporting and appropriate reporting expectation, relevant to organisation size.	21st May
Scottish Government: Cruise Ship Levy	We echoed CEC's call for local	28th May

	decision making and planning.	
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5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and its appendix.

Andrew Ferguson
SEStran Consultant

Appendix 1: Consultation Response

Policy Implications	There could be implications for future iterations of the RTS, dependent on further actions by those consulting.
Financial Implications	None
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

Consultation on the Draft Just Transition Plan for Transport

Respondent Information Form

Please Note the respondent form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy:
<https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Respondent Information Form

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- ☐ Individual
☒ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)

Phone number

0131 524 5150

Address

Area 3D (Bridge), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh

Postcode (will not be published)

EH6 6QQ

Email Address

sestran.enquiries@sestran.gov.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- ☒ Publish response with name
☐ Publish response only (without name)
☐ Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you

again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Where do you live most of the time?

N/A

How would you describe your local area? [SG Classification: Large Urban, Other Urban, Accessible Small Town, Remote Small Town, Accessible Rural Area, Remote Rural Area, Island*, Other (specify)]

South East Scotland, covering Borders, Clackmannanshire, Edinburgh, East, Mid and West Lothian, Falkirk, and Fife Council areas.

*We have included a separate category for island residents in recognition of the potential impacts of decarbonising Transport on these communities.

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy (required)

☒

Questionnaire

Vision and Outcomes Consultation Questions:

Question 1

Vision and Outcomes Consultation Questions: Aim: To get feedback on the overall structure of the Plan and general comments or gaps identified in the outcomes, This is also to invite views on future engagement on just transition issues in Transport.

Audience: Everyone is invited to answer all consultation questions, but we have suggested that there are some questions which are more relevant to organisations or businesses, so it is possible for you to skip questions you don't want to answer.
Question

1A: Do the draft outcomes reflect what the Plan should be aiming to achieve?
Please give reasons for your answer. **Yes**

1B: Is anything missing from the draft outcomes in the Plan?

Technical innovation that supports net zero transition is supported and its development in Scotland is encouraged.

The public sector works well together to support the implementation of net zero transition.

Existing and developing data sets are available in readily accessible formats to policy makers to properly inform the JTP.

There is clear policy to reduce the uncertainty surrounding the transition and encourage investment, with legislation and timetables to provide a transparent framework for organisations to plan their decarbonisation efforts. For example, establishing technology standards for the electrification of freight is essential to reduce capital expenditure risks and to ensure a smooth transition to decarbonised freight. Borrowing risks can be reduced further through mechanisms such as blended finance. Guaranteeing a minimum price for eHGVs would reduce residual costs.

Question 2: (Everyone): Please look at the draft Transport Just Transition Plan and tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. [Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know]

The Plan is easy to understand **Agree**

The Plan is easy to use **Agree**

The information in the plan is helpful **Agree**

The information in the plan is relevant to me **Agree**

The plan is accessible to me **Agree**

Question 3 (Everyone): Are you involved in any organised groups (for example a campaigning group, industry working group or public sector forum, which does not have to be climate-related) that considers how the transport sector is changing or could change in future?

SEStran's role as Regional Transport Partnership and its production of the statutory Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) mirrors and complements some of the outcomes in the JTP. Some examples of its alignment include:

Decarbonisation Efforts: SEStran's RTS includes measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as promoting public transport, cycling, and walking. This aligns with the Just Transition Plan's focus on transforming transport to achieve net zero.

Accessibility and Inclusivity: SEStran aims to enhance access to public transport and improve transport infrastructure across urban and rural areas. This supports the Just Transition Plan's goal of ensuring that the transition is fair and inclusive, leaving no one behind.

Economic Opportunities: SEStran's strategy includes initiatives to boost economic growth through improved transport connectivity. This complements the Just Transition Plan's emphasis on sharing the benefits of new economic opportunities fairly.

Community Engagement: SEStran has engaged with local authorities and stakeholders in developing its strategy. This collaborative approach can be highlighted as a model for the inclusive consultation process advocated by the Just Transition Plan.

Through its involvement in the Joint RTPs grouping, SEStran has regular meetings with Cabinet Secretary, at which issues concerning the JTP can be discussed.

In partnership with Edinburgh City Region Deal, SEStran has formed the RTS Delivery Group. Having better, region-focused, data would help the delivery of the RTS in a way that is consistent with the JT.

3A: How could existing transport groups consider just transition issues?

Note on Q3: These questions are about understanding how people, organisations and communities want to engage on issues relating to a just transition for Transport. We have heard that people want to use existing groups, not create new ones, and that many groups and organisations have already taken actions, ideas or best practice that others could learn from when considering a just transition for Transport.

JTP should be front and centre of all groups' thinking. Existing groups should be encouraged to carry out an audit of their current objectives and activities to see how they fit with the JTP.

Moreover, compliance with the JTP should be seen as an important part in the formation of policy from the outset. In the same way that EqIA is required in policy development, the JTP should be factored in the same way and at the same time. Doing so will ensure things which are not considered protected characteristics under equalities legislation are properly considered, e.g. transport poverty.

In Scotland we could leverage tools like the Carbon Assessment Playbook, developed for use in England & Wales ([Carbon Assessment Playbook](#)), to enhance its transport decarbonisation efforts linked to the just transition approach (linking with existing transport model work and data gathering, providing a cost-efficient approach that benefits the whole of the UK):

- **Baseline Emissions Analysis:** the Playbook provides a baseline dashboard that helps local authorities understand their current emissions and project future emissions. Scotland can use this data to identify the most significant sources of transport emissions and prioritise interventions accordingly.
- **Testing Carbon Impact:** the Playbook includes tools to test the carbon impact of different transport outcomes. By using these tools, Scotland can visualise how various transport policies and projects will contribute to decarbonisation goals, allowing for more informed decision-making.
- **Intervention Strategies:** the Playbook offers intervention cards summarising the carbon reduction potential of 29 different local transport interventions. A similar approach in Scotland would facilitate the development of tailored local & regional strategies that address specific needs, such as improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, implementing low traffic neighbourhoods, and enhancing public transport services.
- **Policy Development:** the policy builder tool in the Playbook helps create bespoke policy packages to design comprehensive transport policies that integrate multiple interventions, maximising their cumulative impact on carbon reduction.
- **Quantifying Impact:** the Playbook allows authorities to quantify the carbon impact of their transport strategies and plans. Scotland can use this feature to measure the effectiveness of its decarbonisation initiatives and adjust them as needed to ensure they meet national and local targets.
- **Community Engagement:** using the Playbook's data and tools, Scotland can engage with local communities and stakeholders more effectively. Transparent communication about the expected outcomes and benefits of decarbonisation efforts can foster public support and participation.

Aim: To understand priorities for people and communities, gather feedback and identify gaps in the content, including the vision, and collect evidence to inform Just Transition Planning for the sector. Inviting people to reflect on how costs of the transition might be shared fairly.

Audience: Individuals answering on their own behalf as members of communities and households. Organisations representing communities, places, or groups with protected characteristics, as well as the public sector.

Question 4 (Everyone): This question relates to all the content in the section on People and Communities. Are there any gaps in our priority actions to support people and communities in the transition of the transport sector?

Yes, there are notable gaps in the current priority actions outlined in the Just Transition Plan (JTP) for Transport, particularly in how they address spatial equity, planning integration, and implementation support.

Avoiding Transport Deserts through Integrated Land Use Planning

The risk of creating new transport ‘deserts’—areas with limited or no access to public or active transport—remains under-addressed. While the JTP acknowledges this risk, it is not sufficiently supported by current land use frameworks such as NPF4 or emerging Local Development Plans. Stronger policy alignment is needed to ensure that new developments are planned with inclusive, low-carbon transport access from the outset.

Recommendation: Embed transport equity assessments into Local Development Plans and require early-stage collaboration between transport and planning authorities.

Adopting Triple Access Planning (TAP)

The JTP should explicitly align with the Triple Access Planning (TAP) framework, which integrates:

- Physical mobility (transport infrastructure and services),
- Spatial proximity (land use and urban form), and
- Digital connectivity (broadband and remote access to services).

TAP provides a holistic approach to accessibility and resilience, ensuring that all community members—especially those in rural, low-income, or digitally excluded areas—can access essential services and opportunities. This approach is critical for reducing transport-related inequalities and supporting a fair transition.

Recommendation: Incorporate TAP principles into transport appraisal guidance and local transport strategies.

Reference: Triple Access Planning Handbook (2024)

<https://www.tapforuncertainty.eu/portals/0/Triple%20Access%20Planning%20HANDBOOK%20-%20Final%20-%202018-03-2024.pdf>

Need for a Funded Delivery Mechanism

A Just Transition cannot be achieved through vision alone. There must be a clear, funded delivery route map that:

- Outlines responsibilities across government, local authorities, and stakeholders,
- Provides accessible funding streams for community-led and local authority initiatives,
- Includes milestones and accountability mechanisms.

Without dedicated funding and implementation support, trust in the transition process will erode, particularly among communities already facing transport disadvantage.

Recommendation: Establish a Just Transition Transport Fund with ring-fenced support for rural areas, low-income communities, and inclusive mobility projects.

Question 5 (Everyone): Which of the following priorities we have set out in the draft Plan do you think would be most helpful for people like you to reduce how often, or how far, they drive in a private car? You do not need to own or drive a car to answer the question, because reliance on private cars impacts everyone.

- ☐ Better use of space for active travel and public transport
- ☐ More access to online services so people don't need to travel unnecessarily
- ☐ Availability of demand responsive transport for some areas for example dial-a-bus services.
- ☐ Access to 'car clubs' which allow people to hire a car or van for shorter trips.
- ☐ Increasing costs to make driving a less attractive option in some circumstances, especially where there will be other benefits such as reducing pollution and congestion.

All of the priorities listed in the draft Plan are valuable and should be pursued in tandem. It is unhelpful to single out one measure over another, as they are interdependent and collectively contribute to reducing reliance on private cars. Moreover, the list provided is not exhaustive.

A Data-Driven Approach is Essential

To understand which measures are most effective, we need robust, granular data. For example:

- How many people are using car clubs in Edinburgh?
- How many trips are generated through these services?
- What measurable reduction in private car ownership or use has resulted?

Additional data, such as trends in parking permit applications or renewals, could also provide insight into changing travel behaviours. Greater data sharing between local authorities and national agencies would support a more evidence-based approach to policy and investment decisions. This aligns with the need for improved monitoring and evaluation frameworks, as referenced in earlier responses.

Context Matters: One Size Does Not Fit All

It is also important to recognise that the effectiveness of different measures will vary depending on geography and community context. What works in dense urban areas may not be suitable for rural or peri-urban communities. For example:

- Car clubs may be more viable in cities with high population density and good public transport.
- Demand-responsive transport may be more appropriate in rural areas with limited fixed-route services.
- Digital access to services may reduce travel needs in both contexts, but this requires reliable broadband infrastructure.

The Role of Behaviour Change

Reducing car use is not solely a matter of infrastructure or service provision—it also requires a shift in public attitudes and habits. Behaviour change interventions, such as personalised travel planning, workplace travel schemes, and community-based campaigns, can help people understand and embrace alternatives to private car use. These efforts should be inclusive, culturally sensitive, and tailored to local contexts to be effective.

Recommendation: The Plan should include a dedicated strand on behaviour change, supported by funding for local authorities and community organisations to deliver targeted engagement and education programmes.

Recommendation

Rather than prioritising a single intervention, the Plan should support a place-based, data-informed approach that enables local authorities and communities to tailor solutions to their specific needs. This should be backed by funding, capacity-building, and mechanisms for sharing best practice across regions.

Question 6 (Everyone): Does the draft Plan take all groups in society into account in setting out a vision for a future transport system for people and communities?

- √ The Plan considers the impacts of decarbonising transport on all groups in our society.
- ☐ N/A The Plan considers the impacts of decarbonising transport on people like me.

Question 7 (Everyone): Is there anything else you would like to see in the draft Plan for people who are more likely to face challenges accessing affordable, convenient and safe travel options?

There needs to be a much greater focus on the barriers faced by people accessing health. The whole issue of transport to health is a huge area that needs leadership and co-ordination at the TS level to progress.

In general, a requirement for public bodies to ensure greater co-ordination and co-operation to maximise sustainable transport options being available for all sectors of the population.

The focus (or over reliance) on passenger car EVs as *the solution* (key driver of change) whilst initially appropriate, could become a weakness, the full spectrum of mobility should be considered, car, bus, LGV/HGV, train/tram, plane and ship. Industry, academics and government must better understand the characteristics of the electricity demand and convey to the energy sector. The transition to a fully electrified freight network presents significant challenges related to the energy sector. There is uncertainty about electricity demand – where, how much, and when? Both static and dynamic charging solutions offer viable pathways forward, but their implementation must be carefully tailored to operational needs and grid capabilities. The decentralisation of energy sources and storage could reduce dependency on the main grid.

Integrate climate science into electrification infrastructure planning. The industry must better understand how climate change and the increase of severe weather will impact an electrified network (see recent Iberian power cuts!). The increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events necessitate proactive adaptation strategies to ensure long-term transport resilience. Enhanced infrastructure planning and investment are crucial to address these climate-related challenges. To do this, a better understanding of the future climate scenarios to plan for is needed. Freight as an industry is particularly vulnerable to the disruptions brought to the transport network. The uncertainty leads to increased costs, insurance premiums and reluctance for capital investment in infrastructure.

Question 8 (Everyone): Which of the following principles do you think should be the most important to guide the development of a fair system of payment, to deliver a just transition to net zero in Scotland?

- ☐ Those who emit the most pay the most, with protections for low-income groups.
- ☐ Those who earn the most pay the most, without disadvantaging middle-income groups.

- ☒ Costs shared through taxation and incentives, such as reduced costs, will support low-carbon choices.
- ☐ None of the above.

Question 8 Context note: This question is based on independent evidence suggesting that there is a link between households with higher incomes and higher harmful emissions from personal transport. Meanwhile those on lower incomes are more likely to be reliant on public transport and more impacted by negative effects of emissions such as air pollution. We commissioned researchers to work with members of the public to consider how the costs of transforming our transport system and changing travel behaviours should be shared. Over a series of discussions, the group came up with different ideas, or principles, for how costs could be shared based on earnings, emissions, or incentives

This is a logical extension of the 'polluter pays' principle, which is already embedded in legislation such as the Environmental Protection Acts. However there needs to be a recognition that, unless alternatives exist, especially in rural areas, car use will continue to be the only option for some people making some journeys.

Workers Consultation Questions

Aim: To understand priorities, gather feedback and identify any gaps in the vision and content; to collect evidence to inform just transition planning for the sector; and to seek views on scope of challenges around skills provision.

Audience: Individuals answering on their own behalf thinking about their work and lived experience. Organisations representing workers in transport and other sectors, and employers, including the public sector.

Question 9 (Everyone): This question relates to all the content in the section on Workers. Are there any gaps in our priority action to supporting workers in the transition of the transport sector? It would be helpful if you could say whether your answer relates to all workers or transport workers.

Increasingly the transport sector will be supported by new technologies including Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality, as well as the digitisation of travel information. Jobs in this sector should be considered a part of the transport workforce and upskilling of those involved in software development, as well as developing the digital skills of operators, needs to be incorporated into the priority action.

Similarly, areas such as digital twinning and GIS will inform future policy development in transport. A [recent study](#) published for DfT highlights the potential of quantum technologies in the transport sector.

Question 10 (Everyone): We have set out some actions in the draft Plan which we hope will address Transport workforce challenges. How important are the following

actions to make transport jobs more attractive to people who are not as likely to work in the sector, such as women and younger people?

- ☐ Programmes which encourage women and girls to enter science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) courses at school and college or university
- ☐ Actions to promote diversity and inclusion within the industry, including workplace culture changes.
- ☐ Actions that address existing pay gaps for certain groups.
- ☐ Actions to increase access to childcare.
- ☐ Other - please specify

All of the above. However, there should also be a recognition that existing pay and conditions for the workforce needs to be improved to attract workers from across the spectrum.

Question 11: (Everyone): Actions to improve diversity in the transport sector would be most effective if they were mostly led by (choose one):

- √ Public sector However, actions need to be carried out in partnership with private sector if they are to be truly effective.
- ☐ Third sector
- ☐ Individuals
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Don't know

Question 12 (For business/ organisations and Transport workers): Does the summary of priorities for workers in the draft Just Transition Plan address future workforce and skills challenges you expect to have, as the transport sector

See answer to Q9

decarbonises?

Businesses and Organisations Consultation Questions:

Aim: To seek views on the priorities we have set out to address the challenges and opportunities of decarbonising transport. To gauge how effectively we are engaging all businesses, including non-transport businesses, social enterprises and public/nonprofit sector, in just transition planning.

Audience: We think these questions are most relevant to all private and public organisations, including local authorities and businesses which manufacture,

provide or use any form of transport. We also invite responses from social enterprises, charities and non-profit organisations.

Question 13 (Everyone): This question relates to all the content in the section on Businesses and Organisations. Are there any gaps in our approach to setting out opportunities and priorities for businesses and other organisations in the transition of the transport sector?

See answer to Q9.

Question 14 (all organisations)

What does just transition planning mean for your organisation or industry?

- ☐ A just transition for the transport sector is important
- ☐ Just Transition planning is important for my organisation
- ☒ Just Transition planning is happening in my organisation
- ☐ My organisation needs more support for just transition planning

Please give reasons for your answer.

The principles of the JTP align with SEStran's RTS. See for examples the response to Q3.

Question 15 (all organisation)

Which of the following priorities would you consider to be most important to enable you to transition your vehicles to zero emissions alternatives?

- ☐ Access to low-cost finance
- ☐ Cost of replacement vehicles needs to come down
- ☐ Technology for replacing vehicles needs to be proven
- ☐ Mechanism to work with other businesses on fleet transition
- ☐ Reliable infrastructure for vehicles (such as fuel or charging networks)
- ☐ Certainty about availability of parts and maintenance services
- ☐ Other (please tell us more)

N/A – but perhaps provide context from RTS policies?

Monitoring and Reporting Consultation Questions:

Aim: We invite views on the draft indicators and would like to identify any additional relevant data sources. Please see the Monitoring and Evaluation Annex in the draft Just Transition Plan for Transport for more details on the indicators, data sources and quality assessments.

Audience: Everyone

Question 16A: What are your views on the draft indicators we have set out for measuring our progress toward delivering the just transition outcomes for the transport sector?

In general, these seem sensible, However, innovative ways of using other datasets to measure outcomes should be further explored.

In addition, where appropriate regional datasets should be used to provide greater granularity on outcomes, e.g. Edinburgh City Deal's Workforce mobility data, and rurality data collected by Convention of the South of Scotland (COSS). SEStran also supports the idea of Regional Intelligence Hubs (COSS submission).

16B: Make a comment about a specific indicator or indicators, or issue with specific indicators:

As regards Indicator 5.2, it is suggested that the amount of usage of car and bike share schemes is included not just membership. **[It may be COMO UK stats cover this]**

Indicators for Outcome 8 should be stronger, suggest it not be better to measure

- a) number of community bodies actively engaging in transport matters (LAs are meant to maintain contacts with all community bodies in their area via community planning partnerships, so should know what these are) and their current activity levels and
- b) How local authorities have engaged/are engaging with communities on transport matters (public involvement in committee system, number of public consultations on transport matters and level of engagement).

Outcome 14 – not just emissions but also particulate matter and not just death, but adverse health impacts and increase in conditions like asthma

Indicator 15.3 – is important, but not just requiring maintenance, time to repair and incidents that are a result of poor roads (accidents/damage) should be recoded – economic costs

Question 17: If you are aware of any other data being collected that could be used to monitor progress towards any of the outcomes set out in this Plan, please share details below.

Suggested reports to explore:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47634/the-value-of-the-local-roads-network-in-scotland-research-report-summary.pdf>

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/disability-and-transport-2021/outcome-indicators-for-accessible-travel-framework/>

<https://transform.scot/2024/03/08/putting-people-first-why-gender-matters-in-sustainable-transport/>

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/industry-guidance/land-use-and-transport-integrations-in-scotland-latis/>

For travel patterns: INRIX, Tom Tom data, Banking and mobile phone data
Real Time Passenger information to map bus & train services.

Risk Register

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Partnership with its quarterly update on SEStran's strategic risk register.
- 1.2 The report was presented to the Performance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 6 June 2025 for review and comment. Discussions centred in particular on the cyber security risks referred to in 3.5.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Performance and Audit Committee, at its meeting in November 2021 approved the [SEStran Risk Management Framework Policy](#). This policy supports the management of the overall risk process within the organisation, including its governance arrangements.
- 2.3 The latest version of the risk register can be found at **Appendix 1** of this report.

3. CURRENT STRATEGIC RISKS

- 3.1 In previous updates to the Partnership, reports have covered the organisation's Strategic Risk Register in its entirety. However, in its final report on the annual audit for 2023/24, Audit Scotland recommended that the format of future reports be revised to ensure that the Committee focuses on the 3-5 key strategic risks.
- 3.2 As a result, this report focuses on the 3 main current strategic risks, based on the total risk scores shown in the strategic risk register, which is included as an appendix to the report:
- R001 1.1 Change to Regional Governance
 - R002 2.6 Funding Reductions
 - R008 8.1 Cyber Security

3.3 A Potential Change to Transport Governance

- 3.3.1 Transport governance defines the roles and responsibilities of Transport Scotland, the seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), 32 local authorities, and selected partners in shaping Scotland's transport landscape.
- 3.3.2 Recent discussions and independent reports have consistently advocated for Transport Scotland to delegate more of its workload to organisations better positioned to address regional and local priorities. RTPs and Local Authorities, with their deeper understanding of specific transport needs,

may be better equipped to prioritise and deliver projects effectively within their respective areas.

- 3.3.3 For the Partnership, this shift presents both challenges and opportunities. The recent transfer of People and Place responsibilities underscores Transport Scotland's support for a regional approach to certain transport functions, reflecting its confidence in RTPs. Building on this momentum, SEStran is actively engaging with Transport Scotland to explore additional areas where it can contribute meaningfully. However, as new governance arrangements take shape, there is a risk that RTPs' influence could be diluted, potentially limiting their ability to drive regional transport priorities effectively.
- 3.3.4 Furthermore, Transport Scotland intends to review transport governance in the near future, subject to resource availability. RTPs, along with COSLA and SCOTS, are expected to participate in a working group that will report to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

3.4 **Funding Reductions**

- 3.4.1 Transport Scotland's annual grant remained unchanged for over a decade before being reduced by 5% in 2024/25, reflecting wider Scottish Government budget cuts. This reduced budget level has continued into 2025/26, with a real risk of further reductions in 2026/27 and beyond, potentially affecting the Partnership's core operational capabilities.
- 3.4.2 SEStran maintains ongoing engagement with Transport Scotland to ensure its work is recognised and valued. Efforts focus on demonstrating the broader impact SEStran could achieve with increased funding.
- 3.4.3 Council requisitions have declined by 10% over the past decade. In response, Transport Scotland has encouraged RTPs to seek increases. No decision has been made on the approach to 2026/27, but it is likely that the Partnership Director will make reference to this in his update to the Board in June 2025.
- 3.4.4 Ad hoc project funding has historically provided an increase of up to 50% of SEStran's total income but is typically announced mid-financial year, excluding it from budget planning. Due to ongoing fiscal pressures, no such funding was allocated in 2024/25, and availability remains uncertain for 2025/26.
- 3.4.5 European Union funding ceased entirely in 2023/24 following the UK's exit from the EU. However, UK organisations remain eligible to bid for Horizon Europe funding. SEStran is actively collaborating with UK and EU partners to explore these opportunities.

3.5 **Cyber Security**

- 3.5.1 Public sector entities are increasingly being targeted by cyber-attacks and data breaches, posing risks to sensitive information and service continuity.

- 3.5.2 To support its cybersecurity defences, SEStran's Information Technology (IT) service provider oversees all aspects of IT support, including cyber protection. This includes implementing technological defences against attacks and delivering monthly staff training to enhance awareness of social engineering, which is a tactic used by cybercriminals to exploit human trust and trick people into giving up sensitive information or access. It relies on deception rather than technical hacking tactics and threats via common communication channels.
- 3.5.3 SEStran undergoes an annual Cyber Essentials Plus audit, maintaining full accreditation. Additionally, it receives daily threat intelligence updates and weekly vulnerability assessments from the Scottish and National Cyber Security Centres. As part of its IT service contract, SEStran also benefits from monthly in-person consultations with an IT consultant or engineer to ensure ongoing security enhancements.



4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Board is asked to note the contents of the report.

