

PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Dean of Guild Courtroom, City Chambers, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ
Or Microsoft Teams
Friday 21st November 2025 – 1:00pm

AGENDA

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4. **MINUTES**
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 - (c) ~~Financial Planning Procedures~~ (This report will go to Board)
6. **RISK MANAGEMENT** – Report by Angela Chambers **24**
7. **PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT** – **43**
Report by Rebecca Smith
8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The proposed date of the next meeting is **27th Feb 2026**

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Head of Democracy, Governance and Resilience
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PERFORMANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers
on Friday 12 September 2025
1.00pm

PRESENT:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor Imrie	Midlothian Council
	Councillor Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
	Councillor Jenkinson	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Doreen Steele	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Cheryl Fergie	SEStran
	Callum Finlayson Cranshaw	Audit Scotland
	Christopher Gardner	Audit Scotland
	Daniel Baigrie (Clerk)	The City of Edinburgh Council
	Michael Melton	SEStran
	Iain Shaw	The City of Edinburgh Council

Action by

A1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

A2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Glen, Fife Council.

A3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

A4. MINUTES

- 1) To approve the minute of the Performance and Audit

Committee of Friday 6 June 2025 as a correct record; and

- 2) To note that at the meeting on 6 June 2025, there had been discussion regarding HR Policies and that these were on the agenda for the meeting on 12 September 2025.
- 3) To note the minute of the Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup of Thursday 14 August 2025.

A5. EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Independent Auditor's Annual Report summarises the findings arising from the Partnership's 2024/25 external audit. The unaudited Annual Accounts were noted by the Partnership at its meeting on 20 June 2025 and submitted to the appointed external auditor – Audit Scotland. The 2024/25 Annual Audit Report was appended along with the Letter of Representations. In the auditor's opinion, the annual accounts were free from material misstatement. Audit Scotland reported one significant finding from the audit relating to the derecognition of assets.

Decision

To note the Proposed Annual Audit Report.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A6. AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The report presented the Audited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025. The Proposed Independent Auditor's Report states the financial statement; gave a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Partnership as at 31 March 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards, as interpreted and adapted by the 2024/25 Code; and; have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Decision

To note the audited annual accounts and the Auditor's opinion in the audit certificate.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A7. COUNCIL REQUISITIONS

The Partnership Director provided a verbal update regarding Council Requisitions. It was noted that a report regarding this would come to a future meeting and create an opportunity for this to be scrutinised further. The following key information was shared:

- Transport Scotland Grant and Council Requisitions have not increased for 12+ years
- Council Requisitions reduced by 10% in that period
- TS grant reduced by 5% in 2024/25
- Inflation over 40% in that period
- Impact on SEStran's ability to deliver the Regional Transport Strategy in future years

Decision

- 1) To note the verbal update provided.
- 2) To note a report regarding Council Requisitions would come to a future meeting.

A8. FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCEDURES

The Partnership Director provided a verbal update regarding the Financial Planning Procedures. In 2023/24 there had been an Internal Audit recommendation to devise a Financial Planning Procedure and associated scenario planning, efficiency savings and lessons learned. In 2024/25 there had been an External Audit recommendation to extend financial planning horizon to cover the medium term (3 to 5 years).

Decision

- 1) To note the verbal update provided.
- 2) To note a report regarding Financial Planning Procedures would come to a future meeting.

A9. HR POLICIES REPORT

The purpose of this report was to present the Committee with a copy of the proposed Sexual Harassment policy and provide an update on the wider annual HR policy review

Decision

- 1) To approve the Sexual Harassment Policy for implementation
- 2) To approve the amendments made to the Flexible Working Policy for implementation;
- 3) To approve the amendments made to the Family Leave Policy for implementation
- 4) To approve the amendments made to the Recruitment Policy for implementation
- 5) To note that the Anti-Bribery Policy and Procedures will be subject to a review and any amendments will be brought to this committee for approval.
- 6) To note that officers would review the tone of the wording in the Family Leave Policy and report back any changes
- 7) To amend policies, where necessary, to ensure that they mention staff training to support the implementation of these policies where needed and report back any changes.

(Reference – report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A10. RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this report was to provide the Performance and Audit Committee with a quarterly update on SEStran's strategic risk register. 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.

Decision

- 1) To note that a final version of the Risk Register will be referred to the Partnership Board for noting;
- 2) To bring a more detailed report to a future meeting around the 'Potential Change to Transport Governance' risk

(Reference – report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A11. CONTRACTS REGISTER

This report presented the Partnership's contract register to the Committee for review in line with a commitment to transparency in procurement. As per the Contract Standing Orders, the Partnership Director would arrange for all contracts accepted with an estimated value exceeding £50,000 (or such lower amount as agreed with the Partnership Director) to be publicly displayed on the Partnership's externally facing website.

Decision

To note the Contract Register, as circulated.

(Reference – report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

A12. RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

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

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

(Reference – report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

PROJECT AND STRATEGY DELIVERY OVERSIGHT SUBGROUP

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams on 24 October 2025, 10.00 am

PRESENT:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Councillor Conn	West Lothian Council
	Alastair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Councillor McMillan (Chair)	East Lothian Council
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member

IN ATTENDANCE:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Keith Fiskien	SEStran
	Rachael Murphy	SEStran
	Rebecca Smith	SEStran

Action by

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

As per agenda

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Brian Butler, and Michael Melton

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

4. MINUTES OF THE SUBGROUP – 14 August 2025

Agreed as presented

5. PROJECT CLOSE REPORT – VoyagAR

A discussion took place around additional lessons learnt that should be taken forward, especially around commercial alternatives that may be available, and to make sure the specific need that a project is fulfilling is set out at the start, as well as clear aims and objectives. RS

RS to update the lessons learnt sections of the project close report to include:

- Add in clarification on steps required before involving SEStran in similar projects and recommendations for future governance
- Continue to review team capacity and how partnerships can allow for technical projects in the future
- More information to be added on our current financial checks which have been integrated to ensure we are working with sustainable companies
- Note continued involvement in Scotland-wide projects like Traveline
- Note to keep exploring options for the code to be taken forward for 12 months

Decision

It was agreed to note the report subject to the above additions.

6. PROJECT SEStransit

KF

As discussion took place on the timescales and remit of the project. It was highlighted that the regional needs vary and the scope needs to reflect this. To ensure the group are well informed, the consultants will present to the board in December, and an update will be provided at the next PaSDOS in January.

Decision

It was agreed to note the report and to bring a progress update to the next meeting

7. PROJECTS BUDGET

The group discussed bringing budgetary matters to the group and there was consensus there it was not appropriate for this level. Request for concern to be noted around budget pressures and the need for the issue to be escalated to the Board.

Decision

It was agreed to note the report and to bring a paper to the Partnership Board for further discussion.

KF

8. PROJECTS AND STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Decision

It was agreed to note the contents of the report.

9. PROJECTS AND STRATEGY RISK REGISTER

Discussed taking the risks to the board and whether risk training for Board members would be helpful.

Decision

It was agreed to note the contents of the report.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Suggest that the meeting is held on 16th January 2026 – currently scheduled for 30th KF to confirm meeting change and reissue invite. KF

Indicative Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on financial planning being progressed for the 2026/27 revenue budget and an indicative plan for 2027/28 to 2028/29.

2. Main Report

Scottish Government Budget 2026-27

- 2.1 The target publication date for the Scottish Government Draft Budget is anticipated to be 13th January 2026.
- 2.2 It is anticipated Scottish Government funding to Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) for 2026/27 will be advised shortly thereafter.

Financial Planning 2026/27 to 2028/29

- 2.3 The planning assumptions presented to the Partnership on 14th March 2025 have been updated.
- 2.4 Financial planning is currently based on no change in the Transport Scotland revenue grant for 2025/26, with a grant of £743,100 included in the financial plan. This assumption is identified as a financial planning risk.
- 2.5 In 2025/26, the Partnership was awarded additional funding of £6.369m from Transport Scotland to progress the People and Places Programme (PPP). Confirmation has yet to be received of Programme continuation and funding for 2026/27 and beyond.
- 2.6 The financial plan makes provision for a pay award of 3.5% to reflect the second year of the agreed pay award for 2025/26 and 2026/27. A 3% pay award is included for each of 2027/28 and 2028/29.
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 Other budget estimates have been updated to reflect forecast future costs.
- 2.9 The level of employee costs rechargeable to projects in 2026/27 will be confirmed upon confirmation of project budgets for 2026/27.
- 2.10 An analysis of the indicative Core budget for 2026/27 to 2028/29 is shown in Appendix 1.

