

## **SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**

**Meeting of Friday, 26 March 2021 at 10.30am, Remote Meeting via  
Microsoft Teams**

### **Members of the Board**

<b>Andrew Wood</b> (Chair)	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>John Campbell</b> (Vice Chair)	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>David Bryson</b>	- NHS Dumfries and Galloway
<b>Richard Brodie</b>	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Adam Wilson</b>	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Ronnie Tait</b>	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Karen Jackson</b>	- South of Scotland Enterprise

### **Future Meetings**

**25 June 2021**

**24 September 2021**

**26 November 2021**

**Douglas Kirkpatrick**

Lead Officer, South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

# SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

**Meeting of Friday, 26 March 2021 at 10.30am, Remote Meeting via  
Microsoft Teams**

- 1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 29 JANUARY 2021 – FOR APPROVAL**
- 4. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21** – Recommendation - note and comment on the external audit plan for 2020/21 in the Appendix.
- 5. DRAFT REVENUE EXPENDITURE BUDGET 2021/22** – Recommendation – agree the draft revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out in Table 1.
- 6. DRAFT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2021/22 - 2023/24** – Recommendations – (i) agree the draft Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24 outlined in Table 1; (ii) consider future years funding needs and determine if any changes to the submitted request for an increase in core funding, as indicated in paragraph 3.15, should be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council; (iii) consider the information in section 4 of the report and determine what level of funding support can be committed to Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust; (iv) review the limits at the ‘Delegated Authority to Lead Officer, SWestrans’ section of Appendix 1 and determine if they are appropriate; and (v) consider the proposal to merge Asset Classes, as highlighted in section 6 of the report, and determine a position which will then be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council.
- 7. EQUALITIES REPORTING** - Recommendations – (i) note SWestrans duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations; (ii) note the SWestrans Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021 as shown at Appendix 1; and (iii) review and agree the draft SWestrans Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025 as shown in Appendix 2.
- 8. SWESTRANS ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20** – Recommendation – agree the SWestrans Annual Report for 2019/20 as attached at the Appendix.
- 9. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY** – Recommendations – (i) note the progress to develop a new Regional Transport Strategy; and (ii) agree that a formal request for funding assistance be submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council.
- 10. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE** - Recommendations - (i) note the publication of the Union Connectivity Review Interim Report; (ii) note the publication of the Levelling Up Fund Prospectus; (iii) note the publication of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Phase 1 report; and (iv) consider and agree the draft response, attached as the appendix, to the consultation comments form for the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Phase 1 Report.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN MAY DECIDE IS URGENT  
DUE TO THE NEED FOR A DECISION**

Douglas Kirkpatrick  
Lead Officer  
South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

Claire Rogerson  
Secretary to the Board  
South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

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## SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Meeting of Friday 29 January 2021  
at 10.30am at Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams

### Present

#### Members

<b>Andrew Wood</b> (Chair)	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>John Campbell</b> (Vice-Chair)	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Richard Brodie</b>	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Karen Jackson</b>	-	South of Scotland Enterprise
<b>Ronnie Tait</b>	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
<b>Adam Wilson</b>	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council

#### Officials

<b>Douglas Kirkpatrick</b>	-	Lead Officer
<b>Claire Rogerson</b>	-	Secretary to the Board
<b>Josef Coombey</b>	-	Policy and Projects Officer
<b>Kirsty Dunsmore</b>	-	Policy and Projects Officer
<b>Janet Sutton</b>	-	Finance Officer

#### Apologies

<b>David Bryson</b>	-	NHS Dumfries and Galloway
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#### Observers

<b>Fraser Smith</b>	-	Stagecoach Scotland
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**1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES**

6 Board Members present and 1 apology.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST****Decision**

**NONE** declared

**3. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 20 NOVEMBER 2020****Decision**

**APPROVED**

**4. SCOTRAIL PRESENTATION****Decision**

The Board

4.1 **NOTED** the update on rail timetable reductions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

4.2 **AGREED** to receive the presentation from Ewan Tait, Business Development Executive at ScotRail (**Appendix to minute**)

**5. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2020/2021 FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2020****Decision**

**NOTED** the forecast outturn for the revenue budget as at 31 December 2020.

**6. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2022/23 - UPDATE****Decision**

The Board :-

6.1 **NOTED** the update provided on progress with the Capital Expenditure Programme 2020/21;

6.2 **REVIEWED** the options presented for Phase 2 parking improvements at Lockerbie Railway Station;

**AGREED**

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6.3 that two Options (Option B and Option E) are developed for public engagement; and

6.4 the priority list for bus shelter renewal/replacement 2020/21 as shown in Appendix 7 of the report.

## **7. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE**

### **Decision**

The Board:-

### **NOTED**

7.1 the publication of the first National Transport Strategy 2 Delivery Plan;

7.2 the publication of the National Planning Framework 4 Position Statement;

7.3 the publication of the Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 to 2032; and

7.4 the publication of the Hydrogen Policy Statement.

## **8. PUBLIC SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

### **Decision**

The Board **NOTED** the progress on the pilot projects within the three Public Social Partnership work streams as highlighted in section 3 of the report.