Angela Chambers
Business Manager


Appendix 1: SEStran Risk Register

Policy Implications	Policies have been reviewed and updated.
Financial Implications	As highlighted in the register.
Equalities Implications	None
Climate Change Implications	None

Risk Number	Risk Category	Risk Detail	Gross Risk Assessment					Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Risk Assessment					Risk After Mitigation	Date and Owner	Risk Appetite		Action Required		
			Probability		Impact		Risk Score		Probability		Impact		Risk Score							
R001 1.1	Strategic	Regional Governance Transport Scotland review of regional transport governance arrangements could result in changes to functions of RTPs. This could present either a risk or an opportunity to SEStran.	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	The joint RTPs have submitted a refreshed Develop to Deliver report to TS and COSLA in 2024. TS currently are looking for resource to restart the review of regional governance.	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	High Treat	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low	Med	
R001 1.2	Strategic	Regional Governance Lack of clarity on role of non statutory REP/ESES City Region Deal groupings	4	Probable	3	Possible	12	Medium	A Concordat has been established and is functioning effectively between SEStran and the ESESCRD. This agreement commits both parties to collaborate openly and transparently to support land use planning and economic growth across the region. The benefits of this partnership are already evident, with the regional electric vehicle charging strategy and the RTS Delivery Plan development being two key examples. The Partnership will continue to work with partners and stakeholders at Scottish and UK governemnt levels to promotethe benifits of regional partnership delivery.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	Review at end of Dec 2025 Partnership Director	Low	Med	





RO01 1.3	Strategic	Pandemic / Epidemic: Interruption of normal service/inability to deliver functions. Financial impact of crisis on sources of funding.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Adhere to Government restrictions, rules or guidance. Regular communication with Transport Scotland and constituent councils officials to guide any operational changes. Ensure that all staff are trained on the Business Continuity Plan, and that it is reviewed regularly. Maintain current functions that can be delivered within working guidance. Working from home arrangements now tried, tested and effective.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low	Med	↔
RO01 1.4	Strategic	Political/Govt Change There is a risk that a change in government could lead to changes to RTPs/Regional Governance	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Continued engagement with all political parties and agencies. Partnership Director to offer meetings with MSP Transport Spokesperson from each scottish political party.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low	Med	↔
RO02 2.0	Financial	Financial: Significant deviation from budgeted spend	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	The Financial Rules do not permit spending (whether revenue or capital) to exceed available budget. Budget and spend is monitored on a monthly basis by SEStran officers, using financial information provided by CEC through the Partnership's Financial Services Service Level Agreement with CEC and supported by qualified accounting staff of CEC. Action is taken by Partnership officers to develop alternative savings measures, including options for development of contingency arrangements, if required and subject to approval by the Partnership. The Partnership's Financial Rules require reporting of financial performances to the Partnership Board on a quarterly basis. Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 includes section on RTPs carrying reserves.	1	Remote	2	Minor	2	Low	Low Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low	Med	↔

R002 2.1	Financial	The approved budget for 2025/26 makes provision for a pay award of up to 3%.	5	Highly Probable	3	Moderate	15	High	Prudent planning assumption with ongoing monitoring of public sector pay negotiations. Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2025/26. Costs will be aligned with COSLA pay offer.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R002 2.2	Financial	Staff recharges - externally funded projects: The approved budget assumes that £149,000 of staff time can be recharged to Projects. There is a risk this may not be achievable.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Any shortfall in employee cost recharges will be offset by a corresponding reduction in Projects Budget expenditure. Other funding sources will continue to be pursued.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R002 2.3	Financial	Inflation: There is a risk that the indicative budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	When setting the revenue budget, allowance was made for specific known price inflation. Budgets adjusted in line with current cost forecasts. Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2025/26.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R002 2.4	Financial	Delays in payment of external grants results in additional short-term borrowing costs.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	SEStran grant claims for projects are submitted in compliance with grant funding requirements to ensure minimal delay in payment. Ongoing monitoring of cash flow is undertaken to manage exposure to additional short-term borrowing costs. Grant submission procedures in place, along with financial planning.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R002 2.5	Financial	Sources of additional income to the Partnership may become constrained in the current economic climate and/or due to changes in operating arrangements.	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	Revenue budget for-2025/26 developed to take account of most likely level of external income. Continue to explore alternative funding options Lobby/bid for additional funds	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Medium Treat	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↓


R002 2.6	Financial	Funding reductions: Future reductions in core funding from Scottish Government and/or council requisitions. This could result in difficulty in delivering statutory obligations/duties.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	The Partnership will continue to source and develop external funding. Manage organisation in accordance with available funding but ability of organisation to deliver RTS objectives will inevitably be dictated by available funding. Engagement/advocating with SG/TS to maintain/increase funding Working with other RTPs to influence SG review of allocation of funding	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	
R002 2.7	Financial	The funding position of the staff pension fund could lead to increases in the employers pension contribution	4	Probable	3	Moderate	12	Medium	Following Lothian Pension Fund's Triennial Actuarial Review in 2023, Partnership employer pension fund contribution rates are now confirmed at 26.8% until 31 March 2027. Financial planning assumptions have been updated and included in the revenue budget for 2025/26 and indicative budget for 2026/27 approved by the Partnership Board on 14th March 2025.	4	Probable	3	Moderate	12	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	
R002 2.8	Financial	Current staffing levels cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and the Partnership incurs staff release costs	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	The Partnership continues to seek additional sources of funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources. Recruitment control measures in place. Additional resources can be managed through consultancy as required. People and Place Programme has increased financial flexibility.	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Medium Tolerate	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	
R002 2.9	Financial	Funding/Grant Awards: The timing of some funding applications and grant awards do not align with the financial year, resulting in an inability to spend allocated funding within prescribed timescales	4	Probable	3	Moderate	12	Medium	As part of the ongoing business planning process the Partnership will continue to develop and introduce where appropriate a number of suitable on the shelf schemes Regular budget monitoring and reports to the Partnership Board.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Treat	September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	

R003 3.0	Reputational	Project Management: Project incomplete or of poor quality Late Delivery	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	All project progress reported to the Projects Team monthly- and the P&A Committee quarterly. Management action taken as required.. Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup of the P&A Committee set up with quarterly meetings planned for 25/26 to support P&A with its role in scrutinising project delivery.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September 2025 Programme Manager	Low Med	↔
R003 3.1	Reputational	Reputation: Regard by the public and stakeholders. Negative or inaccurate media coverage leading to misrepresentation of SEStran position	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Quick response to negative or inaccurate coverage managed by Communications & Marketing Officer, Proactive profile and reputation management via social media, website and press releases. Partnership staff and Board Members continue to promote and advocate activities via speaking, writing or wider networking Continue to work closely with regional partners Board members regulary updated on SEStran work successes and issues. Agreed approach to media position set out in Standing Orders.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R003 3.2	Reputational	Project Management: Potential insolvency of 3rd party supplier	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Improved supplier viability checks before award, renewal or modification of contracts or grants now in place. Individual risks and mitigations to be developed for any contract or grant over an agreed threshold. Where appropriate, Government frameworks will be utilised. Full review of procurement procedures to be carried out by is nearing completion by Legal Advisers. Staff training on new procedures to be developed.	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Medium Treat	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↓

R005 5.0	External	Third party Service Level Agreements: Failure or inadequacy of service	2	Unlikely	2	Minor	4	Low	Service Level Agreements in place for Financial Services, HR and Insurance services. Reviewed annually by senior officers. Subject to independent audit scrutiny.	2	Unlikely	2	Minor	4	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end of 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R005 5.1	External	Contract Management: Failure to manage contracts leads to under performance and failure to obtain best value and delivery from contractual relationship.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Conditions of contract reviewed, including Contract Standing Orders. This work will shape a new Procurement Strategy and Manual which is being developed by Anderson Strathern. Ensure contract documentation sound and up to date. Ensure contracts are adequately managed. Business propriety/credit/analytic criteria to be written in to documentation. Contract management process to be included as part of full procurement review.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↔
R005 5.2	External	Grants: Failure to adhere to grant conditions could result in grants being withheld or reclaimed, impacting the SEStran budget	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	Ensure that grant conditions are understood before application is submitted, that relevant team members are briefed on grant conditions, and that adequate controls are in place to ensure that all steps and approvals are documented. Also refer to risk 2.9. Successful management of risk 5.2, reduces likelihood of risk 2.9	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Medium Treat	Review at end of September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Med	↓
R006 6.0	Legal and Regulatory	Statutory Duties: Failure to adhere to duties described in legislation and related documentation	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Regular monitoring and programming of statutory duties is undertaken by the Partnership Director, Senior Partnership Manager and Business Manager. Audited by third parties. Officers to carry out a review of compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty.	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Treat	Review at end September 2025 Partnership Director	Low Low	↔

R007 7.0	Specific Operational	People and Place Plan: Funding changes result in programme not continuing regionally beyond 2025/26	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Engage regularly with Transport Scotland. Ensure outcomes and outputs from the programme delivery are captured to evidence efficacy of regional approach.	1	Remote	3	Moderate	3	Low	Low Tolerate	September 2025 Programme Manager	Low Med	
R008 8.0	System and Technology	Digital/IT: Server failure Comms failure Website breach Resulting in loss of service to business operations	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Regular review of the Management Plan for Business Continuity. IT/Website maintained under contract. Both proactively managed by third parties. IT hardware/software/licences upgraded at regular intervals. Contracted IT consultants deliver IT services. Website contract includes security updates. Robust Information Security Policy in place with regular monitoring reports. GDPR compliant and Cyber Essentials Plus Accreditation maintained.	1	Remote	4	Major	4	Low	Low Tolerate	Ongoing Business Manager	Low Med	
R008 8.1	System and Technology	Cyber Security: Public sector entities are prime targets for cyberattacks and data breaches, which can compromise sensitive information and disrupt services.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Annual Cyber Essentials Plus audit and accreditation awarded. In receipt of daily threats and weekly vulnerability emails from the Scottish/National Cyber Security Centre. Regular Staff training and exercises. Monthly in person visit by IT Consultant/Engineer under contracted services provision.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Treat	Review Sept 2025 Business Manager	Low Med	
R009 9.0	People	HR: Non-compliance with employment and/or data privacy laws may result in poor reputation as an employer, difficulty in attracting skilled resource and greater probability of litigation and / or financial penalties	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	SLA in place until May 2026 with Falkirk Council to provide specialist HR advice as required and is under regular review. Legal advice is provided, when required, through a framework contract, which is in place until August 2027	1	Remote	3	Moderate	3	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end March 2026 Partnership Director	Low Low	

R009 9.1	People	Inadequate measures in place to facilitate staff health, safety and well-being during contingency arrangements or future office arrangements.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Regular review of appropriate policies. Carry out appropriate assessments of office equipment and working arrangements, following landlords guidance in relation to access to the office. Risk Management Framework approved by P&A Committee. Liaise with HR Adviser, SG facilities team. Hybrid Working Policy implemented to facilitate transition arrangements to normal working arrangements. An ongoing risk remains for future pandemics and future widespread disease or other outbreaks. Measures will be adjusted in accordance with government advice.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September-2025 Partnership Director (Subject to SG advice)	Low	Low	↔
R009 9.2	People	Inadequate measures in place to facilitate staff health, safety and well-being during working from home arrangements.	3	Possible	4	Major	12	Medium	Appropriate policies are reviewed and updated. Risk assessments of staff personal home working arrangements have been completed and will be subject to regular review. Risk Management Framework approved-by P&A Committee. Business Continuity Plan reviewed. Liaise with HR Adviser. Review transition arrangements to normal working arrangements at appropriate time. Hybrid Working Policy implemented and working well. An ongoing risk remains for future pandemics and future widespread disease or other outbreaks. Measures will be adjusted in accordance with government advice and legislation.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September-2025 Partnership Director (Subject to SG advice)	Low	Low	↔
R009 9.3	People	Loss of key personnel may lead to inability to deliver strategy, projects and/or operations	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Recruitment Policy in place. Development of existing staff through performance appraisal. Staff training Work programme will be monitored and redistributed as necessary.	3	Possible	1	Insignificant	3	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September-2025 Partnership Director	Low	Low	↔

R009 9.4	People	Climate Change Staff are unable to access the office more frequently due to increase in adverse weather events.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Home working policy in place and procedures for inability to access the office outlined in the SEStran Business Continuity Plan (Jan 2024). Train team in BCP, and review regularly.	3	Possible	2	Minor	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September-2025 Partnership Director	Low	Low	
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Risk Number	Risk Detail	Risk Category	Gross Risk Assessment					Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Risk Assessment					Risk After Mitigation/Appetite for Risk	Date and Owner						
			Probabilit	Impact	Risk Score				Probabilit	Impact	Risk Score										
	Restricted ability to undertake RTS re-write: Inadequate senior staff resourcing available due to continued absence of Partnership Director	Strategic	4	Probable	3	Moderate	12	Medium	Resolve absence as soon as possible and appoint external resources as required.	2	Unlikely	2	Minor	4	Low	Partnership Director appointed May 2019. Funds identified for RTS re-write	June 2019 CLOSED				
	Accommodation: Occupancy Agreement with SG due for renewal February 2019. SG may not renew and alternative premises required at market rates.	Financial	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	A notice period of 12 months must be served by each party under the current occupancy agreement. Occupancy Agreement renewed until February 2022.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium		June 2019 CLOSED				
	ECOMM: Agreement to commit to ECOMM on the basis of being cost neutral. Income depends on number of delegates attending conference.	Financial	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	SEStran withdrew offer to host ECOMM due to uncertainty over Brexit and subsequent impact on attendance at the conference.	3	Possible	2	Minor	6	Low		June 2019 CLOSED				
	Following the outcome of the EU Referendum, the Partnership is unable to access EU funding.	Financial	5	Highly Probable	3	Moderate	15	High	The Partnership continues to seek alternative funding sources to progress knowledge exchange/transfer.	4	Probable	3	Moderate	12	Medium	Medium Tolerate: Adapt expenditure accordingly. Currently involved in 5 EU projects, the completion of which are underwritten by the UK Treasury.	June 2021 CLOSED				
	Governance: Succession Planning Business Continuity	Governance	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Governance Scheme contains adequate provision to deal with senior officer absence. Staff structure and Business Continuity Plan in place. Senior Partnership Manager appointed.	2	Unlikely	2	Minor	4	Low	Low Tolerate	CLOSED Partnership Director				
	Policy Appraisal: Poor Quality Lack of consultation	Strategic	1	Remote	3	Moderate	3	Low	Advised by Government of relevant policy changes and Partnership Director and Officers regularly looking out for further policies and responding accordingly. Consultative forums also enable greater visibility and integration of local policies into regional strategy. Make full use of online consultancy options.	1	Remote	2	Minor	2	Low	Low. Partnership staff also continue to monitor their networks for relevant policy discussions. Draft RTS approved for statutory consultation. Tolerate	CLOSED Partnership Director	Low	Med		↔
	Regional Transport Strategy: Introduction of new RTS. Delay in approval by ministers. Delayed introduction of the new strategy.	Strategic	3	Possible	2	Minor	6	Low	Regular comms with Transport Scotland at all stages in the development of the RTS.	1	Remote	2	Minor	2	Low	Low Tolerate	28 March 2023 Jim Stewart CLOSED	Low	Med		↔
	Newly Appointed Board. Risk of lack of continuity and loss of expertise due to high turnover in members for the new term of office.	Governance	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Ensure that full training and support is provided to the new Board in 2022 to enable strategic decisions to be made. A Regular schedule of meetings of the Succession Planning Committee.	2	Unlikely	2	Minor	4	Low	Low Skills audit will identify future training requirements Option to appoint Board Observers to supplement areas of expertise Partnership Director 1:1 meetings with Board Members Tolerate	Ongoing Partnership Director CLOSED	Low	Med		↔
	Other Funding Sources: Reduced access to EU project funding and lack of replacement funding from UK Government	Financial	5	Highly Probable	3	Moderate	15	High	The Partnership has sought to engage in as many relevant EU projects and funds as it can whilst UK authorities are allowed to access these funds. This should mitigate the short-term impact of any EU Exit negotiated and implemented. The Partnership has a proven track record in securing funding for relevant projects from the UK and other partners. It is anticipated that this will continue. Horizon projects being pursued.	5	Highly Probable	2	Minor	10	Medium	Medium: The risk remains as there is significant uncertainty around the immediate and medium (3-5year) horizon for access to funds. Other funding applications will be made when available. There has been no confirmation from UK Government on participation in EU funded programmes, like Horizon. Advocate for access to UK replacement funds. Explore further ongoing calls for Horizon programme when available. Treat	CLOSED Partnership Director	Low	Med		↓

Risk Description and Impacts Table

Ref	Type of Risk	Description	Impact
R001	Strategic	Inability to design and / or implement a strategic plan or strategy for SEStran.	Lack of clarity regarding future direction and structure of SEStran impacting quality and alignment of strategic decisions
R002	Financial	Inability to perform financial planning; deliver an annual balanced budget; manage cash flows; and confirm ongoing adequacy of reserves	SEStran is unable to continue to deliver in line with strategic objectives; inability to meet financial targets; adverse external audit opinion; adverse reputational consequences
R003	Reputational	Adverse publicity because of decisions taken and / or inappropriate provision of sensitive strategic, commercial and / or operational information to external parties	Significant adverse impact to SEStran’s reputation in the public domain
R004	Governance	Inability of management and members to effectively manage and scrutinise performance, and take appropriate strategic, financial and operational decisions	Poor performance is not identified, and decisions are not aligned with strategic direction
R005	External	Inability to effectively manage SEStran’s most significant supplier and partnership relationships	Inability to deliver strategy and major projects within budget and achieve best value
R006	Legal / regulatory	Delivery of services and decisions are not aligned with applicable legal and regulatory requirements	Regulatory censure and penalties; legal claims; financial consequences
R007	Specific Operational	Inability to deliver projects and programmes effectively, on time and within budget	Inability to deliver projects; achieve service improvements; and deliver savings targets
R008	System and technology	Potential failure of cyber defences; network security; application security; and physical security and operational arrangements	Inability to use systems to support services; loss of data and information; regulatory and legislative breaches; and reputational consequences
R009	People	Employees and / or citizens suffer unnecessary injury and / or harm	Legal; financial; and reputational consequences
R010	New Project Income	Inability to attract new projects to fill the funding gap left by diminishing EU projects/Brexit	Inadequate funding streams and lack of innovation.

Risk Impact

Likelihood		Severity		Risk Score	
1	Remote	1	Insignificant	1	Low Risk
2	Unlikely	2	Minor	2	
3	Possible	3	Moderate	3	
4	Probable	4	Major	4	
5	Highly Probable	5	Catastrophic	5	
				6	Medium Risk
				8	
				9	
				10	
				12	High Risk
				15	
				16	
				20	
				25	

At Risk
Strategic
Financial
Reputational
System and Technology
Governance
Specific Operational
External
Legal and Regulatory
People
New Project Income

Impact				
Descriptor	Score	Health and Safety Impact	Impact on Service and Reputation	Financial Impact
Insignificant	1	No injury or no apparent injury.	No impact on service or reputation. Complaint unlikely, litigation risk remote.	Loss/costs up to £5000.
Minor	2	Minor injury (First Aid on Site)	Slight impact on service and/or reputation. Complaint possible. Litigation possible.	Loss/costs between £5000 and £50,000.
Moderate	3	Reportable injury	Some service disruption. Potential for adverse publicity, avoidable with careful handling. Complaint expected. Litigation probable.	Loss/costs between £50,000 and £500,000
Major	4	Major injury (reportable) or permanent incapacity	Service disrupted. Adverse publicity not avoidable (local media). Complaint expected. Litigation expected.	Loss/costs between £500,000 and £5,000,000.
Catastrophic	5	Death	Service interrupted for significant time. Adverse publicity not avoidable (national media interest.) Major litigation expected. Resignation of senior management/directors.	Theft/loss over £5,000,000

Likelihood		
Descriptor	Score	Example
Remote	1	May only occur in exceptional circumstances.
Unlikely	2	Expected to occur in a few circumstances.
Possible	3	Expected to occur in some circumstances.
Probable	4	Expected to occur in many circumstances.
Highly Probable	5	Expected to occur frequently and in most circumstances.

Impact					
Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
Major	4	8	12	16	20
Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
Minor	2	4	6	8	10
Insignificant	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood	Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Probable	Highly Probable

Risk Appetite

Risk Rating	Net Risk Assessment	Risk Appetite Response
High	15-25	Unacceptable level of risk exposure which requires action to be taken urgently.
Medium	7-14	Acceptable level of risk but one which requires action and active monitoring to ensure risk exposure is reduced
Low	1-6	Acceptable level of risk based on the operation of normal controls. In some cases, it may be acceptable for no mitigating action to be taken.

Risk Response

There are four categories of risk response:

- Terminate:* risk avoidance – where the proposed activity is outwith the current risk appetite level;
- Treat:* risk reduction – where proactive action is taken to reduce the likelihood or impact of an event occurring or limiting the consequences should it occur
- Transfer:* risk transfer – where the liability for the consequences is transferred to an external organisation in full or part (e.g. insurance cover)
- Tolerate:* where certain risks are accepted

Risk Appetite Target Scores

Risk Description	From	To	Commentary
Strategic	Low	Medium	SEStran has a low to medium appetite in relation to its strategic risks and aims to ensure effective delivery of its commitments in line with agreed timescales. Strategic delivery is monitored through ongoing reporting processes and governance processes.
Financial	Low	Medium	SEStran has a low to medium appetite in relation to financial risk and may be prepared to accept some risk, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · setting and achieving an annual balanced revenue budget, in line with legislative requirements · maintaining an unallocated general reserve fund, in line with legislative requirements Financial risk is set out in SEStran's Governance Scheme.
Reputational	Low	Medium	SEStran is prepared to tolerate a low to medium level of occasional isolated reputational damage. Media response protocols are set out in the Governance Scheme.
System and Technology	Low	Medium	SEStran has a low to medium appetite in relation to system and technology risk. The risk appetite will vary depending on the nature, significance and criticality of systems used, and the services they support. Risks are managed through ongoing use of inbuilt technology, security controls, encryption, data loss prevention, firewalls and vulnerability scanning, plus a range of security protocols and procedures. SEStran has achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation.
Governance	Low	Low	SEStran has a low appetite in relation to governance and decision making. The partnership's governance arrangements are detailed in the Governance Scheme. No officer or member may knowingly take or recommend decisions or actions which breach legislation.
Specific Operational	Low	Medium	SEStran has a low to medium appetite in relation to specific operational risks. The Partnership Director and Management Team are expected to design, implement and maintain appropriate programme, project management and governance controls to manage these risks.
External (Suppliers/contractors/partnerships)	Low	Medium	SEStran has a low to medium appetite in relation to external risks. The appetite will vary depending on the criticality of the service or third-party support. SEStran has an established procurement process, supported by the Contract Standing Orders and use of Public Contract Scotland frameworks.
Legal and Regulatory	Low	Low	SEStran aims to fully comply with all applicable regulatory and legislative requirements. No officer or member may knowingly take or recommend decisions or actions which breach the law.
People	Low	Low	SEStran recognises that accidents can occur because of unknown and/or unplanned events and has an appetite to fully comply with all relevant health and safety requirements to minimise any health and safety risks that could potentially result in loss of life or injury.
New Project Income	Medium	High	SEStran has a medium to high appetite in relation to attracting new projects to enable innovation and attract new funding streams. SEStran has an established procurement process, supported by the Contract Standing Orders and use of Public Contract Scotland frameworks. Financial risk is set out in SEStran's Governance Scheme.

PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Please note that this report provides commentary on performance in Q4 of 2024/25. As such, the information is dated but aligns with the Unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25 report that this meeting of the Partnership Board considered at item A2(a) on the agenda.
- 1.2 A version of this report was previously presented to the Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup (PaSDOS) on 24 April 2025 and to the Performance and Audit Committee of 6 June 2025.
- 1.3 As well as reporting on performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams in Quarter 4, this report also updates the Board on future reporting plans in this area.

2 FUTURE REPORTING PLANS

- 2.1 Following discussion at PaSDOS and P&A Committee, a number of changes have been proposed to project reporting for 2025/26. A draft of the new report template, with example data drawn from 2024/25 projects, is shown at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The main changes to the reporting for 2025/26 are as follows:
 - An updated project summary page that places a greater emphasis on programme and finance RAG statuses and provides space to show project by project finance details
 - Revised finance RAG status to better show size of under/overspend – any variance under £5k will be flagged as amber, any variance over £5k will be flagged as red
 - Finance tables for the whole programme and individual projects now have a new column to show SEStran spend. This shows the balance between income and expenditure to make it clear how much of SEStran's finance resource is being invested in each project
 - Individual project pages now contain objectives and outcomes as set out in the Business Plan and include a section for narrative on progress against RTS actions and project objectives in each quarter. It is proposed that progress against outcomes is reported at the end of each financial year
 - A general layout refresh, with the aim of making the report easier to read with key information more readily highlighted at the top of each page

3 PROJECTS AND STRATEGY Q4 REPORT

- 3.1 Appendix 2 gives a breakdown of progress of each project within Q4, including against budget and milestones. Also included is the project risk register and issues log.
- 3.2 There is significant underspend noted across the programme, which is detailed further below. Generally, projects are on timeframe, with 70% of milestones complete and the remainder either on track or delayed to 2025/26.
- 3.3 Some key project and strategy updates over the quarter include:
- The GoSEStran project was closed on 31 March following Board approval to close the app. App users are now being redirected to the Traveline journey planning app.
 - Significant progress has been made on plans for Thistle Assistance, with a survey of users being designed in collaboration with Transport Scotland and Disability Equality Scotland taking place in February and a promotional campaign begun in March that will conclude in April. Initial results are positive and encouraging - as an example, the number of people requesting a card between 10-20 March was 16 compared to 739 between 21-31 March when the campaign was under way. Final results of the campaign will be available from the end of May 2025.
 - A significant amount of work has been undertaken on the Real Time Passenger Information screens asset list to verify the current location and status of all screens. This is resulting in issues being resolved with current screens, with 6 screens brought back online and work progressing with a further 5 organisations to resolve issues.
 - A memorandum of understanding has been signed to progress a joint procurement of public EV charging infrastructure across 7 of the SEStran Local Authorities plus Dumfries and Galloway Council. City of Edinburgh Council has approved its role as Lead Authority for this procurement exercise, and is taking forward joint work to agree the detailed tender scope, with the tender due to be published by the end of May.
 - While feedback received from the European Union Horizon review board on the FUSION submission for delivering elements of the Freight Strategy was positive, the application for funding was rejected.
 - SEStran is currently working with Napier Transport Research Institute to develop a research proposal that will explore the potential for freight tram in Edinburgh.
 - A successful in-person workshop was held with local authority representatives to support the development of the RTS Delivery Plan.
 - The Newburgh Station final report has been submitted to Transport Scotland and is currently being reviewed with feedback awaited. Work on Winchburgh Station is progressing with station design and the final business case both currently in development. The steering group meets monthly with SEStran officers participating.