- 2.11** The 2025/26 Projects budget is shown in Appendix 2. Proposed project activity for 2026/27 is being developed, with confirmation awaited of 2026/27 funding for the People and Places Programme. An update of the Projects budget will be reported to the Partnership, following confirmation of Scottish Government funding.
- 2.12** The Projects budget includes:
- £45,000 to meet the cost of the next phase of the RTS Delivery Plan and
 - £51,000 to fund implementation of the Regional Bus Strategy,
- as reflected in the Finance Officer report on this agenda.
- 2.13** Based on the updated Core budget costs for 2026/27, it is forecast that the full Scottish Government grant of £0.743m and Council contribution of £0.190m will be required to meet the cost of the Core budget.
- 2.14** Appendix 3 shows all budgeted expenditure and income since 2019/20.
- 2.15** In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Scotland (2019) Act, the Partnership has agreed a Reserves Policy and established an unallocated General Fund reserve. Based on 5% of the proposed core budget for 2026/27, an unallocated reserve of £47,000 will be required.
- 2.16** At 1st April 2025, the Partnership has an unallocated General Fund Reserve of £221,000. Based on the forecast requirement for drawdown of £32,000 during 2025/26, the Partnership's unallocated General Fund Reserve is forecast to be £189,000 at 1st April 2026.
- 2.17** At paragraph 2.12, the Finance Officer report on this agenda notes that, of the Reserve balance of £189,000 at 1st April 2026, it is intended to set aside:
- £45,000 to meet the cost of the next phase of the RTS Delivery Plan and
 - £51,000 to fund implementation of the Regional Bus Strategy.
- This would leave a Reserve balance of £93,000 which is £46,000 above the Partnership's minimum unallocated Reserve balance.
- 2.18** A risk assessment for 2026/27 is included at Appendix 4. Financial scenario planning is included at Appendix 5.

3 Next Steps

- 3.1** Following review by Performance and Audit Committee, a report on financial planning for 2026/27 to 2028/29 will be presented to the Partnership Board on 5th December 2025 for review.
- 3.2** The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets will continue to be developed in order to achieve expenditure within available funding prior to a budget for 2026/27 being presented to the Partnership Board for approval at its meeting in March 2026.
- 3.3** This work will require ongoing review of Core and Project costs with an assessment of potential funding. A risk assessment of the deliverability of potential funding will be undertaken.
- 3.4** There will be ongoing discussion of funding for 2026/27 with Transport Scotland.

3.5 An assessment will be made of Reserves held in excess of 5% in order to provide Project funding for 2026/27. This offers a one-off funding source for 2026/27.

4 Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that the Performance and Audit Committee:

4.1.1 note the financial planning assumptions for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29;

4.1.2 note that financial planning for 2026/27 to 2028/29 will continue to be developed for approval of a revenue budget by the Partnership at its meeting in March 2026;

4.1.3 note that the indicative financial plan for 2026/27 to 2028/29 is subject to a number of risks.

5 Background Reading/External References

5.1 [Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Indicative Financial Plan 2026/27](#) – report to South East Scotland Transport Partnership 14th March 2025

Richard Lloyd-Bithell

Treasurer

17th November 2025

Appendix Appendix 1 – Indicative Core Budget 2026/27 to 2028/29
Appendix 2 – Projects – Indicative Activity 2026/27
Appendix 3 – Summary of Revenue Budget 2019/20 – 2025/26
Appendix 4 - Risk Assessment 2026/27

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.

Indicative Core Budget 2026/27 to 2028/29

	Approved Budget 2025/26	Indicative Budget 2026/27	Indicative Budget 2027/28	Indicative Budget 2028/29
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employee Costs				
Salaries	564	591	617	638
National Insurance	76	80	84	87
Pension Fund	151	157	165	171
Recharges	(149)	tbc	tbc	tbc
Training & Conferences	8	8	8	8
Interviews & Advertising	2	2	2	2
	652	838	876	906
Premises Costs	21	21	21	21
Transport	5	5	5	5
Supplies and Services				
Communications & Computing	48	48	48	48
Hosted ICT – Novus FX	45	45	45	45
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	7	7	7
Insurance	7	9	9	9
Equipment, Furniture, Materials, Miscellaneous	4	4	4	4
	111	113	113	113
Support Services				
Finance	31	31	31	31
Legal Services / HR	7	7	7	7
	38	38	38	38
Corporate & Democratic				
Clerks Fees	12	12	12	12
External Audit Fees	12	12	12	12
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	1	1
	25	25	25	25
Interest	0	0	0	0
Total Gross Expenditure	852	1,040	1,078	1,108
Funding				
Scottish Government Grant	(662)	(743)	(743)	(743)
Council Requisitions	(190)	(190)	(190)	(190)
Total Funding	(852)	(933)	(933)	(933)
Funding Shortfall	0	107	145	175

Projects – Indicative Activity 2026-27

Service	2025/26	2026-27		
	Net Budget £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
Sustainable Travel	10			
RTPI – System Maintenance	10			
RTS Delivery Plan	55	45	0	45
Rail Strategy	13			
Equalities Access to Healthcare	60			
Regional Bike Share	25			
Thistle Assistance	8			
Transport Appraisal	0			
Active Travel Network	84			
Projects Consultancy	20			
Mobility as a Service	1			
Bus Strategy Development	71	51	0	51
Regional EV Infrastructure	0			
Freight Strategy	50			
Data Strategy	50			
Multi-Modal Exchanges	51			
Conference SEStran 2025	40			
People and Places				
Revenue	2,099			
Capital	4,270			
Scottish Government grant	(6,369)			
Total	548	96	0	96

Summary of Revenue Budget 2019/20 – 2025/26

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Core	584	581	663	619	774	876	852
Projects	690	1,080	809	907	713	275	205
People and Places						5,326	6,369
Total Budget	1,274	1,661	1,472	1,526	1,487	6,477	7,426
External Funding							
EU Grants	82	142	106	210	26	100	0
Other income	220	547	394	344	489	154	124
People and Places						5,326	6,369
Total External Funding	302	689	500	554	515	5,580	6,493
Scottish Government	782	782	782	782	782	743	743
Council Requisition	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
Total Funding	1,274	1,661	1,472	1,526	1,487	6,513	7,426

Risk Description	Existing Controls
Pay awards The indicative budget makes provision for a pay award of 3.5% in 2026/27 to reflect the agreed award. An uplift of 1% in pay award in 2027/28 equates to an increase of £8,500.	Alignment with Local Government Pay Policy.
Staff recharges to Projects and People and Place Programme The proposed budget assumes that a level of staff time can be recharged to Projects and to the People and Place Programme. There is a risk this may not be achievable.	The forecast of employee recharges will be reviewed as part of the ongoing budget development. Expenditure commitments will be reviewed in the event of any forecast shortfall in employee recharges.
Inflation There is a risk that the indicative budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.	Allowance made for specific known price inflation. Budgets adjusted in line with current cost forecasts.
Pension Fund Contributions The value of the Partnership's pension fund was restricted to 'Nil' at 31 March 2025, following proper accounting practice. The actual surplus may lead to a decrease in future employer's pension fund contributions.	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.
Funding Reductions Reduction in funding from Scottish Government and/or council requisitions. There is a risk that current levels of activity / staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.	Continue to seek to source external funding. Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.

Scenario planning

The principal assumptions underpinning the proposed budget are noted in the table below.

	2026/27	2027/28
Staff pay award (all staff; average provision)	3.5%	3%
Employee Recharges to Projects and People and Place Programme	Employee costs can be recharged to Projects and People and Place Programme in 2026/27.	
Office Rental	Per Scottish Government Memorandum of Terms of Occupation Agreement (MoTO).	
Other contractual commitments	Budget estimates updated when cost commitments are known.	
Transport Scotland core grant funding	Budget estimate updated when funding advised by Transport Scotland.	
People and Place grant funding	Budget estimate updated when funding advised by Scottish Government.	

The factors with the largest impact on the Partnership's income and expenditure at 2026/27 estimated values are noted in the table below.

	At 2025/26 levels, every 1% change would result in following change from core assumptions
Transport Scotland core grant funding year-on-year change	£7,500
Staff pay award (all staff; average provision)	£8,100
Employee Recharges to Projects and People and Place Programme	£1,070
Office Rental cost (MoTO)	£200
People and Place Programme funding	£64,000

In seeking to manage changes from core assumptions, the Partnership would:

- In the first instance, seek to identify additional project funding opportunities. The Partnership has a consistent track record of leveraging external funding.
- Review the partnership's costs, with the intention of reducing costs to achieve expenditure within the available funding.
- Where appropriate, discuss funding with Transport Scotland, using the Regional Transport Partnerships Chairs Forum, as required.
- Where appropriate, discuss funding with constituent councils.

Finance Officer's report

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report presents the second update on the financial performance of the Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2025/26, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Partnership. This report presents an analysis of financial performance to the end of October 2025.
- 1.2** The Partnership's Core and Projects budgets for 2025/26 were approved by the Partnership on 14th March 2025.

