

PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report, as previously presented to the Project and Strategy Oversight Subgroup (PaSDOS) updates the Committee on the performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams in Quarter 1 of 25/26.

2 PROJECTS AND STRATEGY Q1 REPORT

- 2.1 Appendix 1 gives a breakdown of progress of each project within Q1, including against budget and milestones. Unlike in previous versions of this report, the risk register and issues log has not been included, and was separately reported to PaSDOS.
- 2.2 Generally, projects are on timeframe. 4 projects currently have minor delays, and 1 project is reporting a small projected overspend. 25% of milestones are currently complete and 7% are delayed, with the remainder on track.
- 2.3 Some key project and strategy updates over the quarter include:
- A 6-week promotional campaign was carried out for Thistle Assistance concluding in April. The campaign has been extremely successful and has contributed to increasing awareness of the scheme as well as increasing its uptake; it saw a total of 3,376 cards requested (up 2,477%) and 1,784 apps downloaded (up 5,147%).
 - The Transport to Health engagement plan and literature review were completed and published. The literature review has been well received and was presented to our Shared Learning Network and the SEStran Board. Transport Scotland have also included it in their report to the National Transport Strategy 2 Board.
 - Preparations for the *SEStran at 20* event have progressed, with a provisional date set and a draft agenda in development.
 - The feedback from operators, authorities and other stakeholders to our regional bus strategy draft policies was assessed for feasibility and a tightened list of survey questions produced for the public consultation exercise that commenced in July.

2.4 People and Place

The key project progress under the 5 themes (plus access to cycles and the community grant fund) has been as follows:

- As part of our **access to cycles** programme, cycle storage schemes across most LAs have begun gathering details of sites to be delivered this year. City of Edinburgh Council's secure residential cycle parking scheme has been successfully handed over to a new supplier following a tender process in 24/25. Clackmannanshire Council have set up their e-Bike library for council staff to use for work journeys – in the first week of the scheme 2 of the 6

bikes have already been used. The Wee Bike Library in Edinburgh have added 105 bikes in the quarter which have all been loaned out, plus 4 cargo bikes, of which 3 are now on loan. The Cycle Access Fund run by Cycling UK has been starting up again for 25/26, with 20 applications approved so far and application assessments ongoing. The FEL Scotland e-Bike Library has sustained high levels of engagement in Q1 with 107 rentals - 54% of respondents used their loan to cycle to work; 59% said they used the e-Bike in place of a car/van

- With **schools and young people**, Fife Council purchased 210 new bike helmets to go with new and existing Bikeability fleet. The Bike Station in Edinburgh delivered 44 cycling sessions in schools (242 attendances), 7 adult cycling workshops (8 attendances), 11 Maintenance sessions (47 attendances), 1 Dr Bike at Tynecastle High School. From the hands up surveys carried out: 100% enjoyed the sessions, and 83% said they're more confident cycling. Sustrans' I Bike delivery was continued as per 24/25 up to the end of the school term in all funded schools, with a wide range of activity across the region. During the 2025 Big Walk and Wheel (24th March – 4th April) SEStran schools achieved: 137,639 total journeys in 101 participating schools - 104,579 were walked/wheeled, 15,058 cycled, and 16,254 scooted.
- Under the **workplaces** theme, 32 teams of East Lothian Council staff (approx. 160 individuals/3.5% of the workforce) participated in Paths for All Step Count Challenge. Following issues with e-Bike storage in council premises, Midlothian Council are in discussions with insurance for the introduction of a locker that stores and charges the batteries. Travel Know How have completed onboarding with NHS Fife and Fife College, and have continued work from 24/25 with an NHS Lothian staff survey, as well as having discussions with Scottish Enterprise about other sites. Greener Kirkcaldy's work with NHS Fife at Victoria Hospital has had a very positive start to 25/26 with good engagement from NHS Staff for eBike rentals and from both NHS Staff and members of the public for community-based activities in the Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline areas.
- **Accessibility and inclusion** has a range of projects, which includes work in East Lothian, Fife, and the Scottish Borders continuing with the street audits that were begun in 24/25 to develop packages of works for delivery this year, including surfacing, dropped kerbs, tactile paving, bollard and guardrail improvements. Midlothian are progressing the final naming and design of their active travel mascot for production to start. FEL have had a positive first meeting with NHS Rheumatology clinicians, and referrals have spiked through May and June. GPS trackers have been installed in each of these bikes to understand how and when e-Bikes are used and the information will be shared with the clinical team who are hoping to develop the project beyond its current scale and secure multiyear funding for a larger study.
- Work around **capacity and capability building** has included our shared learning event with Local Authority partners at the end of April - this gave the opportunity to look back at 24/25 delivery and look ahead to 25/26, as well as taking some time to think about monitoring and evaluation for 25/26 projects.