3.4 Projects underspend

Including People and Place, the 2024/25 Projects budget was £6.0million, and total underspend on this has been 4.5% of the overall budget. Excluding People and Place, which is dealt with below, the actual underspend (subject to audit) is £0.264m. This includes the underspend of £0.187m which was carried forward from 2023/24. At the last report for Q3, a projects underspend prediction of £0.083m was reported. Of the actual underspend, the vast majority, £0.207m, is contained within 4 projects (Regional Bus Strategy (£0.122m), GoSEStran (£0.039m), Go eBike (£0.026m), and Sustainable Travel Awareness (£0.025m). Full details are shown in the table at appendix 3. Note that as these figures are taken from the draft 2024/25 accounts and include year-end adjustments, whereas the figures reported in Appendix 2 were prepared at the end of April 2025. As such, there may be some variation between the two sets of figures.

- 3.5 Early work is ongoing to ensure the full and realistic allocation of project budgets for 2025/26 with the view to eliminating the underspend. Some improvements to the project tracking as detailed above should also help improve visibility of spend per project.

4 PEOPLE AND PLACE

- 4.1 A full report on Q4 People and Place progress is attached as appendix 4, but the key project progress under the 4 themes (plus access to cycles) is detailed below.
- 4.2 As part of our **access to cycles** programme, the Bike Buddies project in Clackmannanshire has successfully delivered 215 bikes to young people - pupils who qualified received a new bike along with helmets, lights, and locks to ensure safe cycling – and they are now concluding the delivery of the Gearing Up project which supports young people who are care-experienced or have been involved in the justice system. Scottish Borders Council have distributed 167 bikes to young people over the winter, and the Bike Station have had 581 loans over the year from their Wee Bike Library. East Lothian Council have their 4 Brompton hire hubs up and running in libraries across the area, and Fife Council have completed the purchase of 13 adapted trikes for their outdoor education team. Cycling UK's cycle access fund has completed, with some positive evaluation data still to be reviewed – in their recycled bike schemes for example, 77% of those with access to a car started cycling for journeys previously made by car, and while before getting the bike 89% were not meeting the NHS guidance for physical activity per week, afterwards 97% said that receiving their bike has helped to increase the amount of exercise they do.
- 4.3 With **schools and young people**, I Bike continued across the region, with a total of 342 activities across the schools during Q4, with 7,095 pupil attendances. FEL project in schools in Falkirk and Clacks continues to be successful, with a highlight of the quarter being walk leader training for senior secondary school pupils, allowing them to take primary schools pupils on led walks in the local area. Living Streets have worked in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council to produce Active Travel Zone Maps for 5 schools in the authority, involving local authority staff, local residents, parents/carers, staff and pupils at each school to plan an active travel

zone around each school. Fife Council have worked with Hyndhead Special School to install new thermoplastic mats on key routes to school to highlight crossing points, and a new cycle covered shelter and hoops have been installed at Moutfleurie PS, Leven. A new fleet of scooters was launched to all primary schools in Midlothian in late January and so far, have been fully booked - around 800 pupils have participated in this project, in only a few months.

- 4.4 Under the **workplaces** theme, Cycling Scotland and Greener Kirkcaldy have purchased and taken delivery of all 15 planned bikes for hire to NHS Fife staff, with the e-bike rental scheme now live - all details are available at <https://www.nhsfife.org/e-bikes>. Work by Travel Know How has continued with a specific focus on NHS sites, which will roll over into 25/26. Support has also been given to City of Edinburgh Council to develop their travel plan, including engaging with the City Deal Workforce Mobility Project. Midlothian and Clackmannanshire Council are finalising new staff eBike fleets, with work to conclude in 25/26.
- 4.5 **Accessibility and inclusion** has a range of projects, including Cycling UK's Connecting Communities project in East Lothian, for which a highlight has been the introduction of 'Trike Tuesdays' which aims to engage those with mobility issues who are unable to ride a standard cycle, with the numbers of attendees at these sessions growing steadily, and this has led to the loan of a side-by-side e-tandem to a participant and their carer. City of Edinburgh council held a well-attended event in collaboration with Glasgow City Council to coincide with International Women's Day: "A Tale of Two Feminist Cities: why the public realm needs to be safer for women and girls and how they can achieve it". Midlothian Council hosted the Dalkeith Dino Trail over the February school holiday to encourage children and young families to get out and be more active, and to highlight the walking, cycle shared pathways with their local area – as a measure of the success of the event, they received 12,018 visits to its dedicated webpage. Street accessibility audits have been carried out in Hawick and Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders, Tranent, Prestonpans, Haddington and North Berwick in East Lothian, with initial works including 7 new dropped kerb crossing points in East Lothian. Greener Kirkcaldy launched the Kirkcaldy Cycle Shed in February that has created an opportunity for individuals to come into the Greener Kirkcaldy Active Travel hub to develop their skills and interest in bicycle mechanics and socialise with others interested in bikes by coming along to the drop-in sessions to work on their own bikes, help out with processing donations and bikes recovered from recycling centres, and plenty of other workshop-based tasks.
- 4.6 Work around **capacity and capability building** has included the finalising of the Draft Behaviour Change Strategy for Falkirk Council and costed action plan, with plans being underway for a learning session delivered to Falkirk Council – talking through the methodology, workings and assumptions in the development of the Behaviour Change Strategy. A shared learning workshop for Local Authorities is currently being planned for April with a focus on monitoring and data collection. Development work has continued with Urban Tide on our project dashboard, with the aim of integrated M&E data, with current work ongoing to further develop this and to integrate cycle counter data, for example allowing a cohort of counters to be selected that could be used to monitor a specific project.

- 4.7 Over the course of 2024/25, we have been proactively managing project underspends as they have been identified. Total underspend across the programme has been £229,500, of which £137,400 is revenue and £92,100 is capital. The majority of this has been reallocated to other projects which have been able to effectively spend this in line with their project objectives. This has been possible through the SEStran team working with partners early to stress the importance of early underspend identification and proactively holding a reserve funding list of options to absorb this. We will be carrying out some further analysis of this underspend shortly to understand any lessons learnt for 2025/26.
- 4.8 With a small number of final grant claims to review, we are currently predicting a remaining underspend of £9,654 on the total grant of £5,374,748. This underspend represents 0.18% of the total funding award. The primary reason for this is the post 31 March notification of a £20,776 capital underspend from one delivery partner – some of this was absorbed by offering additional funding to one local authority and one delivery partner that had slightly overspent.
- 4.9 The 2024/25 grant management review has been carried out and finalised, and key findings have been presented to the SEStran team. Overall, the findings were positive; the majority of the funded organisations appreciated and welcomed the flexibility of the fund to meet project needs. Funded organisations also welcomed the SEStran team's availability and their ability to have open discussions throughout the process. The funded organisations also found the application process simple and straightforward. The final Evaluation report will be available in June 2025. Additionally, Urban Foresight have started the second phase of the work to focus on the 2024/25 Programme Evaluation. They have delivered a workshop session with the SEStran team to discuss the theory of change and have started collecting and gathering data and information from the funded organisations. This work will complete in June and will be presented to the June meeting of the Partnership Board.
- 4.10 To ensure transparency over projects being funded and to share details of this amongst all partners and stakeholders to help facilitate collaboration, an online dashboard has been created with the support of Urban Tide. Members are welcome to view and share the map here: <https://usmart.io/org/sestran/>

5 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING UPDATE

- 5.1 Communications and marketing achievements in March include:
- Monthly newsletter and blog post produced and distributed
 - Regular posts to LinkedIn, leading to increased engagement and followers
 - Thistle Assistance digital awareness campaign began leading to 4,519% increase in requests for Thistle Assistance cards and 5,155% increase in downloads of the Thistle Assistance app in the first 10 days.
 - Created Thistle Assistance comms pack for transport operators and partners
 - Published four People and Place videos – three case studies and one introduction to our People and Place work – published on a new People and Place case study web page

- Professional photographer began taking photos at various People and Place funded projects
- Created first draft of People and Place funding acknowledgment toolkit for 2025/26 funded projects

More detail on this is provided under a separate item on the Partnership Board agenda.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Partnership Board is asked to note the contents of this report

Michael Melton

Programme Manager

6th June 2025

Appendix 1: Example 25/26 reporting format

Appendix 2: 24/25 Q4 Projects and Strategy Report

Appendix 3: Projects Underspend

Appendix 4: 24/25 Q4 People and Place Report

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.

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget			£0.00
Current Budget			£0.00
Current Actual			
Current Remaining			
Predicted Future Spend			
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Predicted Variance			£0.00

	Count	Current Exp Budget	% of Total Budget
Major Delay	0	£0	0.0%
Minor Delay	1	£37,578	100.0%
On Target	0	£0	0.0%
Underspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Underspend <£5k	1	£37,578	100.0%
On Budget	0	£0	0.0%
Overspend <£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Overspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Total	1	£37,578	

Projects Programme and Financial Summary										
Project	Finance Status	Change Since Last Quarter	Programme Status	Change Since Last Quarter	Current Inc Budget	Current Inc Prediction	Current Inc Variance	Current Exp Budget	Current Exp Prediction	Current Exp Variance
SEStran Project Ex	Underspend <£5k	↓	Minor Delay	↔	£36,988	£36,988	£0	£37,578	£37,578	£1
Total					£36,988	£36,988	£0	£37,578	£37,578	£1

Project Name	SEStran Project Ex
Current Exp Budget	£37,578
Project Code	
SEStran Lead	
SEStran Manager	
Last Updated	

Finance Status
Underspend <£5k
Programme Status
Minor Delay

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£15,996.00	£42,000.00	£26,004.00
Current Budget	£36,988.44	£37,578.08	£589.64
Current Actual	£16,988.44	£36,508.50	
Current Remaining	£20,000.00	£1,069.58	
Predicted Future Spend	£20,000.00	£1,069.00	
Predicted total spend	£36,988.44	£37,577.50	£589.06
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.58	£0.58

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	0	0%
Delayed	1	33%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	2	67%

Project Summary		
The Thistle Assistance Programme provides helps to those that have difficulty in using and accessing public transport. SEStran aim to provide a national approach. The programme increases awareness of challenges faced by vulnerable transport users and reduces the cost for transport operators.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
• Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network	• Improve the scheme to reflect users needs • Delivery promotional initiatives to raise awareness of the scheme nationally • Increase uptake of the scheme among users and transport providers	• Identification of areas of improvement based on feedback/surveys • Engagement initiatives/regular meetings with key stakeholders • Identification of new/potential stakeholders to increase reach of scheme • Identification and delivery of key promotional and marketing initiatives
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Research brief has been drafted and will be reviewed by KF. Understanding of next steps and how the research will inform the development of the Thistle Assistance Comms Plan.		
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Updates made to existing App - security and useability enhancements		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q3 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
New Project Officer and Marketing officer in place working on the project New existing stock of leaflets and cards depleted, new order placed for resupply (3,000 leaflets + card) Publication of updated Accessible Travel delivery plan by TS (Oct 2024) with ambition to promote Thistle Assistance Continuity to promote Thistle Assistance on social media Work started on user survey which aims at identifying current awareness and use of the scheme across Scotland Attended the Accessible Travel Hub session led by Disability Equality Scotland and provided feedback on how to improve Thistle Assistance feature on the Hub		
Q4 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q4 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Developed a user survey in collaboration with TS and DES and administrated it in February for about 2 weeks. Received just over 100 responses which will inform direction for 25/26. In discussion to engage with Transport operators and seek feedback from them. Finalising budget plans for Q4 to ensure budget is fully spent by the end of March 2025 - main expenditure would include promotional initiatives to increase awareness of the scheme and enhancement of the website and marketing contents to streamline messaging.		

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Distribute 100 cards	15/12/24		01/11/24	Complete	03/04/25
Launch media campaign	10/01/25	20/01/25	20/01/25	Complete	03/04/25
Procure new printing supplier	31/03/25	31/05/25		Delayed	03/04/25

Project	Finance Status		Programme Status		Milestones					Risks		Issues			Last Updated
	Finance Status	Change since Q2	Programme Status	Change since Q2	No on track	No completed	No late completed	No delayed	No late	No Medium	No High	No Medium	No High	No Critical	
<u>Thistle Assistance</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	04/04/2025
<u>VoyagAR</u>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	02/04/2025
<u>Real Time Passenger Information</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	03/04/2025
<u>GoSEStran</u>	Underspend	↓	n/a	n/a	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	03/04/2025
<u>Go Ebike</u>	Underspend	↓	Minor Delay	↓	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	03/04/2025
<u>Strategic Network</u>	On Budget	↑	On Target	↑	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	02/04/2025
<u>EV Delivery</u>	Underspend	↓	Minor Delay	↑	0	1	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	02/04/2025
<u>Regional Bus Strategy</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	2	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	02/04/2025
<u>Transport to Healthcare</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	07/04/2025
<u>Regional Freight Strategy</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	04/04/2025
<u>RTS Delivery Plan</u>	Underspend	↓	On Target	↔	2	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	04/04/2025
<u>Rail Strategy</u>	On Budget	↔	On Target	↔	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	07/04/2025
Total					5	12	13	6	0	17	0	5	0	1	
People and Place Plan:															
<u>Local Authority Projects</u>	On Budget	↔	On Target	↔											
<u>Non-Local Authority Projects</u>	On Budget	↔	On Target	↔											
<u>SEStran Projects</u>	On Budget	↔	On Target	↔											
Total															

Project Risk Register

Risk Number	Project	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PR001	Thistle Assistance	Use of the app leads to an accident due to lack of training or awareness from transport operators, resulting in damage to reputation/trust of Thistle	Unlikely	Minor	Low Risk	Good communication material made available and training provided for operators	Remote	Minor	Low Risk	As planned	Communication pack including messaging for transport operators	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	KF
PR002	Thistle Assistance	Issue with app software prevents users from accessing the app therefore transport journeys are impacted, resulting in damage to reputation/trust of Thistle Assistance	Unlikely	Minor	Low Risk	Working closely with the software developers to ensure that the app is up to date and in compliance with apple store / Google requirements	Remote	Minor	Low Risk	Quarterly updates and review of app from Android and iPhone	Updates in place and working	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	KF
PR003	Thistle Assistance	Data breach for personal data collected as part of card process resulting in damage to reputation and/or investigation by ICO	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	SEStran GDPR policy to be followed at all times and data deleted at regular intervals in line with this, with no personal data retained. Working closely with Hillside to ensure website security is up to date.	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Refresh team training on GDPR during Q1 25/26		In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	KF
PR031	Thistle Assistance	Increased demand for cards as a result of advertising campaign means that cards issuing is significantly delayed, leading to damage to reputation/trust in Thistle Assistance	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	Liaising directly with the current printing supplier to agree on a revised timeline for card distribution to allow at least one distribution per week or more when possible.	Possible	Insignificant	Low Risk	See planned mitigation. Further prep work will be done ahead of any future ad campaigns to identify a suitable approach with card distribution and prevent any delays - to be determined based on comms		New	04/03/2025	15/04/2025	SL
PR005	Real Time Passenger Information	Operator data is inaccurate or drops out, resulting in poor user impression/loss of faith in data accuracy/damage to SEStran reputation	Probable	Major	High Risk	Regular meetings with transport operators to ensure data accuracy	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Quarterly review with operators and local authorities in place to review data	Data monitoring in place Operators providing schedule changes & training for LAs to input data	In Progress	01/04/2024	31/03/2025	KF
PR006	Real Time Passenger Information	System failure and/or data feed disruption resulting in system becoming unavailable	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Regular meetings with tech supplier to ensure updates are being made and contingency plans are in place	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Monitoring in place via online system Reaching out to contacts to maintain/ reestablish	Meetings held quarterly with tech provider, LAs, screen provider and bus operators Feedback sent to tech provider	In Progress	01/04/2024	31/03/2025	KF
PR007	Real Time Passenger Information	At contract end, framework contract negotiation fails and/or results in increase in costs impacting ability to delivery additional screens	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Seek negotiation of contract when required working with RTP partners and suppliers to come to agreement	Unlikely	Moderate	Low Risk	Manage new contract development with City of Edinburgh (contract owners) Explore collaborative procurement approaches and how they will enhance	Initial meeting held between RTPs to agree exploration of joint approach to procurement.	In Progress	01/04/2024	31/03/2025	KF

Project Risk Register

Risk Number	Project	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due)	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PR032	Real Time Passenger Information	Failure to properly manage assets leads to decline in service provision and/or early asset right off	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Asset strategy in place and approved by Partnership Board to be followed going forward	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned response/mitigations 14/04	Asset check completed for 24/25 and sent to Audit Scotland	New	04/03/2025	14/04/25	RS
PR033	Go Ebike	Failure to properly manage assets leads to decline in service provision and/or early asset right off	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Asset strategy in place and approved by Partnership Board to be followed going forward	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned response/mitigations 14/04	Asset check completed for 24/25 and sent to Audit Scotland	New	04/03/2025	14/04/25	BHJ
PR013	Strategic Network	Lack of data availability makes mapping element longer than expected and/or incomplete	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Ensure early engagement with each LA to access any available mapping data. Seek other partners who may have relevant data	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	Review risk with project initiation process in May 2025		In Progress	01/04/2024	14/04/2025	BHJ
PR015	EV Delivery	Compressed timescale required to reach contract start date is very tight, and leads to low quality of work and/or missed deadlines and/or failure to meet CPS switch off date	Probable	Major	High Risk	Seek ongoing consultant support for project management Ongoing engagement with TS, including inviting them to join Steering Group	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Discussion continuing with TS and being led by CEC - SEStran to offer support as needed	Extension of CPS date to April 2026 agreed by TS in December 2024 CEC written to TS to request further CPS extension to December 2026	In Progress	01/04/2024	09/04/2025	MM
PR016	Regional Bus Strategy	Work produced by the consultant is of low quality and/or delivered behind programme	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Weekly meetings with consultants to check on progress and work produced to date, staggered payment schedule for invoicing	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	As planned		In Progress	01/04/2024	04/11/2024	RM
PR017	Regional Bus Strategy	Lack of buy in from stakeholders, causing lower quality, less informed assets	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Regular updates to SEStran Board, website page on bus strategy updated regularly	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Updates to board Mention of RBS in all updates to TAB Sharing of key docs with authorities and operators	Website page created: https://sestran.gov.uk/projects/regional-bus-strategy/	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	RM
PR018	Regional Bus Strategy	Lack of investment at a national level for delivery of outputs of strategy, limiting engagement from operators and authorities in new ideas	Probable	Major	High Risk	Continue to support the case for bus investment at relevant meetings with TS	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Actively engaging with bus alliances on new Bus Infrastructure Fund	Actions laid out	In Progress	01/04/2024	03/09/2024	RM
PR019	Transport to Healthcare	Lack of buy in from stakeholders, diminishing quality and collaboration of efforts	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Regular meetings and ongoing opportunities to collaborate	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Shared Learning Network with HBs Contacted Primary Care Directorate	Learning Network is ongoing Meeting held with Primary Care in April 2025	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	RM

Project Risk Register

Risk Number	Project	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PR020	Transport to Healthcare	Lack of strategic direction from Scottish Government, causing instability in shaping of strategy	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Active engagement with policy leads at Scot Gov	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Meet with TS and Primary Care teams Share our work with them Follow any work on the subject	Met with Primary Care Got new contact for TS Updated them on new work	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	RM
PR021	Regional Freight Strategy	Lack of buy in from stakeholders results in limited efficacy of project	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Run quarterly Regional Freight & Logistics forum meetings	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	As per planned response/mitigations 14/04		In Progress	01/04/2024	14/04/2025	KF
PR022	Regional Freight Strategy	Lack of capacity in the public sector to further develop and deliver on freight strategy	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Look to provide training and support as needed	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	As per planned response/mitigations 14/04		In Progress	01/04/2024	14/04/2025	KF
PR023	RTS Delivery Plan	Lack of engagement from stakeholders results in limited efficacy of project	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Regular meetings and opportunities to collaborate	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Regular meetings during key points of the project In person session Reporting to TAB and SEStran Board	All of the actions laid out	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	RM
PR024	RTS Delivery Plan	Low data input from partners, meaning incorrect activities are prioritised	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Seek to minimise requests as much as possible, when making requests give long lead in times	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Regular meetings Commitment of SEStran funding for consultancy support Lots of opportunity for LAs to input	Regular meetings Opportunities for LAs	In Progress	01/04/2024	15/04/2025	RM
PR025	Rail Strategy	Lack of investment at a national level for delivery of outputs of strategy	Probable	Major	High Risk	Continue to support the case for rail investment at relevant meetings with TS	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Develop rail strategy in 25/26 to support case for investment		In Progress	01/04/2024	31/03/2025	KF
PR033	GoSEStran	Poor communications with users and stakeholders will result in confusion over app shutting down and no clear alternatives for users	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Message to users with signposting to Traveline Emails to stakeholders involved in the project	Unlikely	Moderate	Low Risk	Notify users that app is closing and signpost to Traveline/ future Tactran app Email wider stakeholders with information and alternatives	Email to direct stakeholders (East Lothian Council, St Andrews University, QMU) to notify and look at removing physical and digital promotions	In Progress	15/04/2025	15/04/2025	RS
PR034	GoSEStran	Risk of data being poorly managed by provider leading to breach of privacy policy	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Get advice from Anderson Strathern on data management and work with provider to ensure data is correctly handled	Unlikely	Major	Medium Risk	Ensuring SEStran are removed from admin sites Deletion of data/ accounts for GoSEStran		In Progress	15/04/2025	15/04/2025	RS

Project Issue Log

Issue Ref	Project	Description	Severity	Next Steps (date and who)	Lessons Learnt	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PI001	Real Time Passenger Information	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.	Medium	A solution is in place and the target is for real time data will roll out from their fleet from end June 2024. For the regional screen network only, scheduled data will be displayed. The screens will be updated with a message to this effect. KF having regular meetings to discuss and update.	tbc	Closed	11/12/2023	11/11/2024	KF
PI002	Transport to Healthcare	Outcome of UK Government funding bid will be delayed until after the election due to the purdah period	Medium	RM working with partners to understand impact of any delays on potential programmes. As this become known further updates will be made to this issue.	When a minor partner but nonetheless with an active role in delivery, confirm with funder and lead partner that all comms will be shared.	Closed	22/05/2024	29/05/2024	RM
PI003	GoSEStran	Appointment of tech supplier/ new contract/ legal support will be delayed due to timescales for procurement. This is expected to result in the Ember contract being extended to Dec to ensure app is continuously live between suppliers.	Medium	Ember contract drafted to allow for 3 month extension till Dec 2024.	Develop clearer timescales when preparing for procuring and ensure additional time is given in the transitional period from one supplier to another.	Closed	20/06/2024	11/11/2024	RS
PI004	GoSEStran	Unexpected staff absence has caused delays in project delivery. Procurement is yet to be concluded with contract preparation to be delivered. There has been limited development work or marketing planned during this time.	Medium	Consultant brief to be drafted by SEStran to secure interim resource to limit and further delivery delays - by 29/11 Budget to be reworked to incorporate consultant support as above - by 06/12	When working with partners, create more condensed procurement route which has clear milestones and mitigations. Ensure project outcomes are identified early on in project (even where user research is required to determine best approach)	Closed	11/11/2024	24/01/2025	RS
PI005	GoSEStran	Failure to complete legitimate procurement exercise to appoint supplier for project leading to failed procurement and decision to shut down app being approved by the Board	Critical	Project closure report to be drafted summarising project successes and learnings Review procurement at PaSDOS	Ensure legal advice is integrated into partnership projects where processes are multi-organisational	In progress	03/02/2025	15/04/2025	RS
PI006	VoyagAR	Supplier could not be found to take over development of VoyagAR and launch the app, either as a standalone product or as part of GoSEStran	Medium	Investigate options to share the code with any interested developers on a free licence - discussion ongoing with Andreson Strathern	tbc	In progress	03/03/2025	15/04/2025	KF

