

SEStran Partnership Board Minutes

10.00am, Friday, 19 June 2026

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

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Cllr Sally Pattle (Chair)	West Lothian Council
	Cllr Chas Booth	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Jack Caldwell	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Stephen Jenkinson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr Joanna Mowat (substitute for Cllr Neil Cuthbert)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Cllr John McMillan (Vice Chair)	East Lothian Council
	Cllr Paul Garner	Falkirk Council
	Cllr Ian Cameron	Fife Council
	Cllr Derek Glen	Fife Council
	Cllr Russell Imrie (Vice Chair)	Midlothian Council
	Cllr Colin Cassidy	Midlothian Council
	Cllr Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
	Alistair Couper	Non-Councillor Member
	Mailys Garden	Non-Councillor Member
	Callum Hay	Non-Councillor Member
	Simon Hindshaw	Non-Councillor Member
	John Scott	Non-Councillor Member
	Paul White	Non-Councillor Member
	Sally Wyke	Non-Councillor Member

<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation Title</u>
	Andrew Rose (Clerk)	City of Edinburgh Council
	Jamie Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
	Tom Stokes	City of Edinburgh Council
	Ian King	East Lothian Council
	John Mitchell	Fife Council
	Anna Herriman	Midlothian Council
	David Maule	West Lothian Council
	Brian Butler	SEStran
	Angela Chambers	SEStran
	Ewan Doyle	SEStran
	Rebecca Duncan	SEStran

Andrew Ferguson	SEStran
Sarah Junik	SEStran
Sandra Lavergne	SEStran
Michael Melton	SEStran
Rachael Murphy	SEStran
Rebecca Smith	SEStran
Alisdair Brown	SEStran
Stuart Turnbull	SEStran

**Apologies
for
Absence**

Name

Organisation Title

Cllr Neil Cuthbert	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr James Leslie	Fife Council
Cllr Jenny Linehan	Scottish Borders Council
Linda Bamford	Non-Councillor Member
Clara Walker	Non-Councillor Member

1. Order of Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially new members – both councillor and non-councillor - who were attending for the first time, and indicated that the order of business would be as listed in the circulated agenda.

The Chair also paid tribute to Andrew Ferguson who was leaving SEStran and this would be his last meeting. Andrew had worked with or at SEStran since its inception 21 years ago.

2. Apologies for Absence

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

3. Declarations of Interest

Sally Wyke made a transparency statement, in relation to all items of business, by virtue of her role as Chair of Cycling Scotland.

4. Video Presentation

The Board received a video presentation on a PPP Case Study and a verbal contextual introduction by the Programme Manager.

A1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) That the minute of the SEStran Partnership Board of 13 March 2026 be approved as a correct record.
- 2) That the minute of the SEStran Performance and Audit Committee of 5 June 2026 be approved as a correct record.

A2. (a) Unaudited Annual Accounts 2025/26 and Treasury Management

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer presenting the unaudited Annual Accounts in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014. The Board was reminded that the accounts are subject to audit and that the audited Annual Accounts, incorporating the Auditor's report, will be presented to the Performance and Audit Committee and Partnership Board in due course.

The report also outlined the Treasurer's opinion on the effectiveness of the Partnership's system of internal financial control with his opinion being informed by the work of Internal Audit and managers in the Partnership. It is the Treasurer's opinion that reasonable assurance can be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the Partnership's internal control system.

Decision

- 1) That the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2025-26 be noted, and
- 2) That the annual Treasury management report for 2025-26 be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Treasurer, submitted)

(b) Revenue Budget 2026/27

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer presenting a proposed revised Partnership budget for 2026-27 with the report outlining the changes impacting the Budget and requiring revision to it.

Decision

- 1) That the proposed revised core budget of £1,053,000 for 2026/27, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- 2) That the proposed People and Place, Transport to Employment and Workforce Mobility Project budgets for 2026/27, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved, and
- 3) That it be noted that all income and expenditure of the Partnership will continue to be monitored closely with updates reported to each Partnership meeting.