2. Core Budget

- 2.1** The Core budget provides for the day-to-day running costs of the Partnership and includes employee costs, premises costs and supplies and services. The approved Core budget is £852,000. Details of the Core budget are provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2** Cumulative expenditure for the seven months to 31st October 2025 was £513,000. This is within the Core budget resources available for the period.
- 2.3** Estimates have been updated to reflect current expenditure commitments.
- 2.4** For 2025/26, the cost of £49,000 to host the Novus FX service will be met by a recharge to the Projects budget.
- 2.5** At its meeting on 25th September 2025, the Partnership approved a drawdown of £20,000 from the Partnership's unallocated reserve for an ICT technology refresh in 2025/26. Based on the current forecast, only £13,000 of Reserve drawdown will be required.

Projects Budget

- 2.6** The approved Projects budget is detailed in Appendix 2.
- 2.7** Cumulative Projects net expenditure for the year to date is £668,000. This is within the Projects budget resources available.
- 2.8** At its meeting on 25th September 2025, the Partnership approved the allocation of £119,000 from the General Fund Reserve for three projects:
 - Data Strategy £50,000
 - Multi Modal Interchanges £51,000
 - SEStran conference £18,000.These projects are shown in column 3 of Appendix 2.
- 2.9** It is projected that net expenditure on projects 2025/26 will be £100,000 less than budget.

- 2.10** An underspend of £45,000 is forecast for the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) Delivery Plan. This follows a successful bid by City of Edinburgh Council to the Transport Scotland Bus Infrastructure Fund for £250,000. This funding will now meet the cost of the next phase of the RTS Delivery Plan.
- 2.11** It is now anticipated that the emerging SEStran Project will include the planned work on Multi-Modal Interchanges (MMI). Separate funding will be sought for the next phase of SEStran so that the work on MMI can be carried out in 2026/27. It is therefore planned that the MMI funding of £51,000 for 2025/26 will be carried forward to 2026/27 and used to fund implementation of the Regional Bus Strategy.
- 2.12** Expenditure on both the core and projects budgets will be subject of ongoing review for the remainder of 2025/26. The Partnership's Reserves Policy will be applied when reviewing the year-end outturn.

Cash Flow

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

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

Date	Balance due to SEStran(+ve) /due by SEStran (-ve)
	£
30 April 2025	+ 1,813,420
31 May 2025	+ 1,183,977
30 June 2025	+ 278,201
31 July 2025	+ 1,390,623
31 August 2025	+ 562,096
30 September 2025	+ 578,435
31 October 2025	+ 1,138,736

- 2.14** Interest is charged/paid on the monthly indebtedness between the Council and the Partnership. Interest will be calculated in March 2026.
- 2.15** The positive cash balance at 31st October 2025 is attributable to funding received from Scottish Government grants – principally the People and Place programme grant.

Reserves

- 2.16** The Board's Reserves Policy recommends establishment of an unallocated General Fund Reserve based on a minimum value of 5% (£43,000) of the Partnership's core revenue budget. At 1st April 2025, the Partnership has an unallocated General Fund Reserve of £221,000 - 25% of the core budget.
- 2.17** As noted, on 25th September 2025 the Partnership approved drawdown from Reserves of up to £139,000 to fund delivery of a comprehensive range of projects and replacement of ICT equipment. Following the forecast updates noted at paragraphs 2.5, 2.10 and 2.11, a reserve drawdown of £32,000 will be required for 2025/26, with the Partnership's unallocated General Fund Reserve reduced to £189,000 - 22% of the core revenue budget - at 31st March 2026.
- 2.18** An update of Financial Risks for 2025/26 is included at Appendix 3.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Performance and Audit Committee notes:

- 3.1** the expenditure and income forecast for the Core revenue budget for 2025/26.
- 3.2** the forecast underspend of £100,000 on the Projects budget. The actual underspend will be confirmed at the financial year-end and carried forward to 2026/27.

Richard Lloyd-Bithell

Treasurer

14 November 2025

Appendix	Appendix 1 – Core Budget Statement at 31st October 2025
	Appendix 2 – Projects Budget as at 31 st October 2025
	Appendix 3 – Financial Risks 25/26
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 as a result of this report.
Equalities Implications	There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.
Climate Change Implications	There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

Core Budget 2025/26 – as at 31st October 2025

Appendix 1

	Annual Budget £'000	Period Budget £'000	Period Actual £'000	Annual Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
Employee Costs					
Salaries	564	329	330	563	(1)
National Insurance	76	44	44	76	0
Pension Fund	151	88	86	148	(3)
Project Recharges	(149)	0	0	(100)	49
Training & Conferences	8	5	9	12	4
Interviews & Advertising	2	1	0	0	(2)
	652	467	469	699	47
Premises Costs					
Office Accommodation	21	11	0	21	0
Transport					
Staff Travel	5	3	2	4	(1)
Supplies and Services					
Communications & Computing	68	28	27	63	(5)
Hosted Service - Novus FX	45	45	0	(4)	(49)
Printing, Stationery & General Office Supplies	7	4	3	6	(1)
Insurance	7	7	9	9	2
Equipment, Furniture & Materials, Miscellaneous	4	2	2	5	1
	131	86	41	79	(52)
Support Services					
Finance	31	0	0	31	0
Legal Services / HR	7	0	1	7	0
	38	0	1	38	0
Corporate & Democratic					
Clerks Fees	12	0	0	12	0
External Audit Fees	12	0	0	12	0
Members Allowances and Expenses	1	1	0	0	(1)
	25	1	0	24	(1)
Total Expenditure	872	568	513	865	(7)
Funding:					
Scottish Government Grant	(662)	(484)	(484)	(662)	0
Council Requisitions	(190)	(107)	(107)	(190)	0
General Reserve Drawdown	(20)	0	0	(13)	7
Total Funding	(872)	(591)	(591)	(865)	7
Net Expenditure/ (Income)	0	(23)	(78)	0	0

Projects Budget 2025/26 - as at 31st October 2025

Appendix 2

	Approved Budget	Add: Project carry forward from 2024/25	Add: General Reserve Drawdown	Less: Income /Other Grant	Budget Realignment	Net Budget	Annual Forecast	Forecast Variance
Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Projects Approved by Partnership Board 14th March 2025								
Sustainable Travel	20	25		(20)	(15)	10	10	0
RTPI – System Maintenance	25	8		(15)	(8)	10	10	0
RTS Delivery Plan	18	20			17	55	10	(45)
Rail Strategy	0	13				13	13	0
Equalities Access to Healthcare	10	(2)			52	60	50	(10)
Regional Bike Share	10	26			(11)	25	25	0
Thistle Assistance	30	6		(24)	(4)	8	19	11
Transport Appraisal	0	5			(5)	0	0	0
Active Travel Network	5	84		(5)		84	84	0
Projects Consultancy	22	3			(5)	20	20	0
Mobility as a Service	0	34			(33)	1	1	0
Bus Strategy Development	40	122		(40)	(51)	71	71	0
Regional EV Infrastructure	5	(6)			1	0	0	0
Freight Strategy	20	10		(20)	40	50	50	0
People & Places	6,369			(6,369)		0	0	0
Projects Approved by Partnership Board 26th September 2025								
Data Strategy	0		50			50	50	0
Multi-Modal Exchanges	0		51			51	0	(51)
Conference SEStran 2025	0		18		22	40	35	(5)
Total	6,574	348	119	(6,493)	0	548	448	(100)

Financial Risks 2025/26**Appendix 3**

Risk Description	Mitigation and Controls
Pay award The revenue budget made provision for a pay award of up to 3% in 2025/26. The Local Government pay award of 4% represents an increase on the budget provision.	The financial impact of the Local Government pay award of 4% is included in the forecast.
Inflation There is a risk that the indicative budget does not adequately cover price inflation and increasing demand for services.	Ongoing monitoring and review of all costs and forecasts during 2025/26.
Delays in payment of grant by external funding bodies Resulting in additional short-term borrowing costs.	Grant claims submitted timeously and in line with conditions of grant award.
Pension Fund Contributions A deficit on the staff pension fund could lead to increases in the employer's pension contribution.	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.
Funding Reductions Reduction in funding from Scottish Government and/or council requisitions. There is a risk that current levels of staffing cannot be maintained due to funding constraints and that the Partnership will incur staff release costs.	Scottish Government grant and Council contributions are confirmed for 2025/26. Recruitment control and additional sources of external funding for activities aligned to the Partnership's objectives to supplement resources.

Risk Register

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Performance and Audit Committee with its quarterly update on SEStran's corporate risk register.