Thistle Assistance

Budget Code: 92077
Responsible Officer: Sandra Lavergne
Manager: Keith Fisken
RTS Objectives: 1, 3, 4
Last Updated: 04/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network
Project Summary
The Thistle Assistance Programme provides helps to those that have difficulty in using and accessing public transport. SEStran aim to provide a national approach. The programme increases awareness of challenges faced by vulnerable transport users and reduces the cost for transport operators.
Q1 Progress
Research brief has been drafted and will be reviewed by KF. Understanding of next steps and how the research will inform the development of the Thistle Assistance Comms Plan.
Q2 Progress
Updates made to existing App - security and useability enhancements
Q3 Progress
New Project Officer and Marketing officer in place working on the project New existing stock of leaflets and cards depleted, new order placed for resupply (3,000 leaflets + card) Publication of updated Accessible Travel delivery plan by TS (Oct 2024) with ambition to promote Thistle Assistance Continuity to promote Thistle Assistance on social media Work started on user survey which aims at identifying current awareness and use of the scheme across Scotland Attended the Accessible Travel Hub session led by Disability Equality Scotland and provided feedback on how to improve Thistle Assistance feature on the Hub
Q4 Progress
Developed a user survey in collaboration with TS and Disability Equality Scotland and ran it in February. Received just over 100 responses which will inform direction for 25/26. In discussion to engage with transport operators and seek feedback from them. Finalised budget plans for Q4 to ensure funding from PfA is fully spent by the end of March 2025 - main expenditure is a promotional campaign to increase awareness of the scheme and enhancement of the website and marketing contents to streamline messaging. Currently running the promotional campaign with a media agency running until the end of April. Initial results are positive and encouraging. As an example, the number of people requesting a card between 10-20 March was 16 compared to 739 between 21-31 March. Final results of the campaign will be available from May 2025. Project has an underspend to budget of £4.5k as marketting costs were slightly lower than expected. Income has increased by £20k due to SCSP grant being reallocated from VoyagAR and £1k underestimate of contributions from other RTPs.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
n/a					

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£15,996	£42,000
Current Budget	£35,996	£37,578
Spend to Date	£16,988	£36,509
Remaining	£19,008	£1,070
Predicted future spend	£20,000	£1,069
Predicted total spend	£36,988	£37,578
Predicted Variance	-£992	£1

VoyagAR

Budget Code: 92089
Responsible Officer: Rebecca Smith
Manager: Keith Fiskén
RTS Objectives: 1, 3, 4
Last Updated: 02/04/2025

Programme Status: n/a

Finance Status: n/a

RTS Actions
• Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network
Project Summary
The VoyagAR system provides users with an accessible option within the public transportation ecosystem. Aimed at the traveller within this scenario, who is likely to be a vulnerable individual, the mobile application allows its user to navigate along a pre-defined journey (defined by their carer(s) using the carer app via the web) or create their journey from starting point to an end destination using in-app navigation prompts which update in real-time based upon the users' location and device GPS data.
Q1 Progress
SEStran has received all of the core coding from the outgoing developer Sentireal To secure a new partner to manage further development the VoyagAR procurement will be included in the wider MaaS procurement programme. The procurement is being run in partnership with Tactran, with the work underway
Q2 Progress
SLA for IMPs partnership signed and includes exploring VoyagAR and its future development. Procurement for tech supplier live 10/07/2024 through Innovate UK - open till 05/08/2024. Focus is MaaS apps but VoyagAR and accessibility development forms part of the bid. Innovate UK pitch days set up for Sept. 2024 which will determine how suppliers see the app being integrated.
Q3 Progress
The procurement pitches had mixed abilities to integrate VoyagAR into GOSSEStran. Accessibility integrations are being added into the contract being prepared to finalise the report. The procurement process, and appointing a supplier, has been delayed due to staff absense and is expected to be complete by December 2024.
Q4 Progress
The decision to close GO SEStran and a review of the VoyagAR coding by Ember (software provider) did not produce a useable path for VoyagAR development. The decison was taken to not progress further with devlopment. SEStran will continue to hold the VoyagAR code and explore with other developers in 25/26 potential use, budget for managing code will be £30 per month Budget for marketing was transfered to core Thitle Assistance to fund the digital media campaign

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Procurement of supplier complete	30/09/2024	31/3/2025		Cancelled	01/11/2024
Go live date for app	31/01/2025	31/03/2025		Cancelled	01/11/2024

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£0
Current Budget	£0	£0
Spend to Date	£0	£0
Remaining	£0	£0
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£0
Predicted Variance	£0	£0

Real Time Passenger Information

Budget Code: 92019
Responsible Officer: Rebecca Smith
Manager: Keith Fiskin
RTS Objectives: 1, 3, 4
Last Updated: 03/04/2025

Programme Status:

On Target

Finance Status:

Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport network•Introduce Real Time Passenger Information for public transport services through mobile applications, stations and stops and across all parts of the region
Project Summary
The provision of real-time information contributes to tackling declining bus patronage in the SEStran region, helps makes public transport more accessible and reliable and increases confidence in public transport.
Q1 Progress
LA project group continues to meet weekly Lothian bus feed solution has been developed by the Lothian bus team and is being tested for integration into the SEStran system. End of June 2024 is proposed 'go live' date
Q2 Progress
Lothian bus feed solution is now expected to go live at end of September with full 'disruption' data being available end of September. Testing successful as of 03/09/2024. Speaking with several organisations with offline screens to determine how to progress. Midlothian screen replcement largely complete, West Lothian will comence in September.
Q3 Progress
RTPI screens now show live Lothian feed as of 9th September 2024. Journeo EPI training completed October 2024, including local authority officers, which will allow new staff members to report faults with screens, track the status of screens, add imagery and advertisement to screens, and track performance. SEStran PCs are being monitored and project team are contacting organisation's to resolve any faults or issues.
Q4 Progress
Work being carried out to resolve exisiting issues with indoor SEStran PCs with existing screens being redistributed for replacements or new sites. The RPTI asset register is being updated to log all of the PCs locations, their accompying screens, and their current status. This is being carried out by contacting organisations, an online test, and site visits where required. In the two months, we have gotten six screens back online, and five organisations are currently working with the provider to resolve IT issues. Added in code red for SEStran signs during Storm Eowyn to inform public of no service for bus/ tram services across the region. End of FY: There has been an underspend of £15k due to expected training provided for free by the provider. It was estimated this would cost £5k. The remaining £10k was allocated to system maintenance but this was covered under other budgets, and not required in other instances. This will be reviewed ahead of 25/26 budgeting for the RTPI screens.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Complete review of screen network	30/09/2024		30/09/2024	Complete	01/11/2024
Lothian tracker going live on RTPI screens	31/07/2024	31/09/2024	09/09/2024	Complete - Late	01/11/2024
Review reporting template for PCs	30/11/2024	31/03/2025	31/03/2025	Complete - Late	03/04/2025

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£15,000	£15,000
Current Budget	£15,000	£15,000
Spend to Date	£11,500	£0
Remaining	£3,500	£15,000
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£11,500	£0
Predicted Variance	£3,500	£15,000

Go SEStran

Budget Code:	92086
Responsible Officer:	Rebecca Smith
Manager:	Michael Melton
RTS Objectives:	1, 3, 4
Last Updated:	03/04/2025

Programme Status:	n/a
Finance Status:	Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver improved public transport information in a variety of formats, supported by appropriate wayfinding infrastructure on the transport networkDeliver a regional MaaS pilot scheme to establish the long-term viability of MaaS in the region
Project Summary
The GoSEStran MaaS app is a digital tool which promotes and enables sustainable travel as well as helping improve the viability of shared multi-modal transport opportunities.
Q1 Progress
The current contract has been extended by 6 months as per the board decision. Discussions have been ongoing with Tactran to agree future roles, and Tactran have taken a lead on procurement. Discussions have been held with Perth and Kinross Council and Innovate UK to identify the best procurement route.
Q2 Progress
SLA for IMPs partnership signed and inception meeting set up for August. PID and Contract Strategy signed off by Tactran and SEStran directors. Procurement for tech supplier live 10/07/2024 through Innovate UK - open till 05/08/2024. Innovate UK pitch days set up for Sept. 2024. 14 suppliers applied with 7 taken forward for pitch days. Ember contract extension confirmed through change control notice to ensure app continues running Sept-Dec 2024 whilst procured supplier onboards.
Q3 Progress
The procurement process, and appointing a supplier, has been delayed due to staff absence and is expected to be complete by December 2024. Meetings with stakeholders have been set up to investigate opportunities for the GoSEStran platform to offer more to users. This includes signposting to more payment methods, integrating more features, and targeting specific users groups. The remaining Transport Scotland MIF grant funding was finalised and reporting on the 6 month extension has been submitted.
Q4 Progress
Project closure presented at March 2025 Board with committee papers outlining recommendation. SLA with Tactran paused, and GoSEStran being closed down as of 31/03/2025 with signposting to Traveline for journey planning. Learnings and evidence base collated by Mott MacDonald will be reviewed in project closure report and at PaSDOS. Due to the delays in procurement and cancellation of the project there has been a significant underspend with Paths for All funding updated with GOL variation and unspent funding (£29,965) to be returned to the funder, as well as an underspend on £50k of funding that was carried over from 23/24, which has led to a net underspend of £39,625 when excluding external grant funding.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Report to Board on next steps	27/09/2024		27/09/2024	Complete	01/11/2024
New supplier in place	30/09/2024	28/02/2025		Cancelled	01/08/2025
Ember contract extension awarded	31/07/2024	20/08/2024	13/08/2024	Complete - Late	26/08/2024
App development plan for GoSEStran	20/12/2024	31/01/2025		Cancelled	01/11/2024

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£174,750	£174,750
Current Budget	£98,886	£59,261
Spend to Date	£128,851	£52,455
Remaining	-£29,965	£6,806
Predicted future spend	-£29,965	£6,805
Predicted total spend	£98,886	£59,261
Predicted Variance	£0	£1

Go Ebike

Budget Code: 92076
Responsible Officer: Beth Harley-Jepson
Manager: Michael Melton
RTS Objectives: 1, 2, 4
Last Updated: 03/04/2025

Programme Status: Minor Delay

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
7.0 Delivering Safe Active Travel <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expand the provision of bike-sharing initiatives across the region 8.0 Enhancing Access to and Accessibility of Public Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify locations where implementation of shared mobility solutions could be beneficial and reduce the level of ‘forced’ car ownership
Project Summary
The Go e-bike project involves supporting access to e-bikes and bike share through a variety of routes. Employer e-bike trials are supported in partnership with West Lothian Bike Library. This allows employers to trial a fleet of e-bikes for 4 weeks to give employers and employees to understand the benefits of e-bikes. Community groups across the region have been provided with fleets of e-bikes. This supports access to e-bikes at a local level. Public access bike share is supported through a trial of Brompton (folding bikes) lockers. These are operating in Midlothian and East Lothian. We are in discussion with Scotrail to add a further locker (owned by Sustrans) at Haymarket.
Q1 Progress
Employer trial was held at St Johns Hospital and Persimmon Homes in West Lothian. Survey data was collated from 23/24 employer trials. Brompton hire lockers were vinyl wrapped ahead of going live.
Q2 Progress
Four e-bikes were relocated from the Scottish Borders due to insufficient use. These were moved to City of Edinburgh Council for a longer term employer trial (April 2025) and to West Lothian Bike Library to supplement their public hire fleet. Discussions ongoing to identify additional employers to take part in further employer trials, staff survey taking place at Western General hospital to identify if there is demand. Skills Development Scotland have started a small scale trial with staff in Edinburgh. Brompton hire lockers went live at Musselburgh QMU and at Sheriffhall Park and Ride. A meeting was held with Scotrail at Haymarket Station to determine a potential location for the Sustrans locker.
Q3 Progress
Go e-bike employer trial taking place with staff from Skills Development Scotland over September and October. Cycle Ride Leader training course provided to Social Bite Village to support the use of the e-bike fleet with staff and residents. Bike maintenance and cargo bike training provided to Porty Community Energy to support volunteers with the e-bikes available to loan. Press release issued about the Musselburgh Brompton bike locker, with coverage in several local newspapers. Site for locker at Haymarket was not possible on security grounds, so an alternative site outside the station is being considered. West Lothian College and St Johns hospital expressed interest in future employer trials.
Q4 Progress
Received confirmation from Scotrail in March that Haymarket locker location has been accepted by Network Rail. Plan to set up meeting with recommended architects to take forward drawings for site and review any potential requirements regarding listed building etc. Installation will not now occur until 25/26 therefore cost of this (£25k) is underspend in 24/25 and project is delayed.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Brompton Haymarket locker gets go -ahead from Scotrail	30/09/2024	18/11/2024	19/03/2025	Complete - Late	11/11/2024
Brompton Haymarket locker installed on site	31/03/2025	01/09/2025		Delayed	02/04/2025
Two employer trials delivered in partnership with TKH	30/03/2025	10/10/2024	10/10/2024	Complete	02/09/2024
Existing Brompton lockers small launch event and promotion campaign.	28/10/2024		14/10/2024	Complete	31/10/2024

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	-£2,638	£27,362
Current Budget	-£2,638	£27,362
Spend to Date	-£2,638	£2,139
Remaining	£0	£25,223
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	-£2,638	£2,139
Predicted Variance	£0	£25,223

Budget Notes
Income is negative due to an overpayment on a grant claim from 23/24 that has been repaid in 24/25. No income beyond this correction is budgeted for this project

Strategic Cycle Network

Budget Code: 92082
Responsible Officer: Beth Harley-Jepson
Manager: Michael Melton
RTS Objectives: 1, 2, 4
Last Updated: 02/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: On Budget

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress the delivery of the SEStran Strategic Network and broader cross boundary networks with partners. Develop further phases of this network to ensure a long-term pipeline of investmentDeliver road safety measures that enable people to safely use active travel within the region
Project Summary
<p>This project is in 2 parts:</p> <p>1. Complete the design of the Falkirk to Polmont and Falkirk to Larbert to the point of being ‘construction ready’. This 6 month piece of work will conclude the design work begun in previous years on behalf of Falkirk council for 2 routes that form elements of the SEStran Strategic Network.</p> <p>2. Carry out a review of the current network and its fit with changing local authority plans, with the aim of a robust regional document that support local authorities in securing funding for elements of the network that align with their priorities.</p>
Q1 Progress
<p>Falkirk routes: Funding bid to Sustrans was placed on hold due to lack of funding, alternate funding offered by Falkirk Council via their TS grant, consultant brief completed and quote received, project to start early June (approx. 4 week delay).</p> <p>Network review: Baseline mapping work included in tender for PPP development support, to begin in early June on schedule</p>
Q2 Progress
<p>Falkirk Routes: Procurement complete, but work start is further delayed due to resource constraints at Falkirk Council - kick off meeting expected early September, so delay is now up from 1 month in Q1 to 4 months at present. Still anticipate completion by end 24/25.</p> <p>Network review: work continues to gather data, remains on schedule at this time</p>
Q3 Progress
<p>Falkirk Routes: Workshop held with Falkirk Council end September to discuss design refinements needed. Still several outstanding issues that require addressed before work can commence to complete design. Further meeting currently being sought to resolve. Risk of delay and/or underspend remains and cannot be further clarified until after this meeting.</p> <p>Network review: work continues to gather data, with the majority now received but some remains outstanding - completion date delayed by around 2 months</p>
Q4 Progress
<p>Falkirk Routes: The Falkirk route design work was completed in the quarter. Activities have mainly involved project update meetings and inputting into design discussions as required, with in depth reviews being carried out by Falkirk Council. The work has cost £6,563 more than budgeted due to the need for unexpected survey work - these costs have been agreed with Falkirk Council and will be recovered from them in full.</p> <p>Network review: this work has been paused due to the focus on People and Place in Q4 and difficulties in gathering data. A plan is now in place to progress this work in 25/26 as set out in the Business Plan.</p>

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Feedback on current design complete	30/06/2024	31/08/2024	27/09/2024	Complete - Late	11/11/2024
Completion of design work	30/09/2024	31/03/2025	31/03/2025	Complete - Late	02/04/2025
Completion of baseline map (via PPP)	30/11/2024	30/06/2025		Delayed	02/04/2025

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£42,399	£45,450
Current Budget	£48,962	£52,013
Spend to Date	£49,178	£52,229
Remaining	-£215	-£216
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£49,178	£52,229
Predicted Variance	-£215	-£216

Budget Notes
Income is negative due to an overpayment on an invoice issued by SEStran 23/24 that has been repaid in 24/25. No income beyond this correction is budgeted for this project

EV Delivery

Budget Code: 92088
Responsible Officer: Rebecca Smith
Manager: Michael Melton
RTS Objectives: 1, 4
Last Updated: 02/04/2025

Programme Status: Minor Delay

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Engage with Scottish Government for effective national strategy/guidance/specifications on fleet decarbonisation and rollout of appropriate and future-proofed supporting infrastructure. This should include legislation to manage on street charging provision and the provision of chargers in new developments.•Work with the private sector and partners to develop a regional electric vehicle (and e-bike) investment and charging strategy, with associated technical guidance, including a spatial strategy across the area for long journey, rapid-charging facilities and for local area hub/community charging
Project Summary
This project seeks to support the development of common procurement documentation for public EV charging infrastructure in the SEStran and SWEStran regions. It will also recommend procurement approaches to be taken forward, whether this be a single regional procurement or serval different procurement waves across the region with common tender documents. The overall project aim it to pool resource to create efficiencies for all LAs, and to secure a increased competition and better value in the final tender by presented a bigger market for suppliers.
Q1 Progress
Agreement gained from all LAs (plus Dumfries and Galloway) to jointly develop public EV changing procurement documents. Formal governance structure put in place to oversee the project. Worked with TS to identify grant available to each LA to understand available budget. Ongoing discussion with CEC and a consultant with the aim of having a PM and project delivery support in place from early June.
Q2 Progress
Consultant procurement was completed later than anticipated, which has led to further programme delays, but overall these are minor and with end dates being delayed by around 1 month. Fortnightly working groups meetings are approx. monthly steering groups have taken place over the quarter with the aim of creating a procurement plan and documents that can be used by each LA, whether separately or as part of joint procurement(s).
Q3 Progress
Oversight group met in early October who agreed to proceed with a regional grouping of 8 LAs (minus East Lothian and plus D&G) with a lead authority approach. Documentation defining this agreement will developed as part of a new piece of consultancy work to support the collaboration. This requires a regional budget pooling together the remaining EVIF funding which is to be approved. Ongoing steering group meetings to progress the project with LA officers.
Q4 Progress
Significant progress has been made in the quarter, with City of Edinburgh ow leading on the majority of project delivery work, including the development of a procurement strategy and twice weekly working groups with all LAs to ensure the procurement meets the needs of all partners. SEStran continue to chair the Steering and Oversight Groups, with an oversight group help in March to update senior officers and ensure continued support for the collaborative process, including topics such as ongoing governance, timeline risks, and Councillor engagement. The delivery programme is now being managed by City of Edinburgh, and will be finalised as part of the procurement strategy. There remains a risk that the final contract award will not be in place until after the current back office system (Charge Pace Scotland, commissioned by Transport Scotland) is switched off. Discussions are ongoing with TS to find a solution. The project budget is anticipating an underspend of £5000 - this is due to an error in budget set at the start of the year that was found to have erroneously included £5000 of consultant cost that were actually charged in 23/24. With CEC taking the lead on delivery, it is currently proposed that this work does not continue to be a specific SEStran project, but our role as chair of the Steering and Oversight Group becomes part of our day to day work.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Form governance structure	30/04/2024	31/08/2024	30/04/2024	Complete	19/08/2024
Procure PM & consultant support	31/05/2024	07/06/2024	19/06/2024	Complete - Late	19/08/2024
Procurement docs complete	30/09/2024	31/10/2024	19/10/2024	Complete - Late	08/11/2024
Procurement begins (scope tbc)	31/10/2024	31/04/2025		Delayed	02/04/2025
Tender awarded (scope tbc)	30/05/2025	30/09/2026		Delayed	02/04/2025

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£35,000
Current Budget	£0	£35,517
Spend to Date	£0	£30,580
Remaining	£0	£4,937
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£30,580
Predicted Variance	£0	£4,937

Regional Bus Strategy

Budget Code: 92087
Responsible Officer: Rachael Murphy
Manager: Keith Fiskien
RTS Objectives: 1, 3, 4
Last Updated: 02/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Undertake a Regional Bus Connectivity study for non-Edinburgh travel to identify settlement pairs where travel demand is high and bus services are poor, as a means to promoting new routes and connectivity (in partnership with other policies)•Undertake a Regional Bus Priority study which will identify regional, cross-boundary, quality bus corridors and key bus priority interventions to reduce bus journey times and improve bus journey time reliability where Edinburgh is likely to be a focus•Deliver the bus priority interventions funded by Transport Scotland’s Bus Partnership Fund and subsequently identified by the Regional Bus Priority study•Review the bus powers detailed in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and identify if they could be implemented across all or parts of the region within an integrated strategy to enhance the bus network
Project Summary
The RTS sees the bus network at the heart of the region’s public transport system, building alongside the National Transport Strategy (NTS2). Almost half (47%) of residents across the South East of Scotland used a bus service at least once a month in 2019 and patronage is building back. At SEStran’s June Partnership Board Meeting, the Towards a World Class Bus Service paper begun the process of shaping a Regional Bus Strategy for the South East of Scotland.
Q1 Progress
Consultants procured (Systra + Stantec) Local Authorities and operators engaged Inception documents created EQIAs drafted Case for Change first draft shared with SEStran Summary shared as part of board papers
Q2 Progress
Increased Budget C4C shown to the board and accepted (ongoing drafting) As the study is so multi-faceted, the decision was signed off by the partnership director to draft the strategy's policies and actions before appraising a shorter list of options that are perceived by our authorities and stakeholders to be realisable. RBS main body in progress
Q3 Progress
Development of draft strategy policies and actions against a number of 'qualities' like service level is underway SEStran staff have read through these, and engagement resources are being developed for LAs The board, a smaller group from our IMF forum and operators will work through the document in Q4
Q4 Progress
Draft Strategy policies fedback on by LAs, operators, boards, IMF small group Videos produced (very well received) to work through document Consideration of P&R/ hub integration as part of wider bus work begins The underspend in this project is principally caused by the size of the budget, and the readjustment of work packages to streamline the appraisal phase. All work packages will be complete with the apportioned budget, but some of the work and spend is now in 25/26

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Case for Change	17/05/2024	30/05/2024	30/05/2024	Complete - Late	26/08/2024
Develop Policies, Measures, and a Draft Strategy	31/12/2024		31/12/2024	Complete	11/11/2024
Appraisal of Delivery Options	18/04/2025			On Track	02/04/2025
Consultation on the Draft Strategy	18/04/2025			On Track	02/04/2025

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£150,000	£225,000
Current Budget	£150,000	£175,000
Spend to Date	£150,000	£103,330
Remaining	£0	£71,670
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£150,000	£103,330
Predicted Variance	£0	£71,670

Budget Notes
Est budget reduced by £50k as it is now thought unlikely that the additional work required can be completed in 24/25 - it is expected a request will be made to carry this funding into 25/26 to allow the work to complete

Transport to Healthcare

Budget Code: 92062
Responsible Officer: Rachael Murphy
Manager: Keith Fiskin
RTS Objectives: 2
Last Updated: 07/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
• Support the delivery of bus services and infrastructure measures which ensure access to healthcare for all
Project Summary
Transport to health is a key service, connecting Scots with healthcare, from day-to-day appointments at the GP to hospital care. In 2019, the Mobility and Access Committee, working with Transport Scotland, produced MACS Report: Transport to Health and Social Care. This was strengthened by implementation last autumn of parts of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which dealt specifically with Transport to Health. The Primary Health Directorate and Transport Scotland published their Transport to Health Delivery Plan draft. The draft puts an obligation on both health boards and regional transport partnerships to work together when considering transport to health.
Q1 Progress
1-1s with all four health boards, NHS Assure, Scottish Ambulance Service 1st group meeting with these stakeholders Project with Urban Tide progressing, but election means communicating project is paused *challenge* Want to see more leadership UT in meetings with CPC etc *challenge*
Q2 Progress
Update from CPC on how to talk to potential partners about TtH project with DfT funding Further meeting of TtH group and agreement on desire for 'learning network' for at least next six months
Q3 Progress
Building relationship with PHS and VHS Speaking about our work at PHS conference Keen to move towards decisions about next year's efforts with health boards but concerned that there's not sufficient impetus for a decision.
Q4 Progress
Co-ran event in Ed with PHS Agree TtH strategy as future direction with HBs Begin literature review and engagmenet plan, ahead of strategy The low readiness of partners to begin in-depth work means that less was spent than predicted, but work will continue in earnest in 25/26

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
First meeting with all boards	16/05/2024		16/05/2024	Complete	19/08/2024
Agreed projects for collaboration	31/08/2024	31/03/2025	31/01/2025	Complete - Late	04/11/2024
Ext. consultant for Literature Review/ Engagement Plan	01/03/2025		01/03/2025	Complete	07/04/2025
Literature Review/ Engagement Plan written	30/04/2025			On Track	07/04/2025
End of year/ start of PID	15/04/2025	30/04/2025		Delayed	07/04/2025

Budget	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£10,000
Current Budget	£0	£10,000
Spend to Date	£0	£7,321
Remaining	£0	£2,679
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£7,321
Predicted Variance	£0	£2,679