(Reference – Report by the Treasurer, submitted)

A3. PaSDOS and Future Reporting

The Board received a report by the Programme Manager providing an update on discussions around the future role of the Project and Strategy Delivery Oversight Subgroup (PaSDOS) and future reporting resulting from this and the 2026/27 Business Plan, namely that (a) the scrutiny/audit function of existing projects to be passed back to the Performance and Audit Committee, (b) PaSDOS will report to the Board and provide advice and guidance on project delivery alignment with overall strategy, (c) a core role will be to support development of the Business Plan for the next year and evaluation of the previous year's Business Plan, (d) the group will continue to support ongoing project development with meetings focusing on specific projects, (e) the group will set a 'work plan' for the year based on the milestones within the Business Plan, and (f) membership will look to increase to up to seven with an ongoing focus on the right skills mix to support the role of the Committee.

Decision

- 1) That the proposed changes as set out in Section 2 of the report be approved, and
- 2) That the content of sections 3 and 4 of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

A4. Appointments to Performance and Audit Committee

The Board considered a report by the Business Manager seeking nomination for the appointment of a Non-Councillor Member to the Performance and Audit Committee.

The report also advised that Councillor Sanne Dijkstra-Downie has been elected to the Scottish Parliament and, as a result, is no longer able to continue on this Board and in her role as Deputy Chair of the Partnership. The Chairs have considered the current position and agreed that, as the Partnership has discretion over the number of Deputy Chairs appointed, the vacancy will not be filled at this time.

Councillor Booth, seconded by Simon Hindshaw, proposed that Sally Wyke be appointed as a Non-Councillor Member to the Performance and Audit Committee.

Decision

- 1) That Sally Wyke be appointed as a Non-Councillor Member to the Performance and Audit Committee, and
- 2) That it be noted that former Deputy Chair Sanne Dijkstra-Downie had been elected as an MSP and that the Partnership will continue with two serving Deputy Chairs.

(Reference – Report by the Business Manager, submitted)

A5. Partnership Director's Update

The Board received a verbal presentation from the Partnership Director providing an update on a number of matters which he considered were of significant importance or of interest, but particularly in relation to (a) the Partnership's Risk Register, (b) SEStran's position with regard to the ongoing discussions about empowerment of regional partnerships to drive economic growth and (c) the Transport Scotland Review of Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) funding, along with transport governance, and (d) Scottish Government proposals for a national flat fare of £2.

In respect to these matters, the Chair indicated that, due to their significance and to ensure that the Board was able to spend sufficient time considering them, a special meeting of the Board was being called for July 2026. The date would be dependent on member availability, and the Business Manager would seek responses from Board members on their availability for dates.

A6. Workforce Mobility Project

The Board received a report by the Senior Partnership Manager which provided an update on the opportunity for SEStran to deliver the Workforce Mobility Project in partnership with the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal through the existing Concordat between the two organisations. The Workforce Mobility Project already supports existing regional

activities, and a newly funded pilot will provide data intelligence to Regional Transport Partnerships and Local Authorities across Scotland.

Decided

- 1) That the content of the report and the associated funding position that is further detailed within Agenda item A2(b) Revenue Budget 2026-27 be noted.
- 2) That the action taken by the Partnership Director and Chair of the SEStran Partnership Board, under Standing Order 40, approving the participation of SEStran in the delivery of the Workforce Mobility Project in 2026/27 be noted.
- 3) That the continuation of the Senior Partnership Manager's leadership of the Workforce Mobility Project to deliver the benefits identified in Section 2.4 of the report be approved.
- 4) That the continuation of SEStran partnership delivery of the Workforce Mobility Project beyond March 2027, subject to approval of the Business Case to be submitted to the Scottish Government later in 2026, be endorsed.

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

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Pattle left the meeting and Councillor Conn assumed the Chair.

A7. (a) RTS Delivery Plan

The Board considered a report by the Senior Partnership Manager providing an update on work that has taken place since the last report to the Board in September 2025 on delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan.

Decision

That the contents of the report, and that progress updates will be provided to future meetings, be noted.

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

A7. (b) People and Place

The Board considered a report by the Programme Manager providing an update on the People and Place programme, focussing on developments since the last meeting of the Board in March 2026, in particular, that in April 2026, Transport Scotland informed Regional Transport Partnerships of a likely reduction to the revenue allocation of 60% following its internal approval process. This was later confirmed and thereafter communications were made to all local authorities and funded partners on 10 April 2026.

Decision

That the contents of the report, and the changes to the programme made as a result of a reduction in funding, be noted.

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

A7. (c) Regional Bus Action Plan

The Board received a report by the Projects Officer providing an update on progress of implementation of the Regional Bus Strategy.