There were 17 attendees with all 8 LAs represented - 15 completed a feedback survey and of those 67% thought the event was excellent, and 33% felt it was good, with 93% finding the content relevant. The initial version of the Falkirk Behaviour Change Strategy drafted and submitted for feedback. The community readiness survey questions for this were drawn up and interviews with community representatives were conducted and each community scored using the Community Readiness model. The Programme Evaluation report for 24/25 has been finalised and will be published late July / early August. One of the recommendations suggests developing standardised data collection tools and templates to better assess the programme's impact against outcomes and so we've been working to develop a M&E guidance to allow funded organisations to follow a more structured and standardised monitoring approach.

- On **sustainable transport** projects, Clackmannanshire Council have progressed discussions to provide a bus service to Falkirk Community Hospital. The Clackmannanshire Eye Health Transport Scheme initiative will collaborate with NHS Forth Valley to establish a one day per week service to FCH from Clackmannanshire, for patients who cannot access this service using public transport. East Lothian Council have installed 300 bus stop QR codes to access real time Traveline information for specific bus stops. Locations for the CoMoUK pop up mobility hub have been agreed and they are liaising with local groups to plan events in first stop in Granton.
- Our 15 **community projects** have been commencing, with a common theme across most projects of preparing for delivery and liaising with partners prior to delivery beginning fully in Q2. SCORE Scotland have had a good start to their project, with Dr Bikes, led walks and cycles, and cycle training for women and children being well attended. Porty Community Energy's bike library remains well-used, with 131 loans in three months, including cargo and electric bikes, and they have recruited a summer worker to promote cycling and lead outreach at local festivals. Walk It in the Scottish Borders delivered indoor walking classes across four locations over 12 weeks as well as taster sessions in care homes and community events, including a session for 63 attendees at a Borders Wheels celebration. Bikes for Refugees distributed 126 bikes to refugees/asylum seekers. The eBikes for Borderers project had positive feedback were participants praised the project's accessibility, health benefits, and environmental impact which underscored the value of free access, social benefits, and the opportunity to trial e-bikes before committing to purchase.

2.5 The processing of Q1 grant claims is mostly completed, with the overall claim amount largely aligning with forecasts.

3 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING UPDATE

3.1 Communications and marketing achievements include:

- Monthly newsletters and blog posts produced and distributed
- Regular posts on LinkedIn, leading to increased engagement and followers. This included a weekly 'spotlight on' series to introduce our team.
- Our Thistle Assistance digital campaign continued leading to 3,376 cards being requested (up 2,477%) and 1,784 downloads of the app (up 5,147%).
- Our Thistle Assistance digital awareness campaign being shortlisted for Campaign of the Year in the National Transport Awards.
- Three factsheets produced on our work: SEStran in numbers, buses and Thistle Assistance.
- Beginning our SEStran at 20 work, including creating a celebratory version of our logo.
- Promoting our transport to health literature review.
- Updating the home page of our website and create new pages for different areas of our work.
- Writing our 2024/25 Annual Report.

4 OTHER AREAS OF WORK

4.1 Monthly attendance at Winchburgh Station Steering Group and South of Scotland EV Steering group. Attended the Falkirk and Clackmannanshire community planning partnerships.