Regional Freight Strategy

Budget Code: 92080
Responsible Officer: Keith Fisken
Manager: Keith Fisken
RTS Objectives: 1, 4
Last Updated: 04/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with partners to identify, through the further development of the SEStran Freight Strategy, locations where Freight Consolidation Centres could be located• Work with partners to identify, through the further development of the SEStran Freight Strategy, locations where gauge clearances should be increased to enable new and enhanced rail freight services to operate in the region• Identify opportunities to implement innovation and automation in the freight and logistics industry in the region, including the delivery of relevant pilot projects• Further develop proposals for new rail freight services, including a potential multi-user freight train running from Grangemouth and use of converted passenger trains for freight, as part of the development of the SEStran Freight Strategy
Project Summary
<p>Within the RTS SEStran supports, where appropriate, the development of new or enhanced rail freight services in the region.</p> <p>Opportunities for innovative passenger train forming which incorporates the ability to carry freight should be explored combined with innovation and automation to increase the efficiency of freight and logistics networks across the region. The region should also support improved road freight services with better driver facilities and alternative fuel provision for HGV and LGV working with industry to transition from ICE power.</p>
Q1 Progress
<p>Submitted ACCESS for Goods project funding proposal with the University of West of England, feedback in July</p> <p>Reviewing regional freight study with stakeholders, will present at freight forum in May</p>
Q2 Progress
<p>EU FUSION - Developing draft for Horizon proposal with partners submission in September</p> <p>ACCESS for Goods proposal was rejected by funders, well received but a very competitive fund.</p>
Q3 Progress
<p>SEStran Logistics and Freight forum was held on 21st November with presentations on the regional strategy delivery plan and implications for freight and on further applications for drone use in the Hitrans region.</p>
Q4 Progress
<p>Feedback was received from the European Union Horizon review board on the FUSION submission, and although the feedback was positive the project was rejected for funding.</p> <p>SEStran is working with Napier TRI to develop a research proposal that will explore the potential for freight tram in Edinburgh, this will be funded by SEStran</p>

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Present option to freight forum	30/05/2024		30/05/2024	Complete	19/08/2024
Access for goods funding feedback	31/07/2024		08/08/2024	Complete - Late	19/08/2024
Submit FUSION Proposal	06/09/2024		06/09/2024	Complete	11/11/2024

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£10,000
Current Budget	£0	£10,000
Spend to Date	£0	£0
Remaining	£0	£10,000
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£0
Predicted Variance	£0	£10,000

RTS Delivery Plan

Budget Code: 92042
Responsible Officer: Rachael Murphy
Manager: Keith Fiskin
RTS Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4
Last Updated: 04/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: Underspend

RTS Actions
•Partner councils work with SEStran through the statutory planning processes to implement RTS policies with regards to major developments
Project Summary
Building on the ESESCRD and SEStran Concordat, this delivery plan will highlight projects Local Authorities want to develop that exemplify the themes and objectives of the RTS. By identifying these opportunities, we can make best use of CRD and SEStran efforts and actively pursue funding for these.
Q1 Progress
PID created, shared with group participants First meeting of group hosted, PID and matrix discussed Matrix editing begun
Q2 Progress
Matrix work continued, combined with GIS data from PIP Some delay due to summer holidays Commitment to host 1-1 meetings with LAs on their projects 1-1 meetings with RPF projects to gain context. Ewan drafting note.
Q3 Progress
Matrix is with LAs to share projects Discussion of best mapping procedure to consider the projects Discussion of role of Transport Scotland in the group's meetings Milestone on Baselineing of projects not achieved. This is due to the internal decision to meet with all the Regional Prosperity Framework leads individually, in order to fully understand their transport dependencies, which could be fulfilled by projects in the matrix. Doing this ourselves now will offer two obvious benefits: it's an opportunity to build relationships with RPF leads and it could reduce work (and thus cost) undertaken by a consultant in the next stage.
Q4 Progress
Meeting with all LAs to work through priority projects Use of Power BI and GIS mapping to demonstrate projects Contribution to devolution paper, with RTSDP as transport wishlist Developing work on devolved powers and STPR2 have caused us to slightly delay procuring a consultant so that we can be confident of shaping the work as effectively as possible. As such we have not spent the project budget but will spend it in the new year.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
Project preparation	31/05/2024		31/03/2024	Complete	19/08/2024
Baselining	31/07/2024	30/11/2024	30/11/2024	Complete - Late	11/11/2024
Matrix of projects	30/11/2024		30/11/2024	Complete	30/08/2024
Procurement of consultant support	31/12/2024	30/04/2026		Delayed	30/08/2024
Identify Priority Project Phases	31/12/2024		15/01/2025	Complete - Late	30/08/2024
Develop wider RTS Action Plan	30/06/2025			On Track	30/08/2024
Drafting of RTS Delivery Plan Report	30/11/2025			On Track	30/08/2024

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£20,000
Current Budget	£0	£20,000
Spend to Date	£0	£0
Remaining	£0	£20,000
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£0
Predicted Variance	£0	£20,000

Rail Strategy

Budget Code: 92047
Responsible Officer: Keith Fisken
Manager: Keith Fisken
RTS Objectives: 1, 3, 4
Last Updated: 07/04/2025

Programme Status: On Target

Finance Status: On Budget

RTS Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with key stakeholders (Transport Scotland & Network) rail to develop new rail infrastructure supported by appropriate appraisal and business case development• Opportunities should be explored with partners to introduce new services, including more direct links across the region, national boundaries and cross-city connections
Project Summary
Enhancements to rail services can deliver improved public transport connectivity. This could take several forms, such as more direct through services between locations, reducing the need for interchange on existing routes, and increased frequencies on particular routes or at key times of the day.
Q1 Progress
Developing response to TS comments on Newburgh appraisal for submission in May ECMA - SEStran participated in an officer group meeting in May
Q2 Progress
Newburgh community stakeholder meeting to support appraisal set up for September Quarterly rail meeting held with stakeholders on 4th September Winchburgh steering group in place to progress station development, will meet monthly
Q3 Progress
The Newburgh stakeholder event was held in Newburgh with great representation from numerous stakeholder group exploring the impact that a station could have on Newburgh and the surrounding area. The final addendum to the appraisal with notes from the meeting will be submitted to Transport Scotland in November for consideration SEStran attended the lates Winchburgh steering group meetings
Q4 Progress
The Newburgh final report was submitted to Transport Scotland it is currently being reviewed and feedback is awaited. The Winchburgh work is progressing with station design and business case development, the steering group meets monthly with SEStran officers participating. The regional rail group met in January and discussed the potential for the development of a regional rail strategy to complement the RTS, this will be explored further in 2025/26.

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
n/a					

Budget		
	Income	Expenditure
Original Budget	£0	£2,500
Current Budget	£0	£2,931
Spend to Date	£0	£2,931
Remaining	£0	£0
Predicted future spend	£0	£0
Predicted total spend	£0	£2,931
Predicted Variance	£0	£0

People and Place Plan

People and Place Plan Budget

Theme	Programme Name	Who delivers	Revenue Budget	Capital Budget	Total Budget	LA Rev Awards	LA Cap Awards	SEStran Rev Awards	SEStran Cap Awards	Third Party Rev Awards	Third Party Cap Awards	Total Rev Award	Total Cap Awards	Total Award	Rev Variance	Cap Variance	Total Variance
Schools and Young People	Active Ways to School	Third party	£490,450	£405,849	£896,299	£0	£0			£672,996	£423,340	£672,996	£423,340	£1,096,336	£182,546	£17,491	£200,037
Schools and Young People	Encouraging Active Travel: Young People	Local Authorities	£248,500	£231,650	£480,150	£239,180	£417,750			£0	£0	£239,180	£417,750	£656,930	-£9,320	£186,100	£176,780
Schools and Young People	Access to Bikes: Young People	Local Authorities & Third Parties	£0	£608,795	£608,795	£0	£50,000			£0	£458,795	£0	£508,795	£508,795	£0	-£100,000	-£100,000
Workplaces	Active Ways to Work: Large Employers	Third party	£25,000	£80,000	£105,000	£0	£0			£25,000	£80,000	£25,000	£80,000	£105,000	£0	£0	£0
Workplaces	Active Ways to Work: Other Employers	Local Authorities	£46,524	£135,000	£181,524	£24,520	£113,685	£28,399	£7,115	£0	£0	£52,919	£120,800	£173,719	£6,395	-£14,200	-£7,805
Accessibility and Inclusion	Street Audits and Enabling Facilities	Local Authorities	£0	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£685,448			£0	£0	£0	£685,448	£685,448	£0	£185,448	£185,448
Accessibility and Inclusion	Active Travel Hubs	Third party	£0	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0			£0	£150,000	£0	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£0
Accessibility and Inclusion	Existing Active Travel Hubs Communities support	Third party	£100,792	£334,390	£435,182	£0	£0			£135,478	£380,899	£135,478	£380,899	£516,377	£34,686	£46,509	£81,195
Accessibility and Inclusion	Encouraging Active Travel: Communities	Local Authorities	£566,600	£485,500	£1,052,100	£547,240	£240,000			£0	£0	£547,240	£240,000	£787,240	-£19,360	-£245,500	-£264,860
Accessibility and Inclusion	Access to Bikes	Local Authorities & Third Parties	£0	£431,016	£431,016	£0	£170,327			£0	£236,016	£0	£406,343	£406,343	£0	-£24,673	-£24,673
Accessibility and Inclusion	Regional AT Comms Campaign	SEStran	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£20,260	£0	£0	£0	£20,260	£0	£20,260	-£29,740	£0	-£29,740
Capacity and Capability Building	Behaviour Change Project Officers	Third party	£129,506	£0	£129,506	£0	£0			£74,897	£0	£74,897	£0	£74,897	-£54,609	£0	-£54,609
Capacity and Capability Building	Programme Management for 2024/25	SEStran	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£22,914	£0	£0	£0	£22,914	£0	£22,914	-£77,086	£0	-£77,086
Capacity and Capability Building	Programme Preparation for 2025/26 onwards	SEStran	£80,000	£0	£80,000	£0	£0	£67,862	£0	£0	£0	£67,862	£0	£67,862	-£12,138	£0	-£12,138
Capacity and Capability Building	Capability and capacity building development	SEStran	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	£0	£6,187	£48,594	£0	£0	£6,187	£48,594	£54,781	-£8,813	£48,594	£39,781
Capacity and Capability Building	Programme level Monitoring & evaluation	SEStran	£40,000	£50,000	£90,000	£0	£0	£75,901	£0	£0	£0	£75,901	£0	£75,901	£35,901	-£50,000	-£14,099
Capacity and Capability Building	Contingency	n/a	£21,582	£0	£21,582	£0	£0	-£26,880	-£1,175	£0	£0	-£26,880	-£1,175	-£28,055	-£48,462	-£1,175	-£49,637
			£1,913,954	£3,460,794	£5,374,748	£810,940	£1,677,210	£194,643	£54,534	£908,371	£1,729,050	£1,913,954	£3,460,794	£5,374,748	-£0	£48,594	£48,594
		Schools and Young People	£738,950	£1,246,294	£1,985,244	£239,180	£467,750	£0	£0	£672,996	£882,135	£912,176	£1,349,885	£2,262,061	£173,226	£103,591	£276,817
		Workplaces	£71,524	£215,000	£286,524	£24,520	£113,685	£28,399	£7,115	£25,000	£80,000	£77,919	£200,800	£278,719	£6,395	-£14,200	-£7,805
		Accessibility and Inclusion	£717,392	£1,900,906	£2,618,298	£547,240	£1,095,775	£20,260	£0	£135,478	£766,915	£702,978	£1,862,690	£2,565,668	-£14,414	-£38,216	-£52,630
		Capacity and Capability Building	£386,088	£50,000	£436,088	£0	£0	£145,984	£47,418	£74,897	£0	£220,881	£47,418	£268,299	-£165,207	-£2,582	-£167,789

Risk Number	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PPP12	Funding allocation between Local Authorities is perceived to be inequitable	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Careful engagement with LA partners to coordinate activities and help them understand what factors have influenced 24/25 & 25/26 decisions Online tool developed for transparency on where all funding is being spent and results of this	Unlikely	Moderate	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations 11/03	Monitoring tool live Consultation on draft future plan in October 2024 Meetings held with LAs to in Jan & Feb 25 to develop project proposals for 25/26	In Progress	29/01/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP14	Reduction in revenue funding could lead to an inequitable programme that favours cycling over walking and wheeling and/or lacks capacity to engage with seldom heard groups	Probable	Major	High Risk	24/25 programme revised to retain revenue funding in key areas such as communities and walking/wheeling 25/26 plan to be built up from assumed revenue split to mitigate this impact from the start Programme wide 25/26 IIA has been developed along with guidance on how this should be adapted at a project delivery level	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Compile funding modes split for 24/25 and 25/26 for review - by end Q4		In Progress	25/03/24	18/03/25	MM
PPP18	Lack of resource to deliver projects within local authorities or third parties leads to slowed/no delivery on specific projects leading to underspend and/or failure to achieve anticipated impact	Probable	Major	High Risk	Grant monitoring process of reporting on anticipated spend in place and regular meetings with partners to understand any resource issues early. Identify projects more likely to underspend. Keep reserve list of projects that can be funded if underspend develops	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Continue to develop and add to contingency projects. Review underspend and available contingency with view to reaward by mid March 2025 (delayed from end Jan) Compile definitive list of 24/25 underspend for analysis - by end Q4	Review reserve list of projects by 31/07. Develop proposal for contingency by 31/07.	In Progress	12/04/24	18/03/25	MM
PPP19	Lack of resource within SEStran to delivery on grant management, 25/26 plan development, comms, M&E, and capability building work. This could variously lead to ineffective grant management and/or a failure to deliver on elements of the plan	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Budget set aside in Plan for staff resource based on estimate of time required LA and third parties distributed between the team to share workload	Unlikely	Moderate	Low Risk	Recruit additional Project Officer to manage community fund for 25/26 - advert live mid-March	New Comms Officer started in Autumn. Secondment from Sustrans to support community grant fund launch in post Feb-March	In Progress	12/04/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP23	Change in funding priorities/ political agenda impacts the programme development work, potentially resulting in work needing to be redone or no longer needed	Probable	Major	High Risk	Development of 5 year plan to be flexible to changing priorities and ensure consultant is award of this need for flexibility Develop plan to allow for inclusion of public transport and integrated mode projects. TS have stated that sustainable transport measures will be included under future funding for PPP.	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Case studies being developed on existing projects to demonstrate value of investment - complete by end March	Delivery has been developed incorporating sustainable transport Meetings held with LAs to in Jan & Feb 25 to develop project proposals for 25/26 included sustainable transport options	In Progress	28/05/24	11/03/25	BHJ
PPP26	There is a risk of a cumulative effect of funding confirmation delays and delays to procurement of work being delivered by local authorities that leads to no/limited delivery and/or underspend	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Ongoing discussions with LAs to understand problems early. Flexibility with grant process to move money between projects.	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Consider options for 25/26 by end March 25 (delayed from end Jan)		In Progress	03/07/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP27	There is a risks of mistakes / inaccuracy as we use Excel / Word documents instead of automatic system, which could lead to errors in grant claims, submissions to TS, on funding agreements etc	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	One Excel doc to track budget. Implemented budget change tracker. Automated cross checking.	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	Come back to proposal summer 25 with the potential to implement with 26/27 applications - Q2 25/26	Discussion had with potential provided of system to understand costs and functionality - complete Mar 25	In Progress	03/07/24	18/03/25	MM
PPP28	A lack of capacity within local authorities results in either poor quality, inconsistent, or a lack of monitoring data being collected on projects, which lead to difficulty in demonstrating impact of funded projects to Transport Scotland and more widely	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Continued engagement with LAs to understand what support can be offered in 24/25, but given current position within delivery year impact of this is limited Progress case study work with interested LAs to support what quantitative data can be collected	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Develop plans for additional M&E support for local authorities for 25/26 during Q3 (delayed to Q4) M&E key part of April 2025 LA workshop		In Progress	23/10/24	18/03/25	MM
PPP29	A lack of clear guidance alongside lack of capacity results in inconsistent monitoring data being collected on all projects, which complicates a programme level evaluation and leads to difficulty in demonstrating impact of funded projects to Transport Scotland and more widely	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Continued engaged with all partners to understand what support can be offered in 24/25, but given current position within delivery year impact of this is limited	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Develop plans for additional M&E support for all projects for 25/26 during Q3 (delayed to Q4)	Procure evaluation consultant to support with 24/25 evaluation - by mid Q3	In Progress	23/10/24	06/01/25	MM

Risk Number	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PPP30	Delays to award of 25/26 funding lead to reduced delivery period (and potential to miss summer delivery window) leading to underspend in the programme and/or reduced impact (also see issue ref PPP01 re 24/25)	Highly Probable	Moderate	High Risk	Work to TS timescales to ensure 25/26 plan proposals are submitted on time Take delivery plan and associated grant funding documents to December Board for approval to allow time to run processes prior to 31st March Plan timeline to ensure grant awards can be made in principle by 31st March subject to TS funding confirmation	Highly Probable	Minor	Medium Risk	As per planned mitigations 11/03	Develop grant process documents - by 22.11 Develop grant application and award timeline - by 22.11 Board approval of grant process - Dec 24 Board approval of 25/26 in March includes indicative P&P budget	In Progress	23/10/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP31	25/26 delivery proposals are not approved by Transport Scotland AO process, leading to no funding for 25/26 delivery	Unlikely	Catastrophic	Medium Risk	Ongoing engagement with TS to ensure alignment and answer any questions Iterative discussions with TS as plans for 25/26 progress	Remote	Catastrophic	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations 11/03	First draft plan submitted to TS Dec 24 Final draft submitted to TS Jan 25 following several meetings to discuss	In Progress	23/10/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP32	Community fund - Risk to SEStran reputation where projects are not successful in receiving funding. This risk is amplified by the lack of certainty of funding for 25/26 delivery.	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Develop clear applications guidance and criteria to support applications and when confirmed make budget clear to manage expectations Ensure programme is sufficiently resourced to offer pre application support and guidance where necessary	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	Develop list of alternative funding sources to share with any unsuccessful/ineligible community groups - by end March		In Progress	23/10/24	22/01/25	MM
PPP33	Community fund - Delivering the fund requires more or less work than expected, leading to either a lack or resource that impacts on other areas of delivery, or an over resourcing programme leading to lower value for money	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Fund size value confirmed to Board and with TS indication budget at £400k, which is assumed to be deliverable by one FTE. Review resource requirements on a regular basis at 6 weekly P&P management meetings	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Recruit additional Project Officer to manage community fund for 25/26 - advert live mid-March Review resource requirements on a regular basis at 6 weekly P&P management meetings		In Progress	23/10/24	11/03/25	MM
PPP35	Grants paid in advance - risk of spend not taking place due to suppliers going bust, lack of capacity from organisation, project no longer running. This could lead to funding being spent incorrectly.	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Evidence required when grant claim in advance is requested (invoice, costings etc.) as well as a plan and timescale for spend to be provided to ensure organisation has plan to spend funding. Request for paid invoices/ proof of payment within 30 days of spend.	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned mitigations 06.01		In Progress	23/10/24	06/01/25	MM
PPP36	Changes to funding amounts, including of capital/revenue split requirements, following provision of indicative budget from TS in Dec 2024	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Develop programme in line with Delivery Plan to allow for flex to available budget See risk PPP14 re rev/cap split	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned mitigations 06.01		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM
PPP37	Changes to monitoring/evaluation and/or reporting requirements for 25/26 that extend beyond those for 24/25, leading to either failure to deliver sufficient data and/or budget increases to cover requirements	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Continued attendance at TS P&P M&E meeting to ensure regular updates Draft grant guidance such that M&E requirements are flexible and stress importance of adequate M&E budgets	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations 06.01		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM
PPP38	Annual funding rounds and delays to funding awards reduces ability for long-term planning and delivery partner interest/capacity	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Build relationships with a range to third party providers to ensure multiple options for delivery Continue to discuss multi year funding options with TS	Possible	Minor	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations 11.03	Anderson Strathern have advised on and developed extension option for 25/26 awards and funding agreements - complete Feb 2025	In Progress	06/01/25	11/03/25	MM
PPP39	Challenge to decision on grant programme leads to programme delays and perceptions of unfairness in funding allocation	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Gained Board approval for Grant Eligibility and Assessment criteria in line with Grant Standing Orders Grant guidance contains clear scoring criteria and available to all applicants Three scorers to independently score each application Funding Panel to approve final recommendations	Unlikely	Moderate	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations (06/01)		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM

Risk Number	Risk Detail	Gross Probability	Gross Impact	Gross Risk Score	Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Probability	Net Impact	Net Risk Score	Actions (inc who and date due	Completed Actions	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PPP40	Changes to the delivery programmes of related projects (e.g. of infrastructure improvements) hamper effectiveness of P&P projects	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Early and continued communication with local authorities/delivery partners to stay informed about progress and any potential changes to infrastructure improvements.	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned mitigations (06/01)		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM
PPP41	There is too little innovation in programme design (so delivery is stale), or there is too much innovation in programme design (so limited benefits achieved)	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Use robust M&E to assess the impact of interventions. Seek feedback from stakeholders to identify areas where innovation is needed and gather new ideas. Use evidence from successful innovations elsewhere to inform new interventions. Ensure new ideas are tested by evidence. Implement small-scale interventions to test innovative ideas before delivering them more widely. Use robust M&E to assess the impact of innovative approaches and ensure they deliver real benefits. Communicate with stakeholders to ensure new ideas align with their needs.	Unlikely	Minor	Low Risk	As per planned mitigations (06/01)		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM
PPP42	Lack of data on effectiveness of projects hampers decision making and/or ability to evidence success	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Delivery Plan has been produced based on best available evidence that exists at a national level Urban Foresight commissioned to carry out 24/25 evaluation to feed into future delivery Delivery Plan to be reviewed annually taking previous performance data into account	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	As per planned mitigations (06/01)		In Progress	06/01/25	06/01/25	MM
PPP43	SEStran, Local Authorities and other delivery partners do not properly coordinate P&P and Local Authority People & Place projects, or other complementary projects, such that delivery is inefficient	Probable	Moderate	Medium Risk	Ensure all partners are fully aware of their responsibilities to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure efficient use of resources. Establish regular communication channels for transparent planning, project updates, addressing challenges, and ensuring alignment of efforts.	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Engage with LAs as needed on community grant applications to ensure no overlap - ongoing until decisions made	Share third party funded projects with each LA - complete Mar	In Progress	06/01/25	18/03/25	MM
PPP44	Grant claim payment timescales are longer than anticipated leading to delayed payment on claims. Knock on impacts of this could include delayed project delivery where cash flow is an issue for partners, damage to SEStran reputation of delayed payments, and potential for smaller community projects to withdraw from the programme.	Possible	Major	Medium Risk	Continue to engage with funded partners to set expectation for claim payments and identify issues early, and where these may occur suggest more regular and/or advance claims are submitted	Possible	Moderate	Medium Risk	Review claim guidance for 25/26 to ensure timescales are clearly set out - by end April Review data from CEC on payment timescales to understand current timelines - by end April	Ask CEC for data on 24/25 payment dates - complete March	New	18/03/25	18/03/25	MM

Issue Ref	Description	Severity	Next Steps (date and who)	Lessons Learnt	Status	Date Raised	Last Updated	Owner
PPP01	The funding confirmation from Transport Scotland was received in mid-April rather than mid-late March, which led to a knock on delay to SEStran Board approval for the budget, and subsequent funding awards not being issued until 2nd May, 1 month into the delivery year. This has reduced the delivery year from 12 to 11 months, resulting in impacts to project delivery and spend that require mitigation.	Medium	Discuss with each partner the impact of the funding award delay - complete Update spend profile and project budget based on these discussions - complete Retain flexibility for projects and budget to allow partners to pivot in case of knock on impacts of delays - complete Consider how Board approval could be sought in advance in future years - (complete March 2025)	Run grant rounds as early as possible and issue awards in principle to allow partners to prepare for delivery in case TS funding I delayed in 25/26 Prepare funding agreements in advance of 31st March to ensure all documentation is ready to issue and does not have to be generated once approvals are received	Closed	08/04/2024	11/03/2025	MM
PPP02	No funding can be accrued or claimed in advance for projects that will not complete by 31st March 2025 (with the exception of projects linked to the school year). This has affected one project - funding awarded to Sustrans for 2 officers to support Falkirk and West Lothian Council develop active travel behaviour change strategies. Given the delay to the funding award, recruitment took place later than expected, and only one post was filled. As these were envisaged as 12-month roles, the viability of the second officer (West Lothian) is now in doubt and may need to be removed from the programme, leading to an underspend of approximately £80k (revenue) in this programme area and potential lack of this project being delivered in West Lothian, with a potential knock on impact of delivery in 25/26.	Medium	Work with Sustrans to see if an internal secondment to the post would be possible - complete (was not possible) Develop contingency plan for use of underspend, to first prioritise delivery in West Lothian - (Complete December 2024) If no officer can be recruited, work with WLC to support development of plans for delivery in 25/26 - (Complete January 2025) Final sign off of budget reallocation - by 30th Nov 24 (Complete December 2024)	Request clear programmes from grant applicants at application stage and include an assessment of the deliverability of these as part of the application scoring Hold early inception meetings with project and ensure that recruitment is a standard agenda item for these	Closed	03/07/2024	11/03/2025	MM
PPP03	Several delivery partners have raised concerns around the length of time taken to make grant payments to them, which has caused them issues with cashflow. At present, it can take 5-6 weeks from claim submission to payment, taking into account time to internally check claims (about 1 week), gain approval for payment within SEStran (2-3 days), and then for CEC to process payments (28 days)	Medium	Work with affected organisations to support claims in advance and/or mid quarter claims during Q2 - complete Review claim process to look for efficiencies and ensure payment timescales are clear - complete Discuss payment timescales with CEC - during Q4	tbc	In Progress	02/09/2024	24/10/2024	MM
PPP04	Delayed notification of project underspend from partners has resulted in a growing programme wide underspend towards the end of March 2025. Whilst a plan was in place to reallocate this as a contingency, this has been delayed due to the need for partners to sign variations to reduce grant awards before this amount can be rewarded elsewhere, leading to potential underspend at year end.	Medium	Progress issuing of grant variations as soon as possible - all, ASAP Discuss appetite for risk re slightly over allocating the grant fund on paper to account for delays to signing paperwork - MM, by 10/03 Ask solicitors to review legal agreement to see if clauses can be inserted for 25/26 around reducing grant awards without signed variations - MM, by 10/03	tbc	New	24/02/2025	11/03/2025	MM

Project	Underspend (factoring in income)	Reason for Underspend	Plans for underspend
Thistle Assistance	£6,454	Marketing costs have come in slightly below expectations. Final print order for cards due to demand from marketing campaign to be placed in early 25/26.	Remain within the project to support additional advertising work in 25/26 based on lessons learnt from the March campaign and the users survey
VoyagAR	£0		
Real Time Passenger Information	£8,000	The system training provided for free by the provider but it was estimated this was to cost £5k. The remaining £10k was allocated to system maintenance but this was covered under other budgets, and not required in other instances.	Retain in project to cover 25/26 business plan proposals
GoSEStran	£33,812	These funds would have been used for payments to the new software provider, but due to the cancellation of the project this has not been needed.	Reallocate to other projects in the business plan
Go Ebike	£25,922	£25k has been set aside as requested by Network Rail to cover the costs of the installation of Brompton bike hire locker at Haymarket Station – due to delays with permission etc this has been delayed to 25/26	Retain within Go Ebike project to cover the costs of the Haymarket cycle hire locker in 25/26
Strategic Network	£0		
EV Delivery	-£5,580		

Regional Bus Strategy	£121,647	Around £70k of this is committed to the current consultant but work has taken longer than expected so costs will be (or have already been) incurred in 25/26. £27k was allocated to internal staff time and other costs which has largely been unspent as there was no need to cover staff time from the core budget from this funding pot, and £25k was allocated to future work that due to the delay with the main RBS cannot take place until 25/26.	Complete current work packages (1-4), progress work package 5 as a follow on from this, utilise remaining funding to support the interchange/mobility hub strategy which will be part funded by People and Place
Transport to Healthcare			
Regional Freight Strategy	£10,000	This funding was planned to support a research proposal that SEStran is working on with Napier Transport Research Institute to explore the potential for freight tram in Edinburgh, but this has been delayed to 25/26	Retain in project pending outcome of research proposal
RTS Delivery Plan	£20,000	Developing work on devolved powers and STPR2 have caused us to slightly delay procuring a consultant so that we can be confident of shaping the work as effectively as possible.	Retain in project to support procurement of consultant in 25/26 to progress work agreed with Local Authorities
Rail Strategy	£18,069	The only work undertaken in this area in 24/25 was around Newburgh Station	Work in this area is planned for 25/26, with budget to be confirmed.