Decision

That the progress against implementation of the Regional Bus Strategy be noted.

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

A7. (d) Transport for Employment

The Board considered a report by the Programme Manager providing an update on progress made on Transport to Employment since the last meeting.

Decision

That the contents of the report, and the changes made to the programme, be noted.

(Reference – report by the Programme, submitted.)

A7. (e) Transport to Health

The Board received a report by the Project Officer reminding the Board that it had been presented at the last meeting of the Board in March 2026 but, due to time constraints, had not been able to be discussed in full.

The report was submitted to this meeting to enable discussion to take place.

Decision

That the findings outlined in the report, and the Case for Change report, be noted.

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

A7. (f) SEStransit

The Board considered a report by the SEStran Consultant summarising key findings from the work completed to date and outline plans for completion of the Strategic Business Case.

The report explained that, subject to the level of funding received from Transport Scotland, all local authorities will be required to contribute a portion of the balance of costs to complete the Strategic Business Case.

Decision

- 1) That the progress of the SEStransit Programme be noted, and
- 2) That it be noted that partner local authorities will be required to make a financial contribution to ensure that the programme continues to the end of the current financial year.

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

A7. Date of Next Meeting

The Board was reminded that its next ordinary meeting would be held on Friday, 25 September 2026 in the Dean of Guild Court Room, Edinburgh City Chambers and online via Microsoft Teams.

The date for the special meeting as detailed in paragraph A6 above, to take place in July 2026, would be notified in due course.

Decision

The Board noted the date of its next ordinary meeting and that a special meeting of the Board would be held in July 2026, with a date to be notified.

B1. SEStran Consultation Responses

The Board considered a report by the Projects Officer providing an update on SEStran's response to consultations between March and June 2026.

Decision

That the content of the report, and its appendices, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Projects Officer, submitted)

B2. Internal Audit Report 2024/25

The Board considered a report by the Head of Internal Audit at the City of Edinburgh Council reminding the Board that the City of Edinburgh Council Internal Audit team performs one review annually for SEStran, to provide assurance over the controls established to mitigate key risks in a specific area.

The report provided details on the outcomes of the 2025/26 SEStran Internal Audit review of Project Management, and an update on progress with the completion of actions agreed as part of previous audits, and requested input on potential areas for inclusion in the planned 2026/27 audit.

Decision

- 1) That the outcomes of the 2025/26 Internal Audit review of Project Management, including Internal Audit findings and recommendations and agreed management actions and implementation dates, be noted.
- 2) That progress with completion of management actions from previous audits be noted, and
- 3) That it be noted that the Performance and Audit Committee provides input on key risks or any areas of concern that the Committee would like Internal Audit to consider including in the 2026/27 Internal Audit review.

(Reference – Report by the Head of Internal Audit at the City of Edinburgh Council, submitted)

B3. Risk Management Framework

The Board considered a report by the Business Manager providing the quarterly update on SEStran's Corporate Risk Register.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Business Manager, submitted)

B4. Projects and Strategy Performance

The Board considered a report by the Programme Manager providing an update on the performance of the Partnership's Strategy and Project workstreams in quarter 4 of 2025/26.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B5. Summary of Awards to People and Place Programme

The Board received a report by the Programme Manager providing details of grant awards for 2026/27, as detailed at appendices 1 to 3 of the report.

Decision

That the contents of the report, and the grant awards contained in appendices 1 – 3 of the report, be noted.

(Reference – Report by the Programme Manager, submitted)

B5. Annual External Audit Plan 2025-26

The Board received a report by the Treasurer presenting the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan for 2025-26.

Decision

- 1) That the External Audit Annual Audit Plan be noted
- 2) That it be noted that the External Audit Annual Audit Plan was considered by the Performance and Audit Committee on 27 February 2026.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)

B6. Asset Management Strategy

The Board received a report by the Projects Officer presenting the Partnership's Asset Management Strategy and Asset Derecognition Form to address the recommendations from the Annual Audit Report 2024-25, specifically that "The partnership should improve its processes and documentation around the disposal of assets."

Decision

- 1) That the External Audit Annual Audit Plan be noted.
- 2) That it be noted that the External Audit Annual Audit Plan was considered by the Performance and Audit Committee on 27 February 2026.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted.)