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. KEY NET RISKS

- 3.1 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. These risks have not changed since the report to the P&A Committee meeting on 6 June 2025.
- 3.2 R001 1.1 Transport Governance
- 3.2.1 Transport governance sets out the roles and responsibilities of Transport Scotland, the seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), 32 local authorities, and other key partners in shaping how transport is managed across Scotland.
- 3.2.2 RTPs and COSLA have been pushing for a review of transport governance in the belief that the principle of subsidiarity would result in better transport outcomes. Given that transport is a key enabler for economic growth and land use planning, the benefits of such a review are likely to be significant.
- 3.2.3 A number of previous reviews of transport governance in Scotland have recommended that Transport Scotland should devolve a number of responsibilities to RTPs and local authorities (organisations with a better understanding of regional and local needs). These organisations, with their in-depth knowledge of local transport issues, are often better able to set priorities and deliver projects effectively in their own areas.
- 3.2.4 However, none of the recommendations of these previous reviews have been taken forward.

- 3.2.5 Recently there has been a major push to increase regional delivery of public services by building on the success of the regional growth deals such as the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. These discussions reinforce the recommendations of the 2019 review of Transport Governance undertaken by Transport Scotland and Jacob's.
- 3.2.6 For SEStran, a review of governance presents both risks and opportunities. On one hand, the recent transfer of People and Place responsibilities highlights Transport Scotland's commitment to a regional approach and shows its trust in Regional Transport Partnerships. The RTPs have been using this momentum to work closely with Transport Scotland and identify further areas where they can add value. However, it is also possible that a review may result in the influence of RTPs being reduced, and this may limit their ability to advance regional transport priorities effectively.
- 3.2.7 At its meeting on 26 September 2025, the Partnership Board requested a paper providing a more detailed explanation transport governance and the various potential outcomes of a review. It had been intended to submit the paper to this meeting of the Performance and Audit Committee for scrutiny ahead of the Partnership Board meeting on 5 December 2025.
- 3.2.8 During November 2025, discussions with Transport Scotland have established that a new Directorate within Transport Scotland will lead a fresh review of regional governance. The Directorate will be formally launched in late November 2025, and it is likely to be some time before the review is commenced. Given that this is a rapidly developing picture, a decision has been taken not to submit the report to the P&A Committee as planned. This will to provide Officers additional time to gather further information prior to submitting the report to the Board.
- 3.2.9 A verbal update will be provided at the meeting, with time for discussion.

3.3 Funding

- 3.3.1 After remaining unchanged for over ten years, Transport Scotland's annual grant was cut by 5% in 2024/25 due to government budget reductions. This lower funding continues in 2025/26, with further cuts possible.
- 3.3.2 SEStran and the broader RTP community continue to work with Transport Scotland to highlight the value of a regional approach and the broader impact it could deliver with increased funding. This is further explored in paragraph 3.2.
- 3.3.3 Council requisitions have declined by 10% over the past decade and, in response, Transport Scotland has encouraged RTPs to seek increases. Discussions have been held between SEStran and its partner authorities with a view to seeking an increase in requisitions for 2026/27, but these have been postponed for the time being.
- 3.3.4 Ad hoc project funding, usually from Transport Scotland, has historically accounted for up to 50% of SEStran's total income. However, since the

advent of the People and Place programme in 2024/25, this source of income has become very scarce.

- 3.3.5 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 continues to actively collaborate with UK and EU partners to explore these opportunities.
- 3.3.6 The net effect of all of the above is an increasingly uncertain future for delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy, although the emerging SEStran project may address much of this uncertainty if the business case is accepted by Transport Scotland at the end of the current financial year.
- 3.2.7 Future funding risks are presented in more detail in the Indicative Financial Plan for future years that has been presented to this meeting of the P&A Committee.

3.4 Cyber Security

- 3.4.1 SEStran continues to face significant cyber threats that could compromise sensitive information and disrupt essential services.
- 3.4.2 To protect against these threats, SEStran's IT service provider manages all aspects of IT support and cyber security. This includes:
 - Installing and maintaining up-to-date security systems to block attacks.
 - Providing regular training for staff to help them recognise and avoid common scams, such as suspicious emails, text messages, and phone calls.
 - Carrying out an annual Cyber Essentials Plus audit to ensure high standards are met, with full accreditation maintained.
 - Receiving daily updates on new threats and weekly checks for vulnerabilities from national cyber security agencies.
 - Arranging monthly in-person meetings with IT experts to review and improve security measures.
- 3.4.3 These measures benefit SEStran and its stakeholders by:
 - **Protecting Sensitive Data:** Robust cyber security safeguards personal and organisational information, reducing the risk of data breaches that could harm individuals or the organisation's reputation
 - **Ensuring Service Continuity:** By preventing and responding quickly to cyber threats, SEStran can maintain reliable services for the public and partner organisations
 - **Building Trust:** Demonstrating strong cyber security practices reassures stakeholders—including staff, partner councils, and the public—that SEStran takes its responsibilities seriously
 - **Meeting Legal and Regulatory Standards:** Regular audits and compliance with national standards help SEStran meet its legal obligations and avoid penalties
 - **Supporting Staff Confidence:** Ongoing training and support empower staff to act as the first line of defence, making the whole organisation more resilient

4. RISK APPETITE – FINANCIAL SCORING

- 4.1 The Risk Register shown at Appendix 1 includes tabs detailing the approach to Risk Appetite and Risk Appetite Target Scores.
- 4.2 The Target Scores show the range of Risk Scores (i.e. Low, Medium and High) that SEStran is prepared to accept for each group of risks (e.g. Financial, Reputational, Operational).
- 4.3 This way of grouping risks may result in the appetite for certain risks being misrepresented.
- 4.4 It is felt that, given the statutory imperative to achieve a balanced budget, the appetite for the specific Financial risk relating to a significant budgetary overspend (R002) should be 'low' rather than the 'low to medium' for the wider group of Financial risks,
- 4.5 It is also felt that, given the increasing prevalence of, and damage caused by, cyber attacks, the appetite relating to Cyber Security should be 'low' rather than 'low to medium' as per the target score for System and Technology.
- 4.6 It is therefore suggested that the Risk Appetite Target Scores tab be amended to show the risks outlined in 4.4 and 4.5 separately, with the targets for each set to 'low'

5 CHANGES TO RISK REGISTER

- 5.1 A number of updates have been made to the Risk Register, and these are highlighted in red on the Register itself.
- 5.2 Primary among these are that responsibility for resolution of 'Financial' risks has been changed from Partnership Director to Treasurer, although the Finance and operational teams will continue to work closely together to mitigate all risks.
- 5.3 The working relationship between SEStran and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region is such that R002 can be closed because R001 now captures any risks arising from reorganisation of any form.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to comment on the contents of the report, and;
- 6.2 Note that the corporate risk register will be presented to the 5 December 2025 Partnership Board for noting.
- 6.3 Note that a paper on the risks and opportunities presented by a review into transport governance (R001) will be presented to the Partnership Board on 5 December 2025
- 6.4 Approve the changes to the Risk Register described in paragraph 4.6 and section 5.0

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. Discussions being held with TS on review of regional governance. Response to consultation on Regional Economic Partnerships provides another opportunity to shape debate on RTP roles going forward. Continue to input as SEStran as well as through Joint RTPs A new Directorate within TS has been created and an officer has been appointed to lead the transport governance review.	4	Probable	4	Major	16	High	High Treat	Review at end of September 2025 March 2026 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 government levels to promote the benefits of regional partnership delivery. Response to REP consultation (see above) will assist building partnerships at regional level.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	CLOSED REPs will be included under risk 1.1 above	Low	Med	

Close 1.2

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 consituent 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 March 2026 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 is currently hosting meetings with MSP Transport Spokesperson from each scottish political party. A SEStran Manifesto will launched at the SEStran Summit on 4 December and will be followed by a comms campaign to target MSPs.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Medium Tolerate	Review at end of September 2025 March 2026 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	↔

Update on summit, manifesto, meetings and
comms

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. As the 2025/26 pay award of 4% is higher than the 3% budgeted provision, forecasts for 2025/26 have been reviewed to identify measures to mitigate the additional cost of £7,600.	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. In preparing estimates for 2026/27 and beyond, the Partnership will review all cost estimates to determine if it will be necessary to make a case to increase council contributions.	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		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/constituent councils 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. All potential schemes will be subject to detailed impact assessments to ensure impacts on the Partnership's core activities are minimised or mitigated. 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 Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup quarterly. Minutes of PaSDOS and the full project report are also taken to P&A Committee quarterly for additional oversight. Management action taken as required.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end March 2026 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 regularly 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 March 2026 Partnership Director	Low Med	

R003 3.2	Reputational	Project Management: Potential insolvency of 3rd party supplier	3	Possible	3	Major	9	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 is nearing completion by Legal Advisers. Staff training on new procedures to be developed.	2	Unlikely	3	Moderate	6	Low	Medium Treat	Review at end of September 2025 March 2026 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 March 2026 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 March 2026 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. Grant standing orders 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 March 2026 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. Horizon scanning of consultations which may lead to new statutory responsibilities.	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Treat	Review at end of September 2025 March 2026 Partnership Director	Low	Low	
R007 7.0	Specific Operational	People and Place Plan: Funding changes result in programme not continuing regionally beyond 2026/27	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. With the election in early 2026, the impact of this on P&P is unknown and so likelihood of this has been upgraded to possible despite the mitigations.	3	Possible	3	Moderate	9	Medium	Low Tolerate	March 2026 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.	2	Unlikely	4	Major	8	Medium	Medium Treat	Review is ongoing 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 March 2026 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 March 2026 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	2	Minor	6	Low	Low Tolerate	Review at end September-2025 March 2026 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 March 2026 Partnership Director	Low	Low	

Risk Number	Risk Detail	Risk Category	Gross Risk Assessment					Planned Response/Mitigation	Net Risk Assessment					Risk After Mitigation/Appetite for Risk	Date and Owner					
			Probability		Impact	Risk Score			Probability		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 exeptional 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: · 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 This report updates the Committee on the performance of the Partnership's strategy and project workstreams in Quarter 2 of 2025/26.