Appendix 3

Sustainable Travel Awareness	£25,462	This is held as contingency for the projects budget which has not been spent due to the underspends elsewhere	Retain as contingency for the projects budget
Project Consultancy Support	£2,640		

RTP Active Travel People and Place Programme Reporting

This template should be used by Regional Transport Partnerships to report quarterly on their Active Travel people and Place Programme grant progress. The focus of this report should be on financial management, outcome progress, and risk reporting.

Name of Organisation	SEStran	Name of Programme	Active Travel People and Place Programme
Total Value of Grant	£5,374,748	Reporting period	Q4

The expected outcomes of the Grant are: With due regard to (1) Regional Transport Strategies, (2) Local Authority programmes of active travel infrastructure delivery, (3) Community Planning Partnerships and Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (LOIPs), and in line with the national Active Travel Framework, to:

- Increase the proportion of short everyday journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Increase positive attitudes towards / increase propensity to walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Increase the proportion of journeys to school by walking, cycling and wheeling;
- Increase the frequency of walking, wheeling and cycling for pleasure / exercise;
- Increase positive perceptions of safety of walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Reduce the proportion of people identifying barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Increase the delivery capacity and capability of the active travel sector to better achieve these outcomes.

The targets/milestones against which progress in achieving expected outcomes shall be monitored are: In line with the People and Place Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:

- Quarterly reports including information on:
 - **Section A:** Narrative on overall progress;
 - **Section B:** Financial management;
 - **Section C:** Delivery against expected project outputs;
 - **Section D:** Risk management;
- Programme spend completed by March 2025.
- Final Evaluation Report submitted by end June 2025.

RTP Active Travel People and Place Programme – Quarterly Report

Section A. Summary:

Narrative on overall progress over the past quarter

Q4 has been a quarter of transition from the 24/25 programme and into the 25/26 programme, with a significant amount of work undertaken internally on preparation for 25/26 alongside closing off the 24/25 programme. Whilst spend and claims had been lagging behind plan up to end Q3, as predicated spend has picked up in Q4, and they are predicting spend of 99.8% of the grant (with an £11k underspend). This has been possible through significant work to reallocate underspend as it has been identified, with around £220k of underspend being reallocated within the programme over the course of 24/25.

A particular highlight of the quarter from the programme management side has been the conclusion of the first part of our 24/25 M&E which involved our consultant, Urban Foresight, carrying out a survey and interviews with our funded partners. Overall, the findings were positive; the majority of the funded organisations appreciated and welcomed the flexibility of the fund to meet project needs, it was stated that the funded organisations also welcomed SEStran team's availability and their ability to have open discussions throughout the process. The funded organisations also found the application process simple and easy. Details of this will be available in the final Evaluation report in June 2025. In addition to the ongoing evaluation, an Internal Audit has been completed on the 24/25 programme with the final report due imminently, and initial reviews have been carried out by our External Auditors.

Key project progress under the 4 themes (plus access to cycles) has been as follows:

- As part of our **access to cycles** programme, the Bike Buddies project in Clackmannanshire has successfully delivered 215 bikes to young people - pupils who qualified received a new bike along with helmets, lights, and locks to ensure safe cycling – and they are now concluding the delivery of the Gearing Up project which supports young people who are care-experienced or have been involved in the justice system. Scottish Borders Council have distributed 167 bikes to young people over the winter, and the Bike Station have had 581 loans over the year from their Wee Bike Library. East Lothian Council have their 4 Brompton hire hubs up and running in libraries across the area, and Fife Council have completed the purchase of 13 adapted trikes for their outdoor education team. Cycling UK's cycle access fund has completed, with some positive evaluation data still to be reviewed – in their recycled bike schemes for example, 77% of those with access to a car started cycling for journeys previously made by car, and while before getting the bike 89% were not meeting the NHS guidance for physical activity per week, afterwards 97% said that receiving their bike has helped to increase the amount of exercise they do.
- With **schools and young people**, I Bike continued across the region, with a total of 342 activities across the schools during Q4, with 7,095 pupil attendances. FEL project in schools in Falkirk and Clacks continues to be successful, with a highlight of the quarter being walk leader training for senior secondary school pupils, allowing them to take primary schools pupils on led walks in the local area. Living Streets have worked in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council to produce Active Travel Zone Maps for 5 schools in the authority, involving local authority staff, local residents, parents/carers, staff and pupils at each school to plan an active travel zone around each school. Fife Council have worked with Hyndhead Special School to install new thermoplastic mats on key routes to school to highlight crossing points, and a new cycle covered shelter and hoops have been installed at Moutfleurie PS, Leven. A new fleet of scooters was launched to all primary schools in Midlothian in late January and so far, have been fully booked - around 800 pupils have participated in this project, in only a few months.

- Under the **workplaces** theme, Cycling Scotland and Greener Kirkcaldy have purchased and taken delivery of all 15 planned bikes for hire to NHS Fife staff, with the e-bike rental scheme now live - all details are available at <https://www.nhsfife.org/e-bikes>. Work by Travel Know How has continued with a specific focus on NHS sites, which will roll over into 25/26. Support has also been given to City of Edinburgh Council to develop their travel plan, including engaging with the City Deal Workforce Mobility Project. Midlothian and Clackmannanshire Council are finalising new staff eBike fleets, with work to conclude in 25/26.
- **Accessibility and inclusion** has a range of projects, including Cycling UK's Connecting Communities project in East Lothian, for which a highlight has been the introduction of 'Trike Tuesdays' which aims to engage those with mobility issues who are unable to ride a standard cycle, with the numbers of attendees at these sessions growing steadily, and this has led to the loan of a side-by-side e-tandem to a participant and their carer. City of Edinburgh council held a well-attended event in collaboration with Glasgow City Council to coincide with International Women's Day: "A Tale of Two Feminist Cities: why the public realm needs to be safer for women and girls and how they can achieve it". Midlothian Council hosted the Dalkeith Dino Trail over the February school holiday to encourage children and young families to get out and be more active, and to highlight the walking, cycle shared pathways with their local area – as a measure of the success of the event, they received 12,018 visits to its dedicated webpage. Street accessibility audits have been carried out in Hawick and Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders, Tranent, Prestonpans, Haddington and North Berwick in East Lothian, with initial works including 7 new dropped kerb crossing points in East Lothian. Greener Kirkcaldy launched the Kirkcaldy Cycle Shed in February that has created an opportunity for individuals to come into the Greener Kirkcaldy Active Travel hub to develop their skills and interest in bicycle mechanics and socialise with others interested in bikes by coming along to the drop-in sessions to work on their own bikes, help out with processing donations and bikes recovered from recycling centres, and plenty of other workshop-based tasks.
- Work around **capacity and capability** building has included the finalising of the Draft Behaviour Change Strategy for Falkirk Council and costed action plan, with plans being underway for a learning session delivered to Falkirk Council – talking through the methodology, workings and assumptions in the development of the Behaviour Change Strategy. A shared learning workshop for Local Authorities is currently being planned for April with a focus on monitoring and data collection. Development work has continued with Urban Tide on our project dashboard, with the aim of integrated M&E data, with current work ongoing to further develop this and to integrate cycle counter data, for example allowing a cohort of counters to be selected that could be used to monitor a specific project.

Some common themes that have merged as challenges in Q4 are:

- As in previous quarters, issues with insurance and eBikes continues to raise issues for both bike fleets and personal bike storage. Solutions have begun to be developed to get around these issues by providing secure storage away from building, but this sacrifices convenience and often increases storage cost, especially if new electrical connections are required for charging.
- A number of projects have come up against capacity constraints (both in terms of resource, materials and funding) that have limited their ability to deliver further – this has been particularly prominent in bike library schemes and those that build and/or repair bikes. Some organisations have been able to source additional funding to employ further resource to manage this, but this has not been possible for all.
- Procurement has been an ongoing challenge for Local Authorities, especially around cycle storage and bikes. While some frameworks can be utilised for cycle parking for example, sourcing adapted bikes in particular has been a challenge, as has seeking more local providers for Dr Bikes and other smaller pieces of work
- Transport of bikes and scooters to project locations has come up as a challenge on several projects, both in terms of cost and time taken. Some projects have overcome this by switching to larger vehicles, and others have looked to purchase a van rather than hire to increase sustainability longer term and reduce overall

costs. With bikes, one project found that working with organisations and delivery partners experienced in bike procurement has streamlined processes and has ensured that high-quality bikes are secured, helping avoid potential delays caused by sourcing challenges.

- For secure bike storage, the TRO process for siting units on street has proved to be a cause for delays
- Where projects are either continuing up until 31st March, or in some cases beyond then, collection of year end monitoring data has been difficult or impossible, and so evaluation will have to continue either without these projects or with only interim data

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Section B. Financial Management:

Part 1: Financial Claim:

Please provide details of any new financial claims made over the last period:

Date of Claim	Ref Number (if applicable)	Capital Claimed	Resource Claimed	Total Claim
24/03/2025		£798,472.68	£623,255.78	£1,421,728.46
26/03/2025		£226,047.00	£212,006.96	£438,053.96

Part 2: Historic Claims:

As a test check and financial audit, please list all claims you have made over the current financial year:

Date of Claim	Ref Number (if applicable)	Capital Claimed	Resource Claimed	Total Claim
14/06/2024		£294,604.53	£37,672	£332,276.53
22/07/2024		£14,732.08	£78,109.67	£92,840.75
12/09/2024		£830,388.61	£360,667.89	£1,191,056.50
25/10/2024		£20,726.58	£77,968.10	£98,694.68
20/12/2024		£905,011.15	£367,778.28	£1,272,789.43

Part 3: Financial Forecasting:

Each month Transport Scotland revises its financial forecast for the year. Please complete the below table with your expected claims that will be made for the coming year. They appreciate this may be high level and will carry a risk of significant change due to the nature of behaviour change programmes

Month	Expected Capital Claim	Expected Revenue Claim	Expected Total Claim	Month	Expected Capital Claim	Expected Revenue Claim	Expected Total Claim
Apr 2024				Oct 2024			
May 2024				Nov 2024			
Jun 2024				Dec 2024			
Jul 2024				Jan 2025			
Aug 2024				Feb 2025			
Sep 2024				Mar 2025			

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Please provide details of any payment to be accrued or paid beyond 31st March 2025:

Revenue: £155,490.04; Capital: £360,504.58 (note, this is based on our revised Q4+1 claim figure, rather than the original figure that looks to have been the only one paid out)

Part 4: Over and Under Spend

Please provide any information on expected underspend or overspend that has developed or is at risk of developing as part of your investment (if possible, break it down by Capital/Revenue). Please also note any mitigation you are taking, and continue to inform your Transport Scotland Grant Manager:

Total underspend across the programme has been £229,500, of which £137,400 is revenue and £92,100 is capital. The majority of this has been reallocated to other projects who have been able to effectively spend this in line with their project objectives. This has been possible through the SEStran team working with partners early to stress the importance of early underspend identification and proactively holding a reserve funding list of options to absorb this.

As of 11th April, they are currently predicting an underspend on the grant of £11,313 (0.21% of the total grant award) or which £1,006 is revenue and £10,307 is capital (note these figures may change when a small number of final grant claims are received for verification). The primary reason for this is the post 31st March notification of a £20,776 capital underspend from one delivery partner – some of this was able to be absorbed by offering additional funding to one Local Authority that had slightly overspent.

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Section C. Delivery against expected project outputs:

Please provide examples of progress / delivery against expected project outputs under each of the People and Place themes. As well as successes they are equally interested in areas where there are delivery challenges to highlight or good practice / lessons learned to share.

Active Schools and Young People	
Project Name	<u>Access to Bikes – Young People</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	<p><u>Cycling Scotland:</u></p> <p>FEL Project Update: The Bike Buddies project in Clackmannanshire has successfully delivered 215 bikes to young people. Pupils who qualified received a new bike, built by FEL Scotland mechanics, along with helmets, lights, and locks to ensure safe cycling. Additionally, the led rides from primary to secondary school have been a major success, with over 400 pupils taking part. These rides provide pupils with confidence cycling on roads and help with their transition to high school. The project has also included bike servicing, with 93 pupils having their bikes checked and maintained to ensure their safety and longevity.</p> <p>Forth Environment Link are now also concluding the delivery of the Gearing Up project in Partnership with Barnardo's, which supports young people who are care-experienced or have been involved in the justice system. The project has delivered 8 bikes and facilitated 12 sessions where young people build their skills before receiving their bikes at the end of the programme. There are another 4 young people due to take part in the 6-week programme, who will each receive a bike.</p> <p>Greener Kirkcaldy Update: 130 quality assured refurbished and new bikes have been allocated to children and young people in partnership with the following organisations: Fife College, Green Action Trust, Gilvenbank Community Sport Hub, Ore Valley Housing Association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 "Build Your Own Bike" courses completed with Argos Youth Centre, Kirkcaldy, Fife College, Levenmouth and the Kings Trust. Interesting consideration arose from the interim reports: Email communications is not as efficient a mode of communications as anticipated whilst having a physical presence at target sites led to better conversion rates. Overall, GK concludes that any Access to Bikes project promotion will be labour intensive if it is to be successful. • In addition to the above, Cycling Scotland and Greener Kirkcaldy developed and used a schools referral form to identify further beneficiaries. This was sent to all Fife schools involved in the Cycling Friendly School award programme and/or having previously received funding from Cycling Scotland. <p>Full distribution of the 150 bikes on track for year end.</p>

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	<p><u>Scottish Borders Council:</u> This programme was delivered over winter and throughout March, resulting in 167 bikes and associated equipment being distributed to young people of all ages across 33 schools in the Scottish Borders. As word spreads around this amazing opportunity, schools and parents are engaging more with it.</p> <p><u>The Bike Station- Wee Bike Library:</u> Since the start of the current financial year, they have delivered 581 bikes from the branches in Edinburgh. They now have a total of 1515 customers in Edinburgh since the start of the project in August 2023. Additionally there are 901 people signed up to the waiting list for a bike. The priorities for the next quarter include promoting the Wee Bike Library to participants in the Kids Bike Life programme. They expect the demand to continue to increase as they promote this across the schools they are working with. These projects compliment one another as they are able to direct children to the Wee Bike Library who are wanting to join in with Kids Bike Life activities to help them break down that barrier. As mentioned briefly below, they are also collecting data across both the Kids Bike Life and Wee Bike Library projects which is helping build a picture of key barriers to cycling for young people in particular. This information is invaluable as it allows the project to shape the programmes and stay relevant and impactful with the barriers and needs of young people in the communities. Going forward (2025-26) they hope to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • add 1000 additional free to access bikes to the WBL • offer cargo bikes for families through the library • collaborate closer with the Kids Bike Life project to reduce the proportion of recipients identifying ‘safety on the road’ as a barrier • collect more data on the barriers children and young people face to cycling to inform future developments of the project
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p><u>The Bike Station- Wee Bike Library:</u> The main challenge this project has encountered this year (and since the start of the project in August 2023) is the capacity to keep up with demand. The ratio between customers and the number of bikes provided in Edinburgh is 2:1, and this is mainly due to demand exceeding the ability to build enough bikes to meet it, despite having enough bikes in stock to do so most of the time. The majority of the bikes are built from second-hand donations but this year they also purchased a small fleet of new bikes to support the huge demand.</p> <p>The addition of a free lock, light and helmet is an integral part of the programme and further breaks down financial barriers. This allows children and young people to walk away from the project with all the tools necessary to cycle. Another challenge this project experiences occasionally is language barriers. As they start working with schools where most families’ first language isn’t English, they have found that some people who would benefit from this programme might not take part or feel discouraged to sign up if these barriers are not broken down. They have adapted to this by making the website available in different languages. Other challenges include barriers to cycling in</p>

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	<p>general. They are collecting data to better understand what those barriers are and how they can support people by helping them overcome those challenges. Community engagement highlighted a desire for families to utilise cargo bikes but showed a clear financial burden. They hope to make some cargo bikes available through the WBL in future.</p>
Project Name	Active Ways to School
<p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Sustrans- iBike:</u> In Quarter 4 of 2024/25, I Bike Schools has been active in 4 SEStran local authorities: East Lothian (9 schools and learning organisations), West Lothian (9 schools and learning organisations), Edinburgh (7 schools and learning organisations) and the Scottish Borders (7 schools and learning organisations). A total of 342 activities were logged across these schools during Q4, with 7,095 pupil attendances.</p> <p>Accessibility was improved by provision of equipment – bikes, scooters helmets etc., either as temporary fleets, loans or gifted equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikes were loaned on 409 occasions during I Bike sessions. • Scooters were loaned on 1,094 occasions during I Bike sessions. • Adapted bikes were loaned on 5 occasions during I Bike sessions. • Bikes were gifted to St Gabriel's RC Primary School (East Lothian), Longridge Primary School and Polkemmet Primary School (both West Lothian) – a total of 12 bikes. • 50 scooters were gifted to St Boswells Primary, Scottish Borders, and 45 scooters gifted to St Joseph's Primary, West Lothian. <p>Cycle and scooter training; Learn to ride, Bikeability 1&2, scooter skills and Road safety awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 Learn to Ride sessions were held with 105 pupils attending. • 39 Cycling Skills sessions were held, with 280 pupil attendances. • 63 Scooting Skills sessions were held, with 1,475 pupil attendances. • 5 Bikeability (National Standard) Cycle Training sessions were held, with 154 pupil attendances. • 2 Bikeability Learn to Ride sessions were held with 19 pupil attendances. • 1 Bikeability Transition session was held with 44 pupils attending. • 12 Balance Bike Skills sessions were held with 88 pupils attending. <p>Short, local journeys were showcased via led walks, led bike rides & scoots.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 Led Rides were held, with 233 pupil attendances. • 12 Led Scoots were held, with 223 pupil attendances. • 20 Led Walk was held, with 469 pupil attendances.

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Accessibility was improved through Dr Bike sessions to safety check and repair pupils' bikes.

- 17 Dr Bike / Dr Scooter sessions were held, with 246 pupil attendances. 172 bikes were fixed.
- 22 Bike / Scooter Maintenance sessions were held with 64 pupil attendances.
- 3 Bike Repairs on the fly skills sessions were held with 29 pupil attendances.

Support from local, trained volunteers to deliver the above activities.

- There were 34 instances of support from regular volunteers, and 9 instances of support from other volunteers.

Active Travel Breakfasts

- 534 pupils took part in an Active Travel Breakfast in Q4.

Paths for All

A successful Step Count Challenge took place for 2 weeks in March. All of the following are now established and part of the regular school day/week/planning:

- Regular weekly Walking for 3rd years.
- Regular Walking for 4th years.
- Regular weekly Walking as part of Health & Wellbeing classes for 2nd years
- Regular Walking and event promotion (SCC) with Higher Coaching & Leadership classes
- Lunchtime Short Walk club up from 2 days a week to 3 days a week
- Walk groups for pupils in Student Support struggling with mainstream classes.
- Pilot 'Bike Bus' style project set up for pupils who live too far away to walk

Results from the recent survey conducted on the last week of March:

- 10.6% of children walking as part of the core PE
- 6% walking as part of their HWB period
- 2.6% participated in the Step Count Challenge
- 2% were walking every day in the lunchtime walk club

From the initial survey there was 64% walking to and from school now there is 70% of pupils walking to school instead of using other travel.

FEL Scotland - Community Active Travel Programme – Schools

This quarter the project has continued to refine their ways of working specifically around linking the programme of delivery to the school curriculum and Learning for Sustainability as well as increasing the variety of activities they have on offer.

Staff training: The Project Officers have received First Aid Training, ensuring they are fully prepared to handle any emergencies during active travel activities, prioritizing the safety and well-being of all participants. FEL have also equipped sessions with First Aid Kits to further enhance safety. To expand the range of active travel activities and encourage more young people to choose sustainable transport options, they have invested in Roller Blade Training for the Project Officers. This training enables them to confidently lead roller blading sessions, providing an exciting, alternative form of active travel that encourages physical activity. These investments are crucial to supporting the goal of increasing active travel participation and fostering a lasting modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport in the communities they serve.

At Falkirk High, FEL have been working closely with pupils to develop independent travel skills, focusing on confidence building activities that encourage active and sustainable transport choices:

- Bus Taster Trips: Pupils have taken part in bus taster trips into town, learning how to navigate public transport, order in cafés, and use self-service checkouts. This has been particularly impactful for a non-attending pupil who is now actively engaging with FEL to develop the confidence to travel to school independently.
- FEL have been delivering Cycle Skills sessions to groups of pupils identified by the school. These sessions focus on essential cycling skills such as starting pedalling, turning corners, and signalling. The goal is to empower pupils to cycle confidently and independently, giving them the necessary skills to make cycling a regular and reliable mode of transport. By equipping them with these skills, they are helping to foster a long-term shift towards more sustainable travel choices.

The Paths for All accredited walk leader training programme offered through FEL Scotland's Active Travel School Hubs has been a resounding success. By equipping senior pupils with the skills and knowledge to lead primary school pupils on health walks through their local communities and beyond, they are fostering a new generation of passionate leaders. These young leaders are helping to support their schools and communities, promoting physical and mental well-being through the power of walking. Health walks are essential for promoting both physical and mental health, providing a fun, engaging environment that encourages mindfulness and allows students to disconnect from screens. The training course gives pupils the tools to plan and lead walks, teaching them how to identify hazards, complete risk assessments, and ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved. Walk leaders at Alva completed the course in three weeks, see picture below of sports leaders taking part in the training.

Along with the weekly school newsletters and increased social media presence – including ‘school spotlight’ posts – they also focused resources this quarter on securing press coverage of the bike buddies programme. They received online coverage in the Alloa Advertiser and in-print coverage in the Scotsman, highlighted below.



Living Streets- WOW Programme:

Living Streets Scotland has achieved participation in 55 schools across the region taking part in WOW. Number of pupils participating each quarter increased from 10,256 in Q1 to 11,477 in Q4 with active travel (including park and stride) rate maintained, on average, above 87% across Q1- which is 20% above the national average.

In Q4 Living Streets has worked in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council to produce Active Travel Zone Maps for 5 schools in the authority. This work involved local authority staff, local residents, parents/carers, staff and pupils at each school to plan an active travel zone around each school. Maps currently in production with launch events planned for May/June.

Living Streets has heard great feedback from pupils within the primary schools taking part in WOW:

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"I love WOW because it encourages people to walk to school which means children are more active and children are happier. Making an active route means they can see nature instead of being in the car. They love the badges too!" – Dalgety Bay Primary School

"It makes me feel like I have done something good AND I HAVE ALL MY BADGES ON MY BAG. I WANT TO BE FIRST PERSON TO COLLECT THEM ALL." - Guardbridge Primary School

The Bike Station- Kids Bike Life:

Cycle Training for school pupils has taken up the majority of this projects delivery time. They are currently offering cycle training sessions in 11 schools across Edinburgh. To date Kids Bike Life have delivered 94 sessions with 699 attendances. Feedback from schools indicates the project is having a positive impact:

"The Kids Bike Life project has been exactly what's been needed to help inspire more children and families to give cycling to school a go."

