

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 SEStran, working in partnership with the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (the City Deal) and constituent local authorities, is leading the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan. Following the update paper presented to the Board in September 2025, progress on the Plan was paused to enable limited regional resources to be prioritised towards the development and delivery of SEStran, a nationally significant initiative funded by Transport Scotland through the Bus Infrastructure Fund.
- 1.2 The City Deal has provided an in-principle approval of a three-year capital funding bid through the Local Growth Fund which represents a significant opportunity to re-establish momentum on the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan. This funding will allow SEStran to strengthen regional capacity and recommence development of the Delivery Plan, ensuring it is robust, deliverable and aligned with national policy and investment priorities.
- 1.3 Over the next three years, this renewed focus will support further work on the prioritisation and coordination of strategic transport interventions across the region, dovetailing with the outcomes of the SEStran and Regional Bus programmes. This will result in a coherent and investable pipeline of transport interventions that will support and influence regional spatial and economic ambitions.

2 MAIN REPORT

- 2.1 In December 2024 the Board received an overview of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan.
- 2.2 It explained the work that has been done to:
 - Collate all transport projects planned by partners across the region;
 - Work with colleagues across economic development, planning and transport teams in partner councils to assess each project against a wide range of criteria; and
 - Devise a prioritised list of projects for which funding will be sought to undertake appraisals and build business case.
- 2.3 An update was provided in September 2025 that confirmed:
 - Regional governance for the programme had been developed further to include the appropriate officer and Elected Member forums to consider transport matter across all partners;

- Transport Scotland had clarified the expectation for regional partners to lead on the development of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 recommendation 12 to develop a Mass Transit system for the southeast of Scotland (SEStransit);
- The interdependency between SEStransit as a key theme of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan and the need to develop both in parallel; and
- Confirmation that Transport Scotland had approved funding in 2025/26 to commence the development of a Strategic Business Case in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance.

2.4 Since September 2025 SEStran and the City Deal have led the mobilisation of a lead technical consultant to develop the Strategic Business Case for SEStransit, with input from regional partners as 'in-kind' contributions. A client based Technical Director has also been commissioned to support the regional partners navigate and review the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance process and the consultant outputs.

2.5 The data led 'Case for Investment' will be drafted by mid-May 2026 for partners to review at the gateway point and will form the evidence base for the remainder of the Strategic Business Case process between now and mid-2027. Further detail is provided in the specific SEStransit update report.

3 LOCAL GROWTH FUND

3.1 With the end of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, regional partners have been asked to coordinate the allocation of revenue and capital funding for regional priorities that support the outcomes of the new Local Growth Fund which include:

- Support long term economic growth;
- Boost GDP; and
- Boost real household disposable income.

3.2 In March 2026, the City Deal Joint Chair of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan Working Group brought forward a proposal to the City Deal Directors' Group to allocate capital funding to restart the Delivery Plan process. The proposal sought to provide additional regional capacity, enabling partners to progress development of the Delivery Plan in parallel with the ongoing delivery of SEStransit. This approach is intended to optimise contributions from regional partners, ensure effective use of limited resources, and articulate a comprehensive, region-wide picture of the transport investment required to support and complement SEStransit.

3.3 The proposal was endorsed by City Deal Directors and at a subsequent City Deal Joint committee meeting, so the SEStran team is drafting an official funding application to be submitted by City Deal to Scottish Government.

4 PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

4.1 Confirmation of LGF funding is expected in June 2026 and will allow the following activities to be undertaken over the remainder of the financial year:

- Commission a consultant to complete the baselining of existing projects from regional partners and the list of ‘Sifted Projects’ from the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 into the existing strategic assessment matrix;
- Undertake an Equalities Impact assessment to supplement the project level assessments undertaken by partner Local Authorities for individual projects. The outcomes will be built into the future process, programme and scope;
- Complete the ‘mapping and gapping’ exercise with regional partner to identify opportunities for new projects, cross boundary collaborations and economies of scale;
- Assess and draft a scope of services for the remaining two financial years of funding (2027-2029) to undertake a Strategic Business Case Assessment in accordance with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance, or other appropriate alternatives;
- Provide an updated programme cost estimate to deliver the scope of service;
- Provide a draft delivery programme with external dependencies quantified;
- Provide programme governance structure, with processes and templates; and
- Draft Transport Planning Objectives for consideration at the next stage.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Board is asked to note the contents of this report and that progress updates will be provided to future meetings.

Ewan Doyle

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19th June 2026

Policy Implications	The Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan support the deliver of the Regional Transport Strategy and will form the basis for future influence on a Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Partners developments. It will provide a coherent and ambitious business case for transport investment over the next 30-40 years to enable the regional to reach its full potential.
Financial Implications	The proposed Local Growth Fund will support the activities identified within 2026/27 and the scoping of the next phase of activities will identify if any additional funding is required beyond the 3 year capital funding.

Equalities Implications	An EQIA will be undertaken within the proposed activities and the outcomes included in the next phase of the programme.
Climate Change Implications	As projects will generally support access to sustainable transport, this will support the transition to net zero.