2 PROJECTS AND STRATEGY Q1 REPORT

- 2.1 Appendix 1 gives a breakdown of progress of each project within Q2, including against budget and milestones. The risk register and issues log is subject to a separate report on this agenda.
- 2.2 Generally, projects are on timeframe. 3 projects currently have minor delays, and 1 project has a major delay. 25% of milestones are currently complete and 7% are delayed, with the remainder on track. A milestone calendar has been included as Appendix 2.
- 2.3 Some key project and strategy updates over the quarter include:
- 2.3.1 A procurement exercise was undertaken to support the delivery of a Case for Change as part of our Transport to Health project. Urban Foresight has been appointed and will be leading on the delivery of a public and stakeholder consultation in Q3 with the aim of addressing the research gaps previously identified in the Literature Review.
- 2.3.2 Preparations for the *SEStran at 20* event continue to progress – the date and venue are now set, and invites have been sent out. The agenda has been confirmed and includes the launch of our regional bus strategy, presentations on current work and the history of SEStran.
- 2.3.3 SEStran is part of a successful funding bid to the Transport Scotland ZE HDV Skills Challenge Fund 2025-26 - project called SCOT-ZED: Supporting Careers and Opportunity in Transport – for Zero Emission Diversity in the ZE HDV Sector. SEStran will be working with partners Glasgow University and University of West of England to deliver this by March 2026.
- 2.3.4 The public consultation for the Regional Bus Strategy was completed having received over 5000 responses. The consultants have commenced the preparation of a report on the responses, including analysis of the 1600 open text responses received
- 2.3.5 City of Edinburgh Council successfully bid for Bus Infrastructure Funding, meaning that SEStran and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal can progress the mass transit theme of the RTS Delivery Plan, to develop *Project SEStransit*. Local authority partners, Transport Scotland and Network Rail gathered in Edinburgh to discuss the scope and structure of the work stream, as well as to consider maximising pre-existing work like local development plans

2.4 People and Place

- 2.4.1 The key project progress under the 5 themes (plus access to cycles and the community grant fund) has been as follows:
- 2.4.2 As part of our **access to cycles** programme, cycle storage schemes across most LAs have begun procurement and delivery for workplaces, residential and school sites. Fife Council have identified 20 community centres for install of bike repair stations and scooter parking. The Clackmannanshire Council Staff e-bike fleet continues to be promoted internally and has enabled a travelled distance of 450km since July 2025 (replacing vehicle miles with sustainable journeys). The Cycle Access Fund run by Cycling UK is continuing to support repair and recycling organisations across the region, with 50% of this funding now allocated. The Bike Station Wee Bike Library loaned out 110 bikes to kids and 12 loans of cargo bikes. Transition St Andrews have loaned out 90 bikes to students since the term started.
- 2.4.3 With **schools and young people**, The Bike Station in Edinburgh delivered 27 Learn to Ride sessions in schools (128 attendees), 12 adult cycling sessions, 18 Maintenance sessions (58 attendances), and 12 Dr Bike events with 90 bikes checked. In East Lothian Walk to school week reached over 90% of primary school pupils. Clackmannanshire Council installed 5 active travel zone maps at primary schools with launch events and engagement as part of this. The FEL Schools Officer working in partnership with Linlithgow Community Development Trust are delivering curriculum-linked initiatives, active travel roadshows, buggy walks, and community engagement. Sustrans' I Bike delivery was continued in Edinburgh, West Lothian, East Lothian and Scottish Borders. Ongoing engagement activities have been delivered, including 180 young people receiving bike servicing in Edinburgh, 200 pupils taking part in scooter sessions in West Lothian. WOW continues to be delivered across a number of LAs in the region. 70,067 active trips have been recorded across the region since the start of term. Scottish Cycling have been delivering cycling sessions in Dunfermline with 60 young people attending.
- 2.4.4 Under the **workplaces** theme, the Bio-Quarter project has delivered monthly Dr Bike sessions, nature walks, a travel plan and car sharing review and 1-2-2 cycle training. Travel Know How is progressing work with 3 NHS boards. Work is about to start on engaging with staff and students at Fife College. Greener Kirkcaldy continue their e-bike loans with NHS Fife at Victoria Hospital. Loans continue to be popular and the loan term will now be extended to 3 months.
- 2.4.5 **Accessibility and inclusion** consists of a range of projects, which includes work in East Lothian, Fife, and SBC continuing with the street audits that were begun in 2024/25. Progress has been made on scheduling and delivery of works, with dropped kerbs work commencing in Musselburgh in East Lothian and tactile paving at a school in Fife. SBC are continuing audits in two towns to develop a pipeline of delivery. Midlothian have started production of materials for their new active travel mascot and have a community event planned for October. Midlothian are also planning a community step count challenge focussed on new housing developments. FEL Scotland continue their referral project with NHS Rheumatology clinicians, smart turbo trainers and bikes have been added to increase the accessibility of the project. CEC have commenced their social prescribing project

with three targeted presentations and two focus groups. Clackmannanshire supported a Cycling awareness day in Alloa town centre with a range of partners. Fife Council Bums off seats campaign held 48 led walks with 600 people attending. SBC have launched a new behaviour change campaign Ridonkulous in Hawick. The campaign is seeking to encourage walking, wheeling or cycling for short everyday trips.

- 2.4.6 Work around **capacity and capability building** has included the planning of three more local shared learning and networking events to take place in early October and bring together LAs, delivery partners and community groups. The Falkirk Behaviour Change Strategy has been reviewed and work is ongoing to finalise it. Work has commenced in West Lothian to develop their behaviour change strategy. The Programme Evaluation report for 2024/25 has been published and shared with all partners. Following the recommendations from this report, we have developed tailored M&E guidance to allow funded organisations to follow a more structured and standardised monitoring approach. We have also started a quarterly newsletter to support knowledge sharing and highlight projects. There are plans to trial a Local Authority joint meeting in Q3/4 to facilitate partnership working and knowledge sharing.
- 2.4.7 On **sustainable transport** projects, the Clackmannanshire Eye Health Transport Scheme initiative with Clackmannanshire Council and NHS Forth Valley has launched. Initially a one day per week bus service to Falkirk Community Hospital from Clackmannanshire, for patients who cannot access this service using public transport. Locations for the CoMoUK pop up mobility hub have been agreed, the hub was in place in Granton in Edinburgh as a test case for a permanent hub. It has now been moved to Hawick and will then move to Haddington. In East Lothian, a contract has been awarded for a new pool car/ car club project. Cars will be located in 4 East Lothian towns. Also in East Lothian, three sites for journey hubs have plans in place to deliver wayfinding totems and they have also been assessed with plans to bring them up to CoMoUK accreditation standards.
- 2.4.8 The 15 funded **community projects** are delivering a range of activities across the region, with a good mix of support for walking and cycling initiatives. Walk It in the Scottish Borders continues to deliver across 4 locations and is looking at potential options for expanding to new locations. The eBikes for Borderers project in Melrose has started working with a local bike recycling organisation for support with hires, servicing and repairs. Parents for Future Scotland has 10 schools actively engaged in Edinburgh and have collected detailed insights into family travel habits and perceptions from 124 parents. Getting there together in north Edinburgh are running led walks, Dr bikes and cycle training with 60 bikes serviced and 43 attendees on led walks.
- 2.5 The processing of Q2 grant claims is underway, currently we are anticipating a slightly lower value compared to the forecasted total claim for this quarter.