"It's still early days, but they feel that collectively these activities are helping to make cycling more visible and they are already seeing more bicycles in the school bike shed. For those children involved in cycling training, they can see that it's having a positive impact on their confidence and general well-being."

"They had positive feedback from families who were very grateful for the experience! One pupil has asked their family to rent bikes over the Easter holidays as they are so keen to practice their new skills!"

They have also distributed 50 adult bikes to parents/guardians of pupils in the schools. The results from the survey to recipients indicate a positive outcome:

- 64% said they cycle more and drive less since receiving a bike from the KBL project
- 100% said they use their KBL bike at least once a week
- 85% felt that their cycling confidence had increased

An example of positive feedback within this survey:

"Thanks to this application, I had a bike for the first time and I experienced that riding a bike is actually very fun and healthy and comfortable. I can make short trips with a bike."

Delivery challenges / lessons learned

FEL Scotland:

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<p><i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p>The additional workshop support offered by internships and the added capacity of the larger delivery van have been critical in the delivery of this project on time. After Easter, the focus will fully shift to the schools in Falkirk. Pupils from first cluster of primary schools are partially sized and delivery of bikes to pupils penned to commence from late April. School staff will be required to dedicate additional hours to manage the logistics of the project, including bike fittings, coordinating training sessions, and ensuring that the distribution process runs smoothly. This increased workload is expected to limit the amount of time available for in-class delivery, potentially affecting their ability to focus on regular teaching and curriculum-based activities. To overcome these challenges, they will ensure clear and open communication with the schools. This will ensure they are able to manage the schools' expectations during this period of time. Where possible they will allocate project officers from different areas to spread delivery time throughout the team and reduce impact on one specific school.</p> <p>One of the challenges they have encountered in the Bike Buddies Project has been the very small number of bikes that have been lost, stolen, or dumped. While these incidents have been minimal, they have still required some effort to address. Thanks to the project's system of labelling and numbering each bike, they have been able to quickly identify and recover the missing bikes. In most cases, they have been able to return them to the young person they belong to or put them back into circulation for other pupils to use.</p> <p>Another challenge they have faced with the Bike Buddies Project is the recent change in the free school meals criteria, which they have been using as the basis for determining which young people receive bikes. The updated criteria has resulted in an increase in the number of pupils who now qualify for bikes, which they do not have capacity for. Given this surge, they now face the challenge of determining how to fairly and efficiently allocate bikes to pupils. They are currently exploring alternative methods to ensure that they can continue supporting as many young people as possible, while also managing resources effectively. Currently, they are using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation as assessment criteria for this. Only pupils who live in SIMD 1 or 2 postcodes or are in care will qualify automatically for a bike. They anticipate further planning needed to align the activity to meet the resource demand for 25-26 delivery of bike buddies.</p> <p><u>Sustrans iBike:</u></p> <p>I Bike West Lothian Officer, has been working weekly with a pupil as part of his learn to ride programme. The pupil has nystagmus and albinism, so not only is she visually impaired, but she also struggles in bright sunlight. While they were making progress on 2 wheels, they then had a go with a trike from West Lothian Bike Library, which has been even better. They since been out and about on local cycle paths with school staff, working on steering & braking and balance on the trike.</p> <p>They are now in the position of purchasing a trike for the school and will loan it out so that they can go cycling outside of school - and enable other pupils to benefit in the long term who may prefer a trike to two wheels.</p>
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	<p><u>The Bike Station- Kids Bike Life:</u></p> <p>Scheduling continues to be the main challenge for this project so they have looked to refine the offering with schools to present a clearer package. They are currently evaluating that this will look like set blocks of 4 weeks as is standard but focusing on absolute beginners for cycle training and more advanced cyclists with after school clubs or lunchtime led rides. This project hopes having more clarity of the offering will enable them to deliver more efficiently and have more impact. They would also want additional CTRL time to enable them to effectively meet the existing demand and take on new schools. This is something they will review in the Q5 delivery.</p>
<p>Project Name</p> <p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Encouraging Active Travel – Young People</u></p> <p><u>City of Edinburgh Council</u></p> <p>Cycle/scooter parking has been scaled up due to underspend identified elsewhere in the programme, and additional bikes purchased for schools</p> <p>Bike 4 ever- All schools who have been identified have taken part in the project. Bikes and helmets have been purchased for High School participation and standard bikes for special schools for pupils to develop skills.</p> <p><u>Fife Council</u></p> <p>Working with Hyndhead Special School, Buckhaven to install new thermoplastic mats on the routes to school to highlight crossing points.</p> <p>At Moutfleurie PS, Leven a new cycle covered shelter and hoops have been installed during the Easter holidays.</p> <p><u>Midlothian Council:</u></p> <p>A new fleet of scooters was launched to all the primary schools in late January and so far, have been fully booked out until the Easter Holidays. Initially aimed for P4-P7, they are getting positive feedback from schools that in some cases, they have managed to get P1-P3 to also use the scooters. Midlothian Council have also purchased an additional 20 scooters to bring a total of 60 units so they can have two sets of 30 scooters which should cover most class sizes. Around 800 pupils have participated in this project, which was found to have a great uptake considering that it has only been running in Q4.</p> <p>Team Rubicon came to give coached skateboarding and scooter sessions to 12 schools for pupils in P5-P7 over 4 days in Feb. Feedback was extremely positive, so much so that they are looking to run it again next financial year. Staff have told Midlothian Council that pupils were very engaged and wished they could do it every week. They had</p>

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	<p>around 1500 pupils take part in this project. With the launching of their own scooter initiative, they will be hoping to tie these in together in 25/26.</p> <p>In March, they had the Clan Stunt Show come to Newbattle Leisure Centre to run their show. Although being a windy day, 300+ people show up. The Edinburgh Falcons Cycle Speedway were also present and provided a fun opportunity to get children and parents on bikes and race each other providing a fun participatory activity. Both the stunt show and cycle speedway expressed interest to help out again at future events.</p> <p><u>Clackmannanshire Council</u> Bikeability Level 1 training completed in 21 Primary Schools, providing confidence training for 581 primary 5 pupils. They have also completed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x new road safety signs and one “20’s Plenty” banner has been produced for Coalsnaughton Primary School following recommendations in the School Travel Plan. • Redwell Primary School – installation of bollards along the pavement outside the school entrance to improve safety following bad parking behaviours • Alva Academy – 4 bike containers to remove bikes from the PE storage cupboard • Alloa Academy – 3 standard bike containers to remove bikes from various cupboards throughout the school • Lornshill Academy – 2 standard and 1 adaptive bike containers, partly to replace broken shelters • St Mungo’s Primary School – 3 adaptive bike containers to relocate a fleet of disabled bikes currently being stored in a classroom • Sunnyside – one container in the playground to remove a fleet of bikes from inside the school. In collaboration with Police Scotland, road safety cones have also been purchased to improve child safety by preventing parking • Forth Valley College – new bike canopy installed to provide cover to existing Sheffield racks
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p><u>Clackmannanshire Council</u> Bespoke containers have been built or adapted to accommodate more bikes and therefore increase storage capacity. They have worked closely with partners and stakeholders (Police Scotland and Living Streets) to provide a collaborative, cohesive and transparent campaign and school offering to address behaviour change across the whole school community (primary school focussed).</p> <p><u>Midlothian Council:</u> The main challenges have been related to the size of the van and the cycle storage. In addition to having to move bikes around for the Bikeability sessions, now having to move numerous scooters around has been time consuming</p>

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at times and they will be using a larger van next financial year to help reduce the number of trips required. Modification and tweaking the scooter loan will also help reduce workload by extending the loan period from the current 2 weeks to 3 or 4 weeks, in addition to creating a more thorough checklist that schools need to adhere to.

Fife Council

Wayfinder project unable to be delivered due to a policy changed on amount additional signs on street lighting columns. Looking at alternative low cost solutions for the future.

Workplaces

Project Name	Active Ways to Work- Large Employer
<p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Cycling Scotland (partnership with Greener Kirkcaldy):</u> Greener Kirkcaldy have purchased and taken delivery of all 15 planned bikes. In partnership with NHS Fife and with support from Cycling Scotland, Greener Kirkcaldy established a bike hire process including an online booking system using Bike Rental Manager (also used by Fife College's fleet manager). The e-bike rental scheme is now live and running with the official launch event scheduled for the end of March 2025. Booking processes have been implemented and a website developed to offer booking and answers to frequently asked questions. All details are available at https://www.nhsfife.org/e-bikes. Due to logistical considerations, the bikes will now be hosted by Greener Kirkcaldy at Lang Toun Cycles, the official pick-up location. Staff are offered the option to collect bikes from the hospital upon prior arrangement.</p> <p>NHS Fife - Victoria Hospital have progressed facilities improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of cycle shelter • Installation of E-bike charging ports for 20 e-bikes across 2 sheds • Relocation of existing shelters and renovation of dilapidated shelter • Electrical works including key card access. <p>Greener Kirkcaldy have identified further facilities requirements at another NHS Fife hospital, following an underspend on their project. The change resulted in 2 additional public bike repair stands and one cycle shelter being installed at Queen Margaret Hospital</p> <p>The project was coordinated and delivered by NHS Fife's Sustainability Officer and Head of Sustainability.</p>

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<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned (A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</p>	<p><u>Cycling Scotland</u> Working with organisations and delivery partners experienced in bike procurement has streamlined processes. Ensuring procurement is integral to project development has ensured that high-quality bikes are secured, helps avoid potential delays caused by sourcing challenges.</p>
<p>Project Name</p> <p>Outputs delivered to date (A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</p>	<p><u>Active Ways to Work – Other Employers</u></p> <p><u>City of Edinburgh Council</u> Council Travel Plan- Following the Autumn Step Count challenge, interest has been maintained for the next Spring challenge through led walks from the main offices in Waverley Court and a walking history tour of Princes Street gardens given by a Park Ranger colleague.</p> <p>Security measures- Due to insurance concerns for e-charging and e-bike batteries stored on bikes in the basement of the building, there has been no progress since a site meeting with Police and the project's Facilities Management looked at the security challenges and advised a secure lockable compound with scope to be a hub catering for more bikes and future pool bikes.</p> <p><u>Travel Know How</u> TKH supported with the development of promotional posters and communications out to NHS Lothian Western General based employees, with a staff survey at the site now live and open until the end of April to maximise response rates and then draft the Travel Action Plan for the hospital. This project will provide valuable base line employee travel data that they can share with NHS Lothian data analyst.</p> <p>In March, TKHS designed and facilitate three Teams-based focus groups with employees across City of Edinburgh Council to help encourage greater engagement with the council Travel Plan Strategy. Building on key themes of road safety, personal safety and infrastructure requirements/gaps that came out of the employee travel survey. Alongside the finalising of the Draft Travel Plan, TKHS are also supporting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the City Region Deal Workplace Mobility Project to further develop initial sharing of survey data and develop site specific mapping for the least accessible council work sites (as identified) in the survey results. Looking at how best to target and encourage public transport usage to key worksites. • Based on the site- specific Travel Action Plans developed for Waverley Court (initial proposal) and additional sites as part of this proposal, look to develop a template that can be used across other CEC worksites going forward

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to review CalCommuter and proof of concept at Langstone Resource centre to understand opportunities for future employee travel survey to collect commuting emissions data on an annual basis for public bodies reporting purposes • Based on key themes from the survey, develop a “bank” of marketing literature that the council can use to promote active and sustainable travel – considering key themes of health and wellbeing, sustainability, cost of living <p><u>Clackmannanshire Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New bike storage and shelters have been purchased for 7 locations across the area. • Rather than purchase a bike fleet, a decision was made to lease ebikes from FEL Scotland. This has meant that a third-party contract is being negotiated with regards maintenance, annual servicing and support. • Revision of the Staff Travel Plan is in progress with desktop data regarding fleet vehicle usage and existing cycle to work schemes updated. • Procedures have also been updated ahead of the new ebike fleet being leased. • A pop-up staff travel survey has been conducted that evidences 80% of staff drive to work. <p><u>Midlothian Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Lunchtime walks continued monthly. • Cycling Training Courses scheduled for March 2025 did not materialise • E-Bike Hire- E-Bikes delivered and extra equipment for pannier bags to accompany bike hires acquired. • One cycle ride leader course was run at Lasswade High school for 4 teachers and 2 senior pupils. <p>E-Bikes for Staff Hire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 e-bikes have since been sourced and purchased. Storage panniers have purposely been acquired, to allow for staff to carry some ‘cargo’ with them on the e-bikes. • Currently in discussions with internal insurance to obtain the required liability cover and for creation of user guidelines manual. Adequate locations to make the e-bikes available still to be finalised. A scheme for these bikes to be utilised to benefit Midlothian Council departments is already being devised.
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p><u>Travel Know How</u></p> <p>Funding for the 4th Project (Cameron Toll) was re-allocated to Edinburgh City Council – to add to the initial project. While initial draft Travel Plan has been developed, there are key aspects/ information that is outstanding. It has also taken time to get meetings/ responses from NHS Lothian, but since underway have been able to build on existing contacts and knowledge of NHS Lothian and Western General will be a good pilot for other NHS Lothian sites.</p> <p><u>City of Edinburgh Council:</u></p>

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Ongoing concerns for charging e-bikes and risks of battery fires have delayed the project and they hope there may be scope to move forward working with insurance in the longer term future.

Clackmannanshire Council

New guidance from the Fire Safety department has meant that Legal and H&S departments are no longer allowing electric bikes or their batteries inside council property. A solution with Grease Monkey has been agreed which will allow external charging. Concerns remain over the longevity of the ebike batteries.

Despite reducing risks to the council owning their own bike by leasing ebikes from FEL Scotland, agreement over the details within the lease agreement has incurred delivery delays until the Legal department approve this document. Procurement may have been more straightforward as the bikes would have come with warranties and guarantees.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Project Name	<u>Active Travel Hubs</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	<u>Cycling UK:</u> <p>Q4 has been another busy period of delivery. Led rides are now beginning to see improved engagement and the Development Officer has a series of rides scheduled as we head into spring. The demand for bike loans has continued steadily as has an interest in accompanying cycle training. A highlight has also been the introduction of 'Trike Tuesdays' which aims to engage those with mobility issues who are unable to ride a standard cycle. This session provides participants with the opportunity to try out the different trikes available to understand what works for them. The numbers of attendees at these sessions have grown steadily, and this has led to the loan of a side-by-side e-tandem to a participant and their carer.</p> <p>Further events have also taken place to raise the profile of the project and what it offers. This included engaging in the recent marketplace event in Haddington and working in partnership with Gullane Village Association which featured two bike maintenance workshops, free Dr Bike safety checks and the chance for community members to donate cycles. The development officer has been able to bring in additional freelance staff to support these events, and feedback from a recent maintenance session led to participants saying that the instructor was "excellent" and allowed people to work at their own pace and level of ability.</p> <p>The development officer started a series of senior led rides earlier this year, with a focus on working at the level of the slowest rider to ensure inclusivity. These rides have been well attended, and the DO is hoping that at least one of the participants will join us as a volunteer.</p>

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	<p>Further discussions have taken place with a local occupational therapist, (who is qualified to lead ‘trail therapy’ rides), about collaborating in the springtime to support people back on to bikes and trikes through active prescribing. Engagement has also continued with our younger members of the community with a high level of attendance at the PTOP sessions on offer. The development officer has been running Saturday PTOP sessions at various locations across East Lothian, with sessions being fully booked – even with the need for an additional freelance instructor. Funding has been used to procure several new bikes to enhance the delivery of the project. The purchase of some lightweight e-bikes, with smaller frames, has meant that more individuals have been able to trial and loan e-bikes. The development officer has also purchased a separable tandem which has been used immediately on loan to ‘In Tandem East Lothian’, (ITEL).</p>
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned (A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</p>	<p>Cycling UK: The development officer had some initial difficulties getting people to sign up to led rides, but with a consistent and methodical approach, information about the project has been publicised across East Lothian, and all rides are now regularly attended. The work that has been done to support young children to ride, (through PTOP sessions), has also led to several e-bike loans, buddy rides and adult cycling sessions for parents who had not ridden a bike for some time. The initial challenges have been overcome and leaves the development officer in a very strong position to start the new delivery year.</p>
<p>Project Name</p>	<p>Access to Bikes</p>
<p>Outputs delivered to date (A description of this project’s key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</p>	<p>Cycling UK: In Q4, 78 cycles were purchased through the shared use, individual ownership and recycle strands, bringing the total cycles purchased to 319. They have exceeded the targets for funding dispersed, organisations worked with, and repairs completed. The figure for people with access to safe and appropriate cycle appears lower than they might have anticipated because Shared programmes are less immediate than the other strands and take time to set up and gather participants. The total number will continue to rise as the Shared strand applicants continue to build their programmes and support more individuals in their communities. The estimated reach through the Shared applicants is over 2000 which would exceed the target for reach.</p> <p>As part of the monitoring and evaluation process, they send follow-up surveys to participants 8 weeks after intervention. Individual strand participants are also asked to complete a baseline survey on receipt of their bikes. Responses for Repair and Recycle were very positive.</p> <p>Recycled respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% cycled regularly (i.e., fortnightly or more) for local journeys before receiving their bikes; this increased to 87% after getting their bike • 77% of those with access to a car started cycling for journeys previously made by car

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% said they were now likely to cycle more as a means of transport in the future 83% said that receiving their bike has made them feel safer when cycling 89% were not meeting the NHS guidance for physical activity per week before getting their bike, with 97% saying that receiving their bike has helped to increase the amount of exercise they do <p>Repair respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% cycled regularly (i.e., fortnightly or more) for local journeys before receiving their bikes; this increased to 97% after getting their bike 77% of those with access to a car started cycling for journeys previously made by car 97% said they were now likely to cycle more as a means of transport in the future 93% said that receiving their bike has made them feel safer when cycling 40% were not meeting the NHS guidance for physical activity per week before getting their bike, with 97% saying that receiving their bike has helped to increase the amount of exercise they do <p><u>Fife Council:</u> Outdoor Education purchased adapted 13 trikes to be used and stored at Lochore Meadow & Fife Cycle Park as well as within schools. Outdoor Education will deliver to schools for use and moved about Fife to where there is need, sharing the asset across Fife. Encouraging community group to use the bikes.</p> <p><u>East Lothian Council:</u> Bromptons for hire are now in place at Prestonpans Library, Haddington Library, Musselburgh Library, and Dunbar library. All 4 hubs are now live and have completed a small number of hires.</p>
Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i>	<p><u>Fife Council:</u> Fife Council have found that long lead in time for adaptive bikes and limited suppliers. They also require more space for storage which can be problematic.</p> <p><u>East Lothian Council:</u> A more detailed timeline for delivery with Brompton from the outset, with milestones written into the contract. Staffed elements of the hubs has proved harder to manage than originally anticipated. Brompton have taken this feedback on board and are working on a 'self-serve' solution that will take the burden off host staff and allow customers to access bikes independently. They have indicated that there will be no cost to ELC for transitioning to this model.</p>
Project Name	<u>Encouraging Active Travel - Communities</u>

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<p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>City of Edinburgh Council:</u></p> <p>Womens' safety in public places- Held event in collaboration with Glasgow City Council at CoSLA in March to coincide with International Womens Day: “A Tale of Two Feminist Cities: why the public realm needs to be safer for women and girls and how they can achieve it”.</p> <p>Updates to active travel maps- Requests for paper maps are still co-ordinated by the Central Library, who have the remaining stock of maps, but they have received some written complaints relating to the maps being out of date, further solidifying the need for resource to update the maps, which is part of the application for 2025-26 funding. Focus groups took place for the development of the new maps, providing useful insight of how useful/helpful members of the public find the maps in planning active travel journeys.</p> <p>On-street secure cycle parking in residential areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 218 hangars installed in Edinburgh continue to perform well. • They are currently in a handover period between the outgoing contractor for management and maintenance (Cyclehoop) and the incoming contractor (Grease Monkey). This means they have a short period where residents are not able to apply for a space or add themselves to a waiting list, and where spaces are not being backfilled from the waiting lists. This has led to a slight dip in user numbers which they anticipate will pick back up once Grease Monkey fully take over the scheme at the beginning of April. • Designs for the next batch of installations are complete and almost ready to commence TRO, and final amendments are being made on the designs for the last batch of installations as part of phase 2 <p><u>Scottish Borders Council:</u></p> <p>Walk It – this is a showcase project for Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. The SEStran PPP funding has allowed SBC to pass the delivery of the project to Borders Wheels – this delivers benefits to Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. Those already walking with this project, are very keen to up their fitness levels once they get a little fitter through walking and SBC are addressing this need by proposing fitness Walking Classes, open to all, and free of charge. They believe these will be a real enhancement to the participating walkers. They are aware that some walkers do not walk during the Winter as they are concerned about the weather, slips, trips and falls, and do not attend when they have these concerns. Therefore, this project aims to create a culture of walking where everyone walks more. They wish to enable easy convenient and safe mobility for all. They also would like to address more people walking with the project in SMID quintiles 1,2 and 3 and feel this would be a great introduction to physical activity for that population, in addition to the classes being free and accessible to all.</p> <p>Scottish Borders Council know from their own survey that 48% of all of all surveyed walkers increased their physical activity with Walk It.</p>
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Community projects - Q4 Community Cycling Events delivered are Gowaan Kids, The FNY Collective, Hike and Bike Hub Spring Event and Sea the Change Spring Event. Grant conditions cover SEStran M&E process. Q4 Projects delivered on are targeted to existing shared active travel routes e.g. Kelso to Sprouston, Lauder to Oxton, Clovenfords to Galashiels. They have also enhanced the excellent internal Path Warden capacity to improve and enhance Active Travel Routes, they have provided funding to the third Sector organisations project delivery for Sea the Change Cycle Hub, The FNY Collective Project, Stow Cycle Hub Lauder routes, and Hike and Bike Walking and Wheeling Festival detailed above.

Fife Council:

- Promoted active travel through School Travel Plan Co-ordinators FACT Groups (Frankie's Active Travel Campaigners) - pupil group set up within schools.
- Attending events and distributed incentives as a way to engage with the public with incentives that are reusable, ie water bottles, hi-vis items shoppers, travel mugs, etc

East Lothian Council:

Pilot of shared residential cycle storage at 2 locations – Dunbar Harbour and Regeneration Trust and a local Architect spent much of 2024-25 engaging the local community there on redevelopment of communal space just off Lamer Street in Dunbar. This work identified a range of accessible path and potential shared cycle storage improvements for local residents, which they are aiming to support them to deliver throughout 2025-26.

A small amount of funding has been used to carry out enabling works to remove old walls and level out ground in advance of new cycle storage, landscaping and path improvements. Due to the timescales involved in community engagement it was not possible to arrange installation of the shared cycle shelter, however the plan is to support the community to install this in 2025-26, subject to planning permission.

Active Travel Prescriptions – East Lothian Council worked in partnership with colleagues from the NHS to integrate walking and cycling initiatives with the existing Exercise Referral Pathway in the primary care system in East Lothian. Cycling UK and GoJauntly were both brought into initial discussions to sketch out options for referrals. Bespoke challenges were developed for the GoJauntly platform. A soft launch of the intervention occurred in January with a full launch coming online in March.