4.2 Responded to the following consultations:

- SFRS Statutory Consultation; Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025-28
- CEC Supplementary Guidance (SG) on Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery
- City of Edinburgh Council City Plan 2040
- A Just Transition for Transport Scottish Government
- Community Wealth Building Bill Scotland
- Climate change duties - draft statutory guidance for public bodies: consultation

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Committee is asked to discuss and note the contents of this report

Michael Melton

Programme Manager

12th September 2025

Appendix 1: 25/26 Q1 Projects and Strategy 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	£70,500.00	£534,500.00	£464,000.00
Current Budget	£70,500.00	£539,550.00	£469,050.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£21,470.29	
Current Remaining	£70,500.00	£518,079.71	
Predicted Future Spend	£70,500.00	£512,679.71	
Predicted total spend	£70,500.00	£534,150.00	£463,650.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£5,400.00	£5,400.00

	Count	Current Exp Budget	% Exp Budget
Major Delay	0	£0	0.0%
Minor Delay	4	£226,000	41.9%
On Target	10	£313,550	58.1%
Underspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Underspend <£5k	0	£0	0.0%
On Budget	13	£502,500	93.1%
Overspend <£5k	1	£37,050	6.9%
Overspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Total	14	£539,550	

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
Multi Modal Interchanges	On Budget		Minor Delay		£35,000	£35,000	£0	£100,000	£100,000	£0
Freight Strategy Delivery	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0
Regional Cycle Network	On Budget		Minor Delay		£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
RTPI & Ticketing	On Budget		On Target		£11,500	£11,500	£0	£21,500	£21,500	£0
Regional Bus Strategy	On Budget		Minor Delay		£0	£0	£0	£71,000	£71,000	£0
RTS Delivery Plan	On Budget		Minor Delay		£0	£0	£0	£55,000	£55,000	£0
SEStran at Twenty	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£40,000	£34,600	£5,400
Rail Strategy	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Data Strategy	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0
Thistle Assistance	Overspend <£5k		On Target		£24,000	£24,000	£0	£37,050	£37,050	£0
Transport to Health Strategy	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Regional Bike Share	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£25,000	£25,000	£0
Sustainable Travel Awareness	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Project Consultancy Support	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0
Total					£70,500	£70,500	£0	£539,550	£534,150	£5,400

Project Name	Regional Cycle Network
Current Exp Budget	£0
Project Code	92082
SEStran Lead	Beth Harley-Jepson
SEStran Manager	Michael Melton
Project Partners	All 8 Local Authorities
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	05/08/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
Minor Delay

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£0.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£0.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	3	50%
Delayed	2	33%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	1	17%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
Mapping of the regional cycle network to provide a single source of information on existing infrastructure and future plans. The project will involve the collation of data from Local Authorities and help identify gaps in the current and proposed network and support Local Authorities to work collaboratively on connecting cross boundary routes. This will not involve the design/delivery of infrastructure projects.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
<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 investmentReview destinations served by the active travel network to identify gaps and locations where cross-boundary schemes may be required to ensure an integrated, high quality network exists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a uniform approach to mapping cycling infrastructure across the regionCreate a shared mapping resource that can be accessed by all Local AuthoritiesWork with Local Authorities to identify opportunities to support cross boundary connectionsCreate a story map to highlight the extent of the existing network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Creation of a baseline map of the existing cycle networkIdentify gaps in current mapping dataSupport the development of a unified approach to mapping cycle infrastructureMapping resource for current and future cycle network across the region
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Held meeting with CEC to discuss development of a Regional Cycle Network and developing a consistent approach to mapping of infrastructure.		Identified a preferred uniform approach to mapping infrastructure that aligns with Sustrans approach.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Propose to take to the RTSDP grouping to secure senior buy-in to the approach.		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q3 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Q4 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q4 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress

[illegible]