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.
- Successful promotion of our bus strategy consultation across all channels, including paid Meta which helped contribute to over 5,000 responses.
- Our Thistle Assistance digital awareness campaign was highly commended in Campaign of the Year category at the National Transport Awards. There were 11 entries shortlisted and we effectively came second.
- Three factsheets produced on our work: People and Place, Transport to Health and RTPI screens
- Continuing our SEStran at 20 work, including procuring a creative agency to work on a digital version of the SEStran vision.
- Publishing 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 Fife Community Planning partnerships.
- 4.2 Responded to the following consultations:
- Scottish Borders Council: Draft Active Travel Strategy Consultation 2025
 - Public Health Scotland's Strategy
 - Public Transport Ticketing Block Exemption
 - Scottish Government Draft Environment Strategy Consultation
 - Draft Climate Change Plan Scrutiny 2025
 - Scotland's Fourth Land Use Strategy
 - Midlothian's Draft Local Transport Strategy

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Michael Melton
Programme Manager
 24th October 2025

Appendix 1: 2025/26 Q2 Projects and Strategy Report

Appendix 2: Current Milestone Calendar

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	£33,500.00	£504,094.62	£470,594.62
Current Actual	£0.00	£41,806.07	
Current Remaining	£33,500.00	£462,288.55	
Predicted Future Spend	£33,500.00	£451,696.82	
Predicted total spend	£33,500.00	£493,502.89	£460,002.89
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£10,591.73	£10,591.73

	Count	Current Exp Budget	% Exp Budget
Major Delay	1	£51,500	10.2%
Minor Delay	3	£121,385	24.1%
On Target	10	£331,210	65.7%
Underspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Underspend <£5k	0	£0	0.0%
On Budget	13	£461,270	91.5%
Overspend <£5k	1	£42,825	8.5%
Overspend >£5k	0	£0	0.0%
Total	14	£504,095	

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		Major Delay		£0	£0	£0	£51,500	£51,500	£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		£9,500	£9,500	£0	£19,500	£19,500	£0
Regional Bus Strategy	On Budget		Minor Delay		£0	£0	£0	£66,385	£61,577	£4,807
RTS Delivery Plan	On Budget		Minor Delay		£0	£0	£0	£55,000	£55,001	-£1
SEStran at Twenty	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£40,385	£34,600	£5,785
Rail Strategy	On Budget		On Target		£0	£0	£0	£13,500	£13,500	£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	£42,825	£42,825	£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					£33,500	£33,500	£0	£504,095	£493,503	£10,592

Project Name	Multi Modal Interchanges
Current Exp Budget	£51,500
Project Code	
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fisken
Project Partners	All 8 Local Authorities
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	31/07/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
Major Delay

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£35,000.00	£100,000.00	£65,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£51,500.00	£51,500.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£51,500.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£51,500.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£51,500.00	£51,500.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	4	57%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	2	29%
Complete	1	14%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
Working in line with the Regional Bus Strategy, and strategies developed in 2020, this study will develop recommendations for hub sites in the SEStran region. This will be further developed in Q3 based on the outcomes of the bus strategy and once we have located counters to collect data at key sites.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
•Deliver the eight pilot multi-modal mobility hubs as defined in the SEStran Mobility Hub study	Deliver improved integration Understand local demands for multi-modal hubs and the most appropriate solutions Work with partners to ensure best practice	Refreshed interchange strategy Understanding of the current landscape Awareness of local authority interchange work
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
The project has been stalled by being included in the Bus Infrastructure Funding bid, taken forward by CEC on behalf of the bus alliance. Nonetheless, we have completed the brief, so it's ready to go as soon as we know the quantum of funding available. All future milestones may need to be adjusted once the funding position is clearer. Happily, we will most likely receive the public consultation of the bus strategy before much more progress is achieved, and that should help us understand public priorities.		
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
As Project SEStransit progresses, we are looking at project overlap. As part of this, the interchange work will be incorporated into the wider SEStranit project which is being financially managed by City of Edinburgh Council as part of BIF. Any gaps remaining can be addressed in 26/27 which will ensure there is no delivery overlap. The funding allocated to this project, £65k, could reallocated in several ways: Option 1: Shift money into 2526 Stantec work Option 2: Earmark money for SEStran's portion of 2627 RTSDP work Option 3: Earmark money for RBS 2627 work Option 4: Spend differently in 2526		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Complete procurement to appoint consultant	27/08/25			Overdue	
Review authorities' preferred sites from RTSDP or LDPs	27/06/25		27/06/25	Complete	31/07/25
Assess Bus Strategy outcomes and feed these into Interchange Study	30/09/25			Overdue	
Meet with partners to understand other mobility hub work and how it interacts with the regional picture	19/12/25			On Track	
Update board on consultants' findings	19/12/25			On Track	
Map out regional progress and next steps for 26/28	31/03/26			On Track	
Review hub opportunities available via PPP funding	31/03/26			On Track	

Project Name	Freight Strategy Delivery
Current Exp Budget	£50,000
Project Code	
SEStran Lead	Keith Fisken
SEStran Manager	Keith Fisken
Project Partners	Falkirk, CEC, Fife, MoD, Forth Ports
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	01/08/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£50,000.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£50,000.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	5	63%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	1	13%
Complete	2	25%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
By continuing our work on freight, we will build local authority capacity and knowledge.		
We expect our role to become more one of support and promotion, but will stay responsive to opportunities as they arise.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
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 Further develop proposals for new rail freight services, including a potential multi-user freight train running from Grangemouth Explore innovative approaches to movement of freight, tram, passenger trains, drones etc.	Improved local authority awareness and capability - Freight included in LDPs & LTS Freight strategy refresh	Updated regional freight strategy Inform Forth Green Free Port transport plan - supporting Alloa to Rosyth corridor Business case development for test projects
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Review of pre-existing work and outline plan for future work drafted Funding bids entered and results awaited Freight appearing as ket theme of RTSDP work, so planning of freight specific workshop underway Met with Green Freeport infrastructure group & MoD to discuss potentail transport options		
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Funding bid to the Transport Scotland ZE HDV Skills Challenge Fund 2025-26 was succesful - project called SCOT-ZED: Supporting Careers and Opportunity in Transport – for Zero Emission Diversity in the ZE HDV Sector. SEStran will be working with partners Glasgow University and University of West of England to deliver this by March 2026. Presented Project SEStransit to Green Free port Infrastructure Sub committee - group will explore how to develop plan for GFP to integrate freight		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Strategy planning and research: review current strategy	30/06/25		29/06/25	Complete	01/08/25
Review Logistics and freight forum - explore how it can be more effective	30/06/25		29/06/25	Complete	01/08/25
Strategy development (draft) - objectives and goals	30/09/25			Overdue	
Stakeholder engagement					
Create timeline and route-map	31/12/25			On Track	
Test pilots identified	31/12/25			On Track	
Funding exploration	31/03/26			On Track	
Develop business cases where appropriate	31/03/26			On Track	
Finalise strategy and publish	31/03/26			On Track	

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 and single source of information on existing infrastructure and future plans. The project will involve the collation of data form 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
- Progress the delivery of the SEStran Strategic Network and broader cross boundary networks with partners. Develop further phases of this network to ensure a long-term pipeline of investment - Review destinations served by the active travel network to identify gaps and locations where cross-boundary schemes may be required to ensure an integrated, high quality network exists	- Develop a uniform approach to mapping cycling infrastructure across the region - Create a shared mapping resource that can be accessed by all Local Authorities - Work with Local Authorities to identify opportunities to support cross boundary connections - Create a story map to highlight the extent of the existing network	- Creation of a baseline map of the existing cycle network - Identify gaps in current mapping data - Support the development of a unified approach to mapping cycle infrastructure - Mapping 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. Met with Fife Council active travel and networks to agree approach. Engaged with Ewan Doyle about discussing as part of mass transit work. Met with Marked and scheduled meeting with Hitrans to explore potential of tool/data gathering to support this work.		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Complete review of data gathered in 24/25 as part of P&P	31/05/25		28/07/25	Complete	05/08/25
Meet with each LA to refine scope of works	30/06/25	28/11/25		Delayed	05/08/25
Complete data collection	31/08/25	28/11/25		Delayed	05/08/25
Complete regional network map	02/01/26			On Track	
Share outcomes with LAs and agree next steps	28/02/26			On Track	
Complete public facing version of map	31/03/26			On Track	

Project Name	RTPI & Ticketing
Current Exp Budget	£19,500
Project Code	92019
SEStran Lead	Rebecca Smith
SEStran Manager	Keith Fiskén
Project Partners	7 Local Authorities plus Stirling Council (not inc ELC)
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	16/09/2025

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	£9,500.00	£19,500.00	£10,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£9,500.00	£19,500.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£9,500.00	£19,500.00	
Predicted total spend	£9,500.00	£19,500.00	£10,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	4	67%
Delayed	1	17%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	1	17%