Clackmannanshire Council

Dr Bike Plus (a more in-depth repair service) and bike maintenance events were delivered by FEL Scotland. This included Dr Bike pop up sessions at 16 schools with 105 bikes repaired and community maintenance sessions at 4 locations

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	<p><u>Midlothian Council:</u></p> <p>The Dalkeith Dino Trail – This was a walking trail event aimed at encouraging children and young families to get out and be more active, and to highlight the walking, cycle shared pathways with their local area. 18 Lego dinosaurs were placed in and around Dalkeith Town Centre, at points of interest or close to public footways. The event was run for 2 weeks, overlapping the February mid-term break for Midlothian schools. An event Webpage and Promotional materials (Logo and posters/banners) were used to advertise the event. Social media posts were carried out frequently in the lead up to and during the event. A ‘dino trail survey’ and Dino Selfie challenge were introduced to incentivise the trail for participants.</p> <p>Information cards with QR codes linked to the survey were placed at each model. Prizes were acquired for those completing the survey correctly or for those who sent in photo selfies with one of the Models. For further engagement, a Dino Trail Map was created and was made accessible by the events webpage. This illustrated the model locations and the active travel cycling route within Dalkeith. Total visits to the event page from both URL’s - 12,018.</p>
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p><u>City of Edinburgh Council:</u></p> <p>Bike skills and maintenance training- Winter weather being challenging with windy, stormy and cold days, even though sessions were advertised and planned, they had to cancel a few events last minute. 5 Social events proposed in the project didn’t happen as weather was freezing and limited capacity and few events were overlapping.</p> <p>Womens' safety in public places- Key challenges were the short timescales for organising and running events and campaigns. These were mitigated through proactive, early communication and planning at the earliest stages, followed by clear instructions to all colleagues involved. Events and campaigns were delivered successfully in due course.</p> <p>On-street secure cycle parking in residential areas- Progress to start the TRO process for the next batch of installations has been slow, with further edits to the delegated powers report requested by the service director. There have been a couple of challenges during the handover of the management and maintenance of the scheme from Cyclehoop to Grease Monkey. These have been addressed by agreeing on an extended handover period and having weekly meetings to tackle any issues that arise.</p> <p><u>Scottish Borders Council:</u></p> <p>Walk It - Any potential challenges and risks were managed by the monthly report and review meeting which includes the NHS Health Improvement Team. They are confident that this project has benefited hugely from the funding and that this has allowed the third sector organisation to seek additional funding for the project. They have seen benefits</p>

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	<p>and social inclusion crossover with the Borders Wheels project. Procurement compliance within local authority guidelines and requirements delayed the start of the project but now that there is a framework agreed for this – this is resolved for the current and future funding process.</p> <p><u>East Lothian Council:</u> A significant amount of lead time is clearly needed to identify, authorise and deliver shared residential cycle storage improvements. East Lothian Council have learned from this and already have preparations under way for 2-3 feasible sites in 2025-26.</p> <p>They are now monitoring participation in Active Prescriptions challenge, but the 12 week challenge will not have been completed en-masse by participants, with the full launch falling at the end of the FY. This presents a reporting issue for now, but they will continue to monitor and evaluate internally, long after the current grant award year has ended.</p>
<p>Project Name</p> <p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Street Audits and Enabling Facilities</u></p> <p><u>City of Edinburgh Council:</u> In Q4 of the 2024/2025 financial year, 37 bike racks were installed, providing a total of 74 bike parking spaces across 12 locations in Edinburgh, with preparations for future rollouts are underway, with ongoing assessments of demand and identification of key locations in alignment with the City's Bike Parking Strategy and Residents' requests.</p> <p><u>Scottish Borders Council:</u> Scottish Borders Council Active Travel Team have met with their Communities Team and agreed that the highest priority is for Hawick and Jedburgh. Both Towns have now published their Place Plans and as active travel and accessibility are included in the plans – they intend to support on the feasibility and audit elements in these two larger towns within Scottish Borders. Hawick is particularly important as the Hawick Flood Protection active travel network is now open. SBC have appointed consultants, and held the Inception meeting and agreed the scope and programme with outputs. They met on site in January with further engagement events held. This project was completed for both Hawick and Jedburgh by end March 2025.</p> <p>The Counters project is now also delivered in Q4. Locations are - Hawick Active Travel network to record baseline data prior to the planned interventions in the next financial year and the Eddleston Water Path which connects Eddleston to Peebles. A further location was added for the new shared use path at the Bordes General Hospital at Melrose.</p>

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	<p><u>East Lothian Council:</u></p> <p>Full audits of Tranent, Prestonpans, Haddington and North Berwick have been completed alongside key members of those communities. The results of these audits have been uploaded to ELC's system for logging street works. A review of the logged interventions has taken place for Tranent, which was the first completed audit. This informed an initial package of improvements for Tranent town centre, which were delivered in Q4. These improvements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surfacing works at 5 locations, including two points next to a Care Home facility; • Removal of guardrails, gates bollards and fencing that created accessibility barriers by not providing a minimum 1.5m width for wheelchair and mobility scooter users at 6 locations; and installation of new guardrails and bollards that provide appropriate widths for wheelchair and mobility scooter users at 5 of these locations; • Addition of 5 new dropped kerbs around Tranent to assist wheelchair, mobility scooter and buggy users, including three in close proximity to Care Home and Community Centre facilities. • Addition of 2 new dropped kerbs at Moir Crescent Musselburgh, which will improve access to the local bus stop for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. <p>Underspend on other projects allowed East Lothian Council to carry out additional accessibility works this year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a detailed design and landscape architecture package for accessible path and barrier improvements throughout Cemetery Park, Prestonpans. This will enhance access through the town and enable disabled access to a proposed community pump track facility that is due to be built in 2025. • Development of a detailed design package for 3 x accessible raised table crossings with tactile paving at key junctions in Tranent. • Purchase of additional bollards which will be used to replace existing infrastructure and improve access at locations identified in the accessibility audits. • Purchase of additional guardrails which will be used to replace existing non-compliant infrastructure and improve access at locations identified in the accessibility audits. <p><u>Midlothian Council:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike Tool stations installations have been delayed but groundworks for all sites are complete • School streets was implemented at Newtongrange Primary for 24/25. This will significantly impact the park&stride figures for this school as well as improve the safety for pupils.
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have</i></p>	<p><u>Scottish Borders Council:</u></p> <p>There was a small delay on the Street Audit process as they have felt they had so many important and priority projects that would meet and benefit from these criteria. They have now fully reviewed this with other Teams within</p>

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<p><i>relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council from a strategic viewpoint and are confident that the priority projects can be delivered and will add huge value to the Placemaking Process which is already well established in Hawick and Jedburgh. Delay mitigated and incorporated into the revised programme, so this is on track at Q3. They have indicated that they can share the draft Place Plans for both Hawick and Jedburgh with SEStran if helpful, once all comments on the Draft reports have been addressed.</p> <p><u>East Lothian Council:</u></p> <p>In advance of further accessibility improvements in 2025-26 East Lothian Council have highlighted they need to determine how they will prioritise the various interventions picked up in the audits and listed on the accessibility audit system.</p>
<p>Project Name</p> <p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Existing Active Travel Hubs Communities support</u></p> <p><u>Greener Kirkcaldy</u></p> <p>Greener Kirkcaldy have engaged over 10,000 people across Fife with in-person and online events, campaigns and conversations. This culminated in the “Spring Into Action – Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Extravaganza” at the end of March, run in collaboration with Fife Council’s Active Communities team and Ore Valley Housing Association at the Fife Cycle Park. This event included opportunities for people to try out arrange of walking wheeling and cycling activities with providers on hand to give advice and information. Activities included led walks and an introduction to Nordic Walking session, mobility scooter demos with Forth and Tayside Disability Ramblers, adaptive bikes from Lochore Meadows Outdoor Education Centre, e-bike demos, smoothie bike and Dr Bike from Lang Toun Cycles, BMX skills sessions from BMX Scotland and information from Fife Council’s “Travel Fife” campaign.</p> <p>They launched the Kirkcaldy Cycle Shed in February. This has created an opportunity for individuals to come into the Greener Kirkcaldy Active Travel hub to develop their skills and interest in bicycle mechanics and socialise with others interested in bikes by coming along to the drop-in sessions. At the sessions people have been able to work their own bikes, help out with processing donations and bikes recovered from recycling centres, and plenty of other workshop-based tasks.</p> <p>Greener Kirkcaldy worked closely with 4 groups in the central Fife area to develop their active travel activities and support for their communities. These groups and areas were: Glenrothes Community Sports Hub in north Glenrothes, Green Action Trust in Levenmouth, Ore Valley Housing Association in Cardenden and Lochgelly Kinghorn Eco Centre in Kinghorn. Following a year-long programme of assessment, advice, training and support with the 4 groups in the central Fife area, all four organisations have firm plans to develop their active travel initiative into 2025 and beyond.</p>

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- In February, Glenrothes Community Sports Hub were awarded funding from The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland to create a cycling project aimed at teaching individuals how to cycle, develop and increase confidence in individuals who haven't cycled for a while, and reduce social isolation and loneliness through increased public participation in sport and physical activity.
- Ore Valley Housing Association is developing their current sustainable transport project offering free access to electric bikes - Ore Vall-E-Bikes. They are also a key referral organisation for Access to Cycles projects with Greener Kirkcaldy and SEStran.
- Kinghorn Eco Centre now have a small fleet of bikes to loan to visitors, and are able to offer guided rides around their site as well as having the skills to effectively maintain and repair these bikes.

FEL Scotland:

Community ebike Library & Warehouse - The additional workshop capacity the internships have provided have allowed an increase in the volume of rentals they can accept at any one time, while continuing to keep up the momentum on building bikes for the Access to Bikes programme. Since January, the workshop has prepared 58 rentals.

NHS Partnership - Following on from very positive get together with staff at the community hospital in Falkirk, they decided to shift the focus away from the primary hospital in Larbert and deliver the final NHS pop-up at the community hospital. Turn out on the day was better than expected and staff were keen to trial a range of electric bikes and had the opportunity to do so thanks to the estates team permitting a section of the car park to be coned off for ebike trials. Nurses from the physio and rehabilitation unit were keen to learn of the benefits the side-by-side adaptive bike could offer patients, with a number taking up the chance to test ride the bike for themselves to understand how easy it is to ride. Passing patients were also interested in the ebike library and were referred to the public library to trial an ebike of their own. The event and targeted advertising (posters containing QR codes were placed in the junior doctor halls of residence, main entrance and throughout the admin staff building) lead to a doubling of ebike bookings from NHS staff, with additional ebikes having to be added to the NHS fleet to meet demand. Testimonial from one NHS user who clocked up over 1500 miles on the ebike:

"I have been absolutely thrilled to have access to the e-bike loan scheme. I was originally told about it by another physio who had accessed the scheme. I was cycling to work on my road bike during the summer months, (they are a one car family, and my husband needs the car to commute to his work).

Living in Gargunnock its just under 7 miles to bike in to the Bellfield. As the winter months approached, I was SO happy to get access to the ebike as it meant I could wrap up warm, and not worry about being out in all weathers. Because the e-bike takes the effort out of cycling, it means you can have all your winter layers onand just cruise

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along! It really is no more effort than walking across the carpark! I'm not all hot and bothered when I arrive at work, don't need a shower etc. I just change into my physio uniform, and am good for the day!

I really enjoy the cycle commute. I have seen owls, lots of roe deer, and amazing sunrises! What's not to love! I do have to brave a busy road, but I wear lots of high viz and have extra flashing lights on the bike for more security. Neil and his team have been super helpful. Sorting out the mudguards and also giving the bike a service whilst I was at work , so no inconvenience to me at all. Cannot rate in highly enough!"

University of Edinburgh

The internship post ran from August 2024 to February 2025. The post was funded until April 2025, but the postholder resigned 8 weeks early. The postholder supported the delivery of the Active Pollock/King's Buildings/BioQuarter project including: design and delivery of the timetable of led walks and cycles; administration of the UniCycles bike hire scheme; and the design and delivery of the walking and cycling audits.

The eBike 'UniCycles' hire scheme was used by 113 individuals (from April 2024) hiring a bike for at least 3 months (4 of which were staff, the rest were students). Another 21 staff tried a UniCycles eBike at an event held at Pollock Halls.

The offer of one to one cycle training has been a success. Previous experience of offering group cycle training shows that resources are wasted due to 'no-shows' and it is difficult to deliver group sessions when participants are of varying competencies (asking participants to assess their competency for to training level rarely works). 106 staff and students have requested and been offered one to one cycle training so far (up from 82 since Q3 report). Of these 50 have received between 2 and 10 hours free one to one cycle training. This has been delivered at times and locations convenient to the participant, and at a level suitable to them.

A community walking and cycling audit of the local commuting routes to the King's Buildings campus has been carried out. The first stage of the auditing was an online survey to collect data regarding the general routes that pedestrians, cyclists and wheelers are using to get to KB (Stage 1 of audit process). The results of the survey were used to identify the principal commuting routes being used by cyclists and by walkers/wheelers. The full audit was sent to participants January 2025. The audit focused entirely on the principal commuter routes identified in Stage 1. This was in the form of an online survey and a request to complete a layer on a shared Google Map to indicate where specific issues are located. The results of the audit are being pulled into a report. The intention is to share the results of the Audit with the Active Travel Team at CEC.

Delivery challenges / lessons learned

FEL Scotland:

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<p><i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p>ebike Library demand & approaching a charging model – In preparation for 25-26 delivery they will invest time in defining how they best target the use of the ebike library to influence modal shift while still prioritising access for disadvantaged communities or those not usually involved in active travel conversations. They anticipate having a fee attached to some rentals next year and using a combination of coupons and community connections to ensure free access for specific community members are areas. This is a new way of working for the organisation and not without logistical challenges. They also need to ensure they have a fuller understanding of how usage of the library then translates into ebike purchases for those who are able and the role of embedded smaller community fleets of bikes in meeting demand responsive transport needs in the community. Insights from other partners and advice from SEStran would be welcome as part of the planning for next year.</p> <p><u>Greener Kirkcaldy:</u></p> <p>Greener Kirkcaldy have learned that when working with other community groups and organisations they can successfully increase the reach of active travel activities. However, these benefits only come with a significant amount of extra energy and effort. They have highlighted they were over-ambitious with the pace at which they could roll out activities and training with the community groups, with the foundation work and assessments taking longer than expected. However, by the end of the project year all of the 4 key partner groups had developed significantly from where they started a year ago. In future, they will strive to focus efforts into less organisations at any given time. This will make for a higher quality of support, and quicker outcomes for themselves and the partners, than by spreading the capacity too thinly.</p> <p><u>University of Edinburgh</u></p> <p>Lunchtime walks and cycles need to be more clearly defined so that students and staff know what to expect and they should be shorter (30-45 minutes max). Working in collaboration with ELGT at the BioQuarter has enabled the Feel Good walks to be enhanced by giving each walk a theme.</p> <p>Poor cycling infrastructure is putting some students off using the UniCycles eBikes, because they do not feel safe cycling in traffic.</p> <p>There is a strong demand for one to one cycle training and it is supporting people to cycle more.</p> <p>It is difficult to encourage students, particularly those from countries with a warmer climate, to continue to hire the UniCycles eBikes through winter. The bikes are also very heavy and for smaller people this can make them difficult (impossible at times) to manoeuvre safely. The size and weight of eBikes must be considered carefully when creating eBike fleets to ensure they are accessible</p>
Project Name	<u>Regional AT Comms Campaign</u>

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<p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p>Two main areas of work have been progressed within the quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisions to the SEStran People and Place webpage to include more information on the programme, as well as host information for our grant rounds for 25/26: https://sestran.gov.uk/people-and-place/ • Three case studies videos have been produced to showcase some of the work happening that is being funded through People and Place – these have been shared on social media in recently: https://sestran.gov.uk/casestudies/
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p>n/a</p>

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Capacity and Capability

Project Name	<u>Behaviour Change Project Officers</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	<u>Sustrans:</u> Progress against the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Behaviour Change Strategy for Falkirk Council and costed action plan and engagement plan submitted to Falkirk Council for feedback. Plans are underway for a learning session delivered to Falkirk Council – talking through the methodology, workings and assumptions in the development of the Behaviour Change Strategy. They have also utilised underspend to obtain independent mobility pattern data for the Falkirk area. • The Falkirk Behaviour Change Strategy 2026-2031 covers Falkirk's Vision and Values for Active Travel and the objectives of their Active Travel Strategy. It also covers the wider context for Behaviour Change projects within Scotland. Following this is a section on the Local Falkirk context and a summary of Behaviour Change interventions delivered to date. The Strategy covers the main models that sit behind the strategy and describes the documents that have fed into it, including the community profile and market segmentation research. It identifies the key journeys and audiences to focus on for future behaviour change interventions. The Action Plan costs out the interventions and provides a practical schedule for covering all the urban areas and neighbourhoods within Falkirk.
Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i>	<u>Sustrans:</u> It has been useful to have a Delivery Co-ordinator in post with previous experience of marketing and designing marketing campaigns. Falkirk also commissioned a research organisation to summarise the learning from previous marketing campaigns. This will be useful to inform the final version of the Behaviour Change Strategy and costed action plan.
Project Name	<u>Programme Management for 2024/25</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	Grant management work has continued in Q4 and has mainly been business as usual.
Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have</i>	A full review will take place for 25/26 delivery of all project documents to ensure learning from 24/25 are put into proactive. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a new grant claim form, with automated checks on claims versus grant awards • A new change control form for partners to request changes to grant awards

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<i>relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the quarterly reporting template to ensure it aligns with required internal reporting • Revised programme tracker document to give improved internal oversight of the entire programme
Project Name	<u>Programme Preparation for 2025/26 onwards</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	<p>Significant work has been undertaken to prepare for 25/26. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching our main grant funds for 25/26, assessing applications, and provisional awarding funding • Working with our Local Authority partners to develop their project proposals for 25/26 • Developing community grant fund guidance and application form in partnership with Tactran and SPT • Launching our community grant fund for 25/26, assessing applications, and provisional awarding funding <p>To support with this work, they have recruited a project intern as well as secured a project officer secondment from Sustrans.</p>
Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i>	<p>Resource to complete this planning work has been challenging, both within SEStran and with our Local Authority partners particularly. Looking forward to 26/27, they will likely look to start engagement with Local Authorities even earlier to try and mitigate the resource risk.</p>
Project Name	<u>Capability and capacity building development</u>
Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i>	<u>Shared-learning event</u> <p>They are currently organising a second shared-learning event which will take place on the 30th April 2025 in Edinburgh. This event will bring together representatives from our 8 Local Authorities to reflect on the successes and challenges of the 24/25 project delivery, as well as look ahead with the 25/26 project delivery. A special focus will be made on monitoring and evaluation to allow Local authorities to share best practices and get further support ahead of 25/26.</p>
Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i>	<p>They had a quarterly events programme planned for 24/25, but due to resource limitations they were not able to fully implement this, with only 1 event in 24/25 and 1 event planned in April 2025. Some of the feedback they have received as part of our programme evaluation is the importance of sharing knowledge across Local Authorities, not just within the region, and we'd be keen to explore this with TS and other RTPs in 25/26.</p>

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Project Name	<u>Programme level Monitoring & evaluation</u>
<p>Outputs delivered to date <i>(A description of this project's key achievements, milestones met, progress against objectives, priorities for next quarter)</i></p>	<p><u>Programme M&E</u> The 24/25 grant management review has been carried out and finalised; key findings were presented to the SEStran team. Overall, the findings were positive; the majority of the funded organisations appreciated and welcomed the flexibility of the fund to meet project needs, it was stated that the funded organisations also welcomed SEStran team's availability and their ability to have open discussions throughout the process. The funded organisations also found the application process simple and easy. Details of this will be available in the final Evaluation report in June 2025. Additionally, Urban Foresight have started the second phase of the work to focus on the 24/25 Programme Evaluation. They've delivered a workshop session with the SEStran team to discuss the theory of change and have started collecting and gathering data and information from the funded organisations.</p> <p><u>Programme Dashboard</u> Development work has continued with Urban Tide on our project dashboard, with the aim of integrated M&E data. Hands Up survey data has been used as an example to see what is possible, and the outcomes are promising, allowing data to be accessed at a school level. Current work is ongoing to further develop this and to integrate cycle counter data, for example allowing a cohort of counters to be selected that could be used to monitor a specific project.</p>
<p>Delivery challenges / lessons learned <i>(A description of challenges, difficulties, lessons learned, particularly if these may have relevance nationally or for partners across the programme)</i></p>	<p>One of the main challenges they have had is consistency and reliability of data collection, in particular from Local Authorities who often lack the capacity to carry this out (whereas delivery partners often have dedicated teams for this). To try and improve this for 25/26, they are looking to develop a series of project type specific monitoring guidance documents. The aim of these will be to bridge the gap between the project specific outcomes that they expect to be achieved, and the M&E questions framework produced by TS, by produced tailored guidance for different types of projects, eg school engagement projects, workplaces projects etc</p>

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Section D: Risk Management:

Please note any risks that the programme is carrying.

Risk	Level of Risk	Mitigating action to prevent or reduce the residual outcome of the risk

People and Place Grant Awards

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report variations to the 2024/25 SEStran People and Place grant awards to the Board, alongside new grant awards issued for 25/26.

2 GRANT AWARDS

- 2.1 As per the Grant Standing Orders, several variations to the 2024/25 People and Place grant awards have been reviewed and approved by the Partnership Director since the previous Board meeting. All awards were under the delegation limit for approval by the Partnership Director.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 shows a list of grant award variations from those values reported to the Board at its last meeting. Also included is a short explanation of the reasons for each variation.
- 2.3 In addition, in line with the People and Place Delivery Plan and grant processes approved by the Board on 6th December 2024, and in accordance with the Grant Standing Orders, grant awards have been issued under the People and Place programme for delivery in the 2025/26 financial year. The total value of these grants is £5,965,319. All except one of these grants is for under £1million and, in line with the delegation in the Grant Standing Orders, these were approved by the Partnership Director and are now presented to the Board for noting. The grant in excess of £1million was approved by the Board at its special meeting on 23rd April 2025.
- 2.4 Appendix 2 shows the full list of grant awards made for 2025/26. As in 2024/25, any variations to these awards will be reported to subsequent Board meetings.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Partnership Board is asked to note the content of this report, the variations to the 2024/25 SEStran People and Place grant awards at Appendix 1, and the new 2025/26 SEStran People and Place grant awards at Appendix 2.

Michael Melton
Programme Manager
14th March 2025

Appendix 1: SEStran People and Place Plan 2024/2025 – variations to grant awards
Appendix 2: SEStran People and Place Plan 2025/2026 – new grant awards

Policy Implications	The People and Place Plan aligns with the objectives of the RTS and therefore will help deliver on SEStran's policy objectives.
Financial Implications	All costs are within the grant award from Transport Scotland, so there is no financial impact on the SEStran core budget. Funding agreements are in place for each grant to ensure funds are appropriately managed.
Equalities Implications	In supporting people to travel actively, the grants should have a positive impact on equalities. Specific elements of the grants 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 EqlA has been undertaken on the People and Place Delivery Plan and recommendations from this will be incorporated where possible.
Climate Change Implications	In promoting behaviour change from private cars to active travel, the grants will support the transition to net zero.

SEStran People and Place Plan 2024/25 – variations to grant awards

Local Authorities grant award variations

<u>Local Authority</u>	<u>Previous Award</u>	<u>New Award</u>	<u>Reason for change</u>
West Lothian	£83,000	£63,760	Grant reduced following update on expected spend in 2024/25
West Lothian	£63,760	£83,000	Grant reverted to previous level following request from West Lothian Council following revised spend profile
Falkirk Council	£52,195	£54,000	Grant increased to cover small overspend in one project area utilising underspend in other projects
Midlothian Council	£270,400	£230,400	Grant reduced following request as one project was undeliverable
City of Edinburgh Council	£798,700	£814,209.50	Grant increased to cover small overspend across a number of funded projects utilising underspend in other projects

Third Party organisations grant award variations

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Previous Award</u>	<u>New Award</u>	<u>Reason for change</u>
FEL Scotland	Community Active Travel Programme - Schools	£209,750	£296,047	Funding increased to cover delivery of project until end of school term (April – June 2025) utilising underspend in other projects
Greener Kirkcaldy	Routes to Change	£109,902	£132,012	Additional funding awarded to purchase equipment to support 2025/26 work utilising underspend in other projects
Sustrans	Behaviour Change Strategy Embedded Officers	£74,897	£76,931	Grant increased to cover small overspend on the project utilising underspend in other projects

SEStran People and Place Plan 2025/2026 – new grant awards

<u>Project</u>	<u>Partner</u>	<u>Total Award</u>
City of Edinburgh Council P&P	City of Edinburgh Council	£1,041,079
Clackmannanshire Council P&P	Clackmannanshire Council	£154,000
East Lothian Council P&P	East Lothian Council	£216,324
Falkirk Council P&P	Falkirk Council	£132,319
Fife Council P&P	Fife Council	£619,485
Midlothian Council P&P	Midlothian Council	£131,200
Scottish Borders Council P&P	Scottish Borders Council	£411,280
West Lothian Council P&P	West Lothian Council	£121,900
Forth Valley College	Forth Valley College	£46,794
Rock up & Ride	Scottish Cycling	£63,360
Kids Bike Life	The Bike Station	£183,303
Wee Bike Library	The Bike Station	£127,107
Linlithgow Schools	FEL Scotland	£122,239
FEL Community	FEL Scotland	£115,214
FEL Schools	FEL Scotland	£410,756
BioQuarter Sustainable Travel	The University of Edinburgh	£91,327
Transitioning to the Active Way	Transition University of St Andrews	£52,195
I Bike	Sustrans	£262,490
Behaviour Change Coord	Sustrans	£94,916
Cycle Access Fund	Cycling UK	£400,000
Connecting Communities (ELC)	Cycling UK	£119,786
Connecting Communities (Mid)	Cycling UK	£119,177
Healthy & Active Ways to Work	Greener Kirkcaldy	£144,659
Fife Access to Cycles	Greener Kirkcaldy	£160,000
Pop-up Hub	CoMoUK	£66,481
Walking Schools	Paths for All	£56,250
Walking Nation	Living Streets	£96,727
Wester Hailes Walk Pedal Thrive	SCORE Scotland	£37,019
Bridgend Farmhouse	Bridgend Farmhouse	£27,656
Air Pollution & Active Travel	Parents for Future Scotland	£31,657
PATH (Porty Active Travel Hub)	Porty Community Energy	£50,000
Stow Cycle Hub	Stow Cycle Hub CIC	£24,640
Wee Spoke Hub	SHRUB Cooperative	£33,968
Falkirk Schools Cycle Smart	Recyke-a-Bike	£10,195
Biking Buckhaven-Methil	CLEAR Buckhaven and Methil	£28,046
Walk It - Indoor Walking	Borders Wheels	£39,432
Getting there together	North Edinburgh Arts	£37,900
New Scots Bike Inclusion	Bikes for Refugees	£30,940
Safe Routes to School	Polbeth Community Hub	£7,504

APPENDIX 2

Cycle for Change	Sea the Change	£22,580
Move for Good	Linlithgow CDT	£13,500
eBikes for Borderers	A Greener Melrose	£9,915