Project Name	RTPI & Ticketing
Current Exp Budget	£21,500
Project Code	92019
SEStran Lead	Rebecca Smith
SEStran Manager	Keith Fiskien
Project Partners	7 Local Authorities plus Stirling Council (not inc ELC)
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	31/07/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£11,500.00	£21,500.00	£10,000.00
Current Budget	£11,500.00	£21,500.00	£10,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£11,500.00	£21,500.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£11,500.00	£21,500.00	
Predicted total spend	£11,500.00	£21,500.00	£10,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	4	100%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	0	0%

Source of Any Income: Scotrail and Local Authorities

Project Summary		
SEStran currently work on two projects supporting real time passenger information available across the region: 1. Purchase and maintenance of around 160 indoor RTPi PCs and screens placed in public buildings (hospitals, Council buildings etc.) 2. A framework which enables LAs to purchase and maintain RTPi screens for the regional bus network as well as using the Novus FX system to update information timetables and services		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduce Real Time Passenger Information for public transport services through mobile applications, stations and stops and across all parts of the region Deliver integrated ticketing systems, potentially incorporating far capping, which can be used across all modes of public transport and operators, taking into account the digital provision differences in urban and rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To increase the real time public transport information available across the region To improve the quality of information available via RTPi and app platforms across the region To champion for ticketing options which supports accessible multi-mode journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More screens being online for users of the public transport network Information being trusted by the public as reliable and up-to-date Encourage smart ticketing to be trialled and improved across the region Link with other RTPs/ LAs to increase economies of scale for RTPi infrastructure and customer support
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Asset register tagging progress - EL screens tagged and issues raised with provider Journeo - on track Meeting with Journeo to monitor SLA and screen issues Added new requested locations for indoor screens to list (from RM's Transport to Health work)		3 screens back online to provide RTPi information in various public sector buildings - screens online now at 56%
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Meetings with new locations - charity sector and NHS sites. Potential for digital widget to be set up to provide PT information without the PC and screen infrastructure.		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q3 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Q4 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q4 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress

[illegible]

Project Name	Thistle Assistance
Current Exp Budget	£37,050
Project Code	92077
SEStran Lead	Sandra Lavergne
SEStran Manager	Michael Melton
Project Partners	All RTPs
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	01/08/2025

Finance Status
Overspend <£5k
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£24,000.00	£32,000.00	£8,000.00
Current Budget	£24,000.00	£37,050.00	£13,050.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£11,422.29	
Current Remaining	£24,000.00	£25,627.71	
Predicted Future Spend	£24,000.00	£25,627.71	
Predicted total spend	£24,000.00	£37,050.00	£13,050.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	14	70%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	6	30%

Source of Any Income: Other RTPs

Project Summary		
Thistle Assistance (card and app) is a national scheme that provides support to users that may face additional barriers to access public transport. It eases the communication between users and transport staff to make the experience more accessible and enjoyable.		
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,	Increase distribution of the Thistle Assistance programme Raise awareness of the scheme nationally and locally Increase engagement with transport providers	Improve the journey experience in public transport for people with disabilities and mobility challenges. Improve feeling of safety for people with disability and mobility challenges when taking public transport. Contribute to making public transport seen as more accessible by people with disability and mobility challenges, Thistle Assistance embedded into transport providers' staff induction and training programme.
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
The digital campaign delivered with Republic of Media ran for 6 weeks and was completed at the end of April 2025. The learning will help shape the next campaign, which is aimed to be delivered from September/October for 2 to 3 months, budget dependent. This campaign has been shortlisted as part of the National Transport Awards in the Campaign of the year category. Winners will be announced in October 2025. 5,000 cards / leaflets were ordered from current supplier to meet high demand during promotional campaign. All RTPs have been contacted to share highlights of 24/25. Meeting held with TS on 28/05/2025 to discuss progress to date. Printing and card distribution supplier appointed.		The digital campaign has been extremely successful and has contributed to increasing awareness of the scheme as well as increasing its uptake; it saw a total of 3,376 cards requested (up 2,477%) requested and 1,784 apps downloaded (up 5,147%). The project plan has been revised based on the lessons learned from the campaign and previous initiatives.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Meeting held with Age Scotland to discuss potential opportunity for them to promote the scheme. Card request form amended based on Lessons learnt. Meeting with all RTPs to be held in Aug/Sept to discuss current plans and potential further financial investments.		
Q3 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress		
Q4 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q4 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress

Milestones					
Name	Due Date	Revised Date	Completed Date	Status	Last Updated
App quarterly maintenance Q1	30/06/25		05/05/25	Complete	30/07/25
Printing brief circulated to 3 potential suppliers	01/06/25		08/05/25	Complete	30/07/25
Printing supplier appointed	30/06/25		09/06/25	Complete	30/07/25
Provide key updates to the Board	20/06/25		20/06/25	Complete	30/07/25
POD laying out plans for 25/26 approved and signed off	30/09/25		01/08/25	Complete	30/07/25
First RTP Thistle Assistance meeting	30/09/25			On Track	30/07/25
Update privacy policy prior to any new marketing initiative	30/09/25			On Track	30/07/25
App quarterly maintenance Q2	30/09/25		03/07/25	Complete	30/07/25
Update card request form prior to any new marketing initiative	30/09/25			On Track	30/07/25
Plan next digital marketing campaign	30/09/25			On Track	30/07/25
Transport operator survey created and distributed	30/09/25			On Track	30/07/25
App quarterly maintenance Q3	19/12/25			On Track	30/07/25
Results from transport operator survey collected and analysed	19/12/25			On Track	30/07/25
Digital marketing campaign done	19/12/25			On Track	30/07/25
User survey created and distributed	19/12/25			On Track	30/07/25
Procurement exercise started to appoint a printer/distributor on a multi-year contract	19/12/25			On Track	30/07/25
App quarterly maintenance Q4	31/03/26			On Track	30/07/25
User survey analysed	31/03/26			On Track	30/07/25
High level project plan for 26/27 based on all data collected and recommendations	31/03/26			On Track	30/07/25
Procurement exercise finalised with a supplier appointed	31/03/26			On Track	30/07/25

Project Name	Regional Bike Share
Current Exp Budget	£25,000
Project Code	92076
SEStran Lead	Beth Harley-Jepson
SEStran Manager	Michael Melton
Project Partners	Local cycling organisations
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	05/08/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£2,488.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£22,512.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£22,512.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	4	80%
Delayed	1	20%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	0	0%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
This project will support access to cycles in the region by promoting opportunities for public bike share, connecting up existing community bike share projects and supporting the delivery of access to cycles projects. This project will continue to provide support to the existing go e-bike project locations where SEStran has assets. This will include support with training, maintenance and networking across the region. The e-bike employer trial will be continued, focusing on NHS sites in tandem with work through TravelKnowHow.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify locations where implementation of shared mobility solutions could be beneficial and reduce the level of ‘forced’ car ownershipExpand the provision of bike-sharing initiatives across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Installation of a Brompton cycle hire unit and provision of 8 hire bikes in Haymarket Station or alternative siteIncrease awareness and access to e-bikes as an option for commuting to work through three e-bike employer trialsIncrease access to e-bikes to the public through supporting training and e-bike loans for community groupsCarry out promotion of existing Brompton lockers at QMU and Sherrifhall P&R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More people are enabled to choose cycling as a transport modeMore people have the opportunity to trial an e-bike and choose to switch to cycling for more of their journeys
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Employer trial has started in St Johns hospital for a 4 week period. Future locations are being explored in Midlothian and Edinburgh. We have several times attempted to receive confirmation from Scotrail about placement of a Brompton locker at Haymarket without receiving a response. If response not received by end of August, will explore whether there are any viable alternative locations.		Continuation of trial at St Johns, engaging 20+ staff members in utilising an e-bike for commuting journeys. Engaged with QMU to organise promotion of Brompton locker to students returning/starting in September. Ongoing support to existing community groups to engage in training.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q3 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Q4 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q4 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress

[illegible]