Source of Any Income: Scotrail and Local Authorities
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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
• 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	• 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	• 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. 70% of locations now have site asset tagged, tags sent to the organisation, or have been flagged as inaccessible.		Increasing engagement with new and existing locations has allowed us to raise the profile of the work. Discussions around creating information 'widgets' which can be installed into the organisation's own equipment offers the opportunity to provide high quality information without the infrastructure. The widget is being developed by the provider and will be tested in Q3.
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Contact all organisations with screens offline	30/09/25		16/09/2025	Complete	16/06/2025
Complete 25/26 audit review of screens	31/03/26			On Track	16/06/2025
RTPI SEStran Area Meetings with supplier (Quarterly)	31/03/26			On Track	16/06/2025
Complete asset tagging of screens	31/08/25	31/10/25		Delayed	16/09/2025
Decide regional software procurement route	30/09/2025			On Track	16/09/2025
Carry out procurement process for software	30/02/2026			On Track	16/09/2025

Project Name	Regional Bus Strategy
Current Exp Budget	£66,385
Project Code	92087
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fiskén
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	£71,000.00	£71,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£66,384.62	£66,384.62
Current Actual	£0.00	£5,727.22	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£60,657.40	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£55,850.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£61,577.22	£61,577.22
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£4,807.40	£4,807.40

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	0	0%
Delayed	1	25%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	3	75%

Source of Any Income: n/a

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.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
- 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	To continue strategic progress from 24/25 To engage partners/ public in bus opportunities To build consensus around the best path forward	Worked up options, based on case for change and review of policies. Work Package 3: Appraisal of Delivery Options Work Package 4: Consultation on the Draft Strategy Work Package 5: Finalise Strategy
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Whilst progress and engagement have been strong, members of the board, including the chair, have suggested that pushing the completion date of the strategy out would allow more review time after the public consultation. As such, milestones have been adjusted.		SEStran staff reviewed the draft policies which had been considered by the board/ working group from Integrated Mobility Forum/ operators and local authorities. The policies had been ranked against their reception with these audiences, as well as their deliverability. A shorter list of questions is being compiled to form the public consultation.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
The public consultation has been published and is receiving significant attention. 5000 plus responses		The consultation is underway with specific comms for each LA in hope of regional equity Reception has been enthused and should provide a strong basis from which to launch the strategy.
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Completion of Work Package 3 (Appraisal of Delivery Options)	27/06/25		12/05/25	Complete	05/08/25
Completion of Work Package 4 (Public Consultation Questions on the Draft Strategy)	27/06/25		18/07/25	Complete	05/08/25
Public consultation closes	25/08/25		25/08/25	Complete	09/09/25
Publication of final strategy	30/09/25	04/12/25		Delayed	05/08/25

Project Name	RTS Delivery Plan
Current Exp Budget	£55,000
Project Code	92042
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fisken
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	£55,000.00	£55,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£55,000.00	£55,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£8,379.67	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£46,620.33	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£46,621.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£55,000.67	£55,000.67
Predicted Variance	£0.00	-£0.67	-£0.67

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	7	78%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	1	11%
Complete	1	11%

Source of Any Income: n/a

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.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
Partner councils work with SEStran through the statutory planning processes to implement RTS policies with regards to major developments	Identifies strategically important infrastructure and integration projects Identify priority projects to be delivered in the next 10 years. Identify priority projects to be developed further. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan Maintenance of an up-to-date matrix of projects in the region	Up to date and useful tool with local authorities project proposals GIS mapping to view projects on boundaries and their potential link-ups PowerBI tool, to quickly assess projects against chosen criteria like RTS or RPF them
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Progress on the delivery plan has been stalled whilst SEStran and City Region Deal seek clarity on the STPR2 Delivery Plan commitments as any changes to the priorities identified in STPR2 will need to be assessed and priorities through the RTS Delivery Plan matrix before the project can move to the next stage.		Progress on the delivery plan has been stalled whilst SEStran and City Region Deal seek clarity on the STPR2 Delivery Plan commitments as any changes to the priorities identified in STPR2 will need to be assessed and priorities through the RTS Delivery Plan matrix before the project can move to the next stage.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Successful BIF funding has progressed MT theme to develop Project SEStransit Data theme progressing with our work with Arup. Freight progressing via strategy work Decarb unprogressed RCN progressing AT theme Interchanges options need to be agreed		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Complete assessment projects that were not included in STPR2	30/08/25			Overdue	05/08/25
Complete first draft consultancy scope	31/03/25		07/01/25	Complete	05/08/25
Determine procurement route	30/06/25	31/08/25		Late	05/08/25
Complete review of Matrix Analysis and sense check outputs	30/11/25			On Track	05/08/25
Complete assessments and recommend appropriate development route for each projects	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25
Complete assessment of the cost of project development and provide overall estimate	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25
Finalise Monitoring & Evaluation Criteria	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25
Finalise Funding Strategy	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25
Finalise delivery programme	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25
Steering Group Gateway Review	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25

Project Name	SEStran at Twenty
Current Exp Budget	£40,385
Project Code	
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fiskén
Project Partners	LAs, TS,
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	£40,000.00	£40,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£40,385.00	£40,385.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£5,400.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£34,985.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£29,200.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£34,600.00	£34,600.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£5,785.00	£5,785.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	5	50%
Delayed	0	0%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	5	50%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
Having been founded in 2005, RTPs have existed for two decades, an anniversary that should be celebrated.		
We plan to celebrate this milestone with events and a re-publication of the RTS vision.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
N/A	To celebrate the milestone of our RTS To engage stakeholders and make new connections Display the vision that guides our RTS in a more engaging way	Event series, perhaps linked to board meetings Final, major event Rich picture version of RTS vision
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
We have produced three newsletters, blog posts, factsheets. The annual report is nearly complete A provisional date has been sent for a celebration event (Dec 4 2025) Chair have been updated on suggested agenda SEStran at 20 Teams backgrounds created		
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
TBP brought on Cab sec agreeing to speak Manifesto development diaried in - first draft complete Vision work procured and progressing Event booked and invites sent out. Agenda almost finalised.		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Three factsheets on specific topics.	31/03/26			On Track	13/10/25
Publish 2024/25 Annual Report.	27/06/25		22/07/25	Complete	05/08/25
Complete vision brief	30/08/25		30/08/25	Complete	05/08/25
Send the Save the Date to key invitees	27/06/25	13/08/25	13/08/25	Complete	05/08/25
Procure designers for vision work	30/08/25		30/08/25	Complete	05/08/25
Book event space for celebration	27/06/25		01/08/25	Complete	05/08/25
Produce manifesto	28/11/25			On Track	13/10/25
Set event agenda	31/10/25			On Track	13/10/25
Send event invites	31/10/25			On Track	13/10/25
Vision and associated collateral complete	07/11/25			On Track	13/10/25

Project Name	Rail Strategy
Current Exp Budget	£13,500
Project Code	92047
SEStran Lead	Keith Fisken
SEStran Manager	Keith Fisken
Project Partners	tbc
Lead Partner	tbc
Last Updated	05/08/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£13,500.00	£13,500.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£13,500.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£13,500.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£13,500.00	£13,500.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

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

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
The rail network (comprising ‘conventional’ heavy rail and light rail/tram) plays a key role linking up the region, as well as providing connectivity to external locations. The region has benefitted from the construction of the Borders Railway which opened in September 2015., Levenmouth rail line and Reston & East Liston stations in 2024.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
Work with Transport Scotland and Network Rail to deliver new rail infrastructure in the region, where appraisal and business case development has demonstrated its merits Opportunities should be explored with partners to introduce new services, including more direct links across the region, national boundaries and cross-city connections	Improved strategic engagement with key stakeholders	Regional agreement on approach to rail List of supported fundable projects Improved integration with other modes Long term - new infrastructure?
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Review of RTS rail chapters completed with rail operators/ NR Conversations underway with NR about better data sharing		
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Regional Rail Group met in September Winchburgh Steering group meet - business case being finalised for submission to TS & ESESCRD Newburgh rail apprasail with TS for review		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Deliver 1st meeting of the Regional rail group	30/06/25	30/08/25	01/09/25	Complete	05/08/25
Strategy planning and research	30/06/25		06/07/25	Complete	05/08/25
Deliver 2nd meeting of Regional Rail Group	30/09/25			Overdue	
Strategy development (draft) - objectives and goals Stakeholder engagement	31/12/25			On Track	
Deliver 3rd meeting of Regioanl Rail Group	31/12/25			On Track	
Deliver 4th meeting of Regioanl Rail Group	31/03/26			On Track	

Project Name	Data Paper
Current Exp Budget	£50,000
Project Code	
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fiskén
Project Partners	WFM
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	30/09/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£0.00	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£50,000.00	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£50,000.00	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	2	22%
Delayed	2	22%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	5	56%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
We will build an understanding of how our local authorities, other RTPs, Transport Scotland, and partner organisations like ESESCRD think about mapping and data challenges and opportunities.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
Drawing on the findings of the monitoring reports, revisit the RTS when the post-pandemic picture has stabilised to determine any policy adjustments required to reflect the ‘new normal’ circumstances	To understand what partner organisations do around mapping and data To build internal skill set on GIS, and associated data/ mapping products To consider what we can learn from open data sources and how it could impact our work.	Discovery Paper on Data and Mapping Inventory of data and mapping resources and capacity within the organisation
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
We are meeting the milestones attached to this project, and are now working in Miro to understand more about what we already have access to/ would need to pay for.		We have: - compiled a list of questions to answer - contacted Transport Scotland about their data strategy - begun data Miro board for organisation -met with UT’s leads on data - begun analysis of RCN
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Outline meeting with Arup and proposal shared with us Comments returned Waiting for second draft proposal		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Meet with Transport Scotland to understand their emerging data strategy's methodology	27/06/25		30/04/25	Complete	05/08/25
Compile data and mapping capacity list	27/06/25		30/05/25	Complete	05/08/25
Complete list of questions to form basis of paper	27/06/25		30/05/25	Complete	05/08/25
Meet UrbanTide's to discuss their work in this area	27/06/25		27/06/25	Complete	05/08/25
Complete evaluation of RCN as active project already using mapping	27/06/25		20/06/25	Complete	05/08/25
Undertake audit of local authorities' mapping and data policies	30/09/25	28/11/25		Delayed	05/08/25
Establish data and mapping gaps list	30/09/25	28/11/25		Delayed	05/08/25
Begin discovery plan drafting	19/12/25			On Track	05/08/25
Present recommendations paper to board	31/03/26			On Track	05/08/25

Project Name	Thistle Assistance
Current Exp Budget	£42,825
Project Code	92077
SEStran Lead	Sandra Lavergne
SEStran Manager	Michael Melton
Project Partners	All RTPs
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	30/09/2025

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	£42,825.00	£18,825.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£12,344.03	
Current Remaining	£24,000.00	£30,480.97	
Predicted Future Spend	£24,000.00	£30,480.97	
Predicted total spend	£24,000.00	£42,825.00	£18,825.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	9	45%
Delayed	2	10%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	9	45%

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
Minor amendments have been made on the card request form based on Lessons learnt. Further development work is currently being undertaken to collect personal information from card requests and app. This will be finalised by the end of October, after which the next campaign will be taking place (from November). Privacy notice being updated. Procurement exercise started to appoint a media agency for future promotional campaigns. Progress on stakeholder engagement: met with TS and all the RTPs for progress update. Transport operators survey distributed.		Update of the privacy policy and amendment on the types of personal data collected in line with data policies will enable: - distribution of future surveys directed at existing users - collection of additional user data Collection and analysis of this information will lead to a better understanding of the current audience of the scheme (and potential gaps, as well as use and impact of the scheme in the overall passenger experience. Transport operators survey will provide a more robust baseline on current awareness and engagement with the scheme by the operators.
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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	01/08/25
First RTP Thistle Assistance meeting	30/09/25		01/09/25	Complete	01/09/25
Update privacy policy prior to any new marketing initiative	30/09/25		30/09/25	Complete	30/09/25
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	31/10/25		Delayed	30/09/25
Plan next digital marketing campaign	30/09/25	31/10/25		Delayed	30/09/25
Transport operator survey created and distributed	30/09/25		25/09/25	Complete	25/09/25
App quarterly maintenance Q3	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Results from transport operator survey collected and analysed	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Digital marketing campaign done	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
User survey created and distributed	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Procurement exercise started to appoint a printer/distributor on a multi-year contract	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
App quarterly maintenance Q4	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25
User survey analysed	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25
High level project plan for 26/27 based on all data collected and recommendations	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25
Procurement exercise finalised with a supplier appointed	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25

Project Name	Transport to Health Strategy
Current Exp Budget	£60,000
Project Code	92062
SEStran Lead	Rachael Murphy
SEStran Manager	Keith Fisken
Project Partners	NHS Boards
Lead Partner	SEStran
Last Updated	30/09/2025

Finance Status
On Budget
Programme Status
On Target

Budget	Income	Expenditure	SEStran Spend
Original Budget	£0.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Current Budget	£0.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Current Actual	£0.00	£491.15	
Current Remaining	£0.00	£59,508.85	
Predicted Future Spend	£0.00	£59,508.85	
Predicted total spend	£0.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Predicted Variance	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Milestone Status	Count	Percentage
On Track	5	38%
Delayed	2	15%
Overdue	0	0%
Complete	6	46%

Source of Any Income: n/a

Project Summary		
We started engagement with our region's four Health Boards and established a learning network creating a space for sharing knowledge and experience. Building on this, we've co-hosted an event with Public Health Scotland on Health and Sustainable Transport. Given the importance of this work, and many complex aspects, we have opted to develop a strategy for the region on Transport to Health.		
RTS Actions	Project Objectives	Project Outcomes
Support the delivery of bus services and infrastructure measures which ensure access to healthcare for all	Reduce barriers on access to health services in the region Continue collaborative work with key stakeholders in the health sector and beyond Integrate TtH into other areas of work led by SEStran	Gain a better understanding of existing projects / available data in the TtH sector in the region and beyond Try and assess the overall current spend in TtH and how to maximise impact Develop a case for change Maintain regular contacts and engagement with Health Boards and key stakeholders
Q1 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q1 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
We are progressing well against delivery of the strategy. Challenges remain around Health Board capacity to engage with the work. As such, we are going in person to meet each Board over the summer months to review the PID and TOR documents with them and understand any challenges specific to their geographies or partners.		Engagement Plan and Literature Review completed and published. We have produced a first draft of our PID and TOR documents for internal review These have been shared with the Health Boards for their comment. We have presented the Literature Review to our Shared Learning Network and our Board, taking note of suggested structure for future Strategy production. TS have included it in their reporting on the NTS2.
Q2 Project Progress and RAG status update		Q2 Objectives & RTS Actions Progress
Meetings held with Borders, Lothian, Fife. Further meeting required for Fife and FV. Positive feedback from Fife. Further data collected by DES in August 2025 on disable people's experiences to access healthcare services; data can be compared to an initial survey distributed in 2019. C4C tender exercise finalised with Urban Foresight appointed. Public and stakeholder engagement will be taking place in Q3.		The C4C will focus on addressing partially or fully the identified research gaps from the Literature Review.
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Sign off Lit Review	27/06/25		28/04/25	Complete	05/08/25
Sign off Engagement Plan	27/06/25		28/04/25	Complete	05/08/25
1st Draft PID	27/06/25		26/05/25	Complete	05/08/25
1st Draft TOR	27/06/25		26/05/25	Complete	05/08/25
Present docs to HBs	27/06/25		02/06/25	Complete	05/08/25
Work with DES to rerun TtH survey	27/06/25		20/06/25	Complete	05/08/25
Identify other key stakeholders	30/09/25	01/12/25		Delayed	30/09/25
Webinar for equalities/ other stakeholders?	30/09/25	01/12/25		Delayed	30/09/25
Pursue work on Case for Change (how to identify potential solutions?)	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Pursue engagement via Learning network	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Review effectiveness of Learning network and identify potential improvements	19/12/25			On Track	30/09/25
Presentation draft Case for Change at Q4 Board	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25
Identify key actions for 26/27	31/03/26			On Track	30/09/25

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	2	50%
Delayed	2	50%
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
- Identify locations where implementation of shared mobility solutions could be beneficial and reduce the level of ‘forced’ car ownership - Expand the provision of bike-sharing initiatives across the region	- Installation of a Brompton cycle hire unit and provision of 8 hire bikes in Haymarket Station or alternative site - Increase awareness and access to e-bikes as an option for commuting to work through three e-bike employer trials - Increase access to e-bikes to the public through supporting training and e-bike loans for community groups - Carry out promotion of existing Brompton lockers at QMU and Sherrifhall P&R	- More people are enabled to choose cycling as a trasnport mode - More people have the opportuniy 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 reponse not recieved 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
Engaged with Midlothian and East Lothian about potential locations for Brompton locker. E-bikes surplus to requirement moved to LCDT in Linlithgow to support local hires.		
Q3 Project Progress and RAG status update		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
Complete three employer e-bike trials at NHS sites	31/03/26			On Track	
Secure confirmation of Brompton locker location	30/06/25	31/08/25		Late	05/08/25
Support training sessions for e-bike groups	31/03/26			On Track	
Collect case studies from e-bike loans	30/09/25	31/03/26		Delayed	
Carry out promotion of existing Brompton lockers	01/09/25	28/11/25		Delayed	

APPENDIX 2