## **9. RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Decision**

The Board **NOTED** and **AGREED** the Risk Register for 2020/21 to 2021/22 included as the appendix to the report.

## **10. MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT CONSULTATION**

### **Decision**

The Board :-

10.1 **NOTED** the draft response on behalf of SWestrans to the Scottish Government consultation on the Model Code of Conduct for members of devolved public bodies; and

10.2 **AGREED** that the response is submitted online on behalf of the SWestrans board by the Secretary following this meeting.

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## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN MAY DECIDE IS URGENT DUE TO THE NEED FOR A DECISION

### Decision

The Board **AGREED** that there was 1 item of business deemed urgent by the Chairman due to the need for a decision.

**PROCEDURE** – The Board **AGREED** to consider the following items of business in private and exclude the Press, members of the public and Observers from the meeting given the report contains confidential or exempt information in respect of paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 10 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

### 11A. LOCKERBIE STATION – LAND OPPORTUNITY

**Summary of report** – The report advised Members of the Board of an opportunity to purchase land to assist with the Board’s ambitions to link the Phase 3 parking to Lockerbie Rail Station.

### Decision

The Board:-

11.1 **NOTED** the information provided and determined an initial SWestrans position on the progression of this land opportunity;

11.2 **AGREED** this position be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council; and

11.3 **AGREED** to receive further detailed reports on Lockerbie Station Parking options as the schemes develop.

## 12. LOCAL BUS SUSTAINABILITY

**Summary of Report** - This report updated Members of the Board of concerns on the future sustainability of local bus services and provided information on current issues and actions.

### Decision

The Board:-

12.1 **AGREED** the proposed reduction to a local bus service subject to confirmation that it is acceptable to funding partners;

12.2 **NOTED** the process that would be undertaken to seek replacement local bus services should a cancellation of commercial service occur;

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12.3 **AGREED** that officers carry out this process for any commercial cancellation following notification to the Chairman and Vice Chairman; and

12.4 **NOTED** the progression of a Demand Responsive Transport trial.



# Swestrans Board Meeting

## ScotRail Update

Ewan Tait  
Business Development Executive  
29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

# Agenda



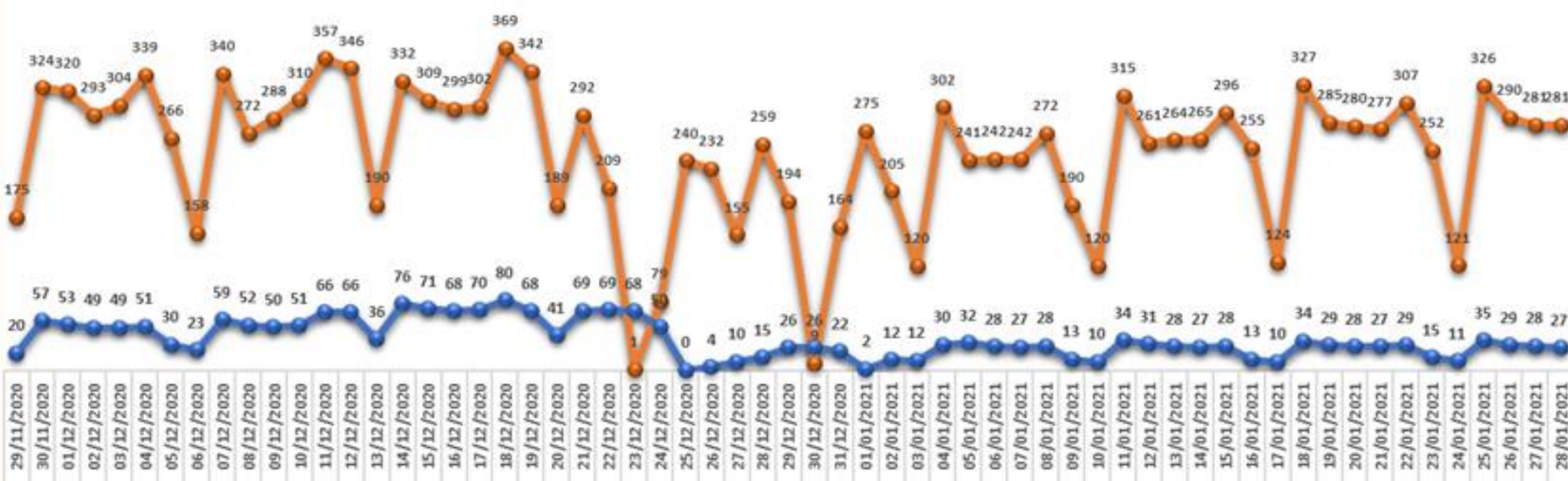
- ScotRail franchise
- Impact of COVID-19
- Timetable changes
- What does the future hold?

- In December 2019, Transport Scotland served a No Rebasing Notice and confirmed that the franchise would end in March 2022
- Since April 2020 we have been in Emergency Measures Agreements with Transport Scotland, and they are providing significant financial support to the rail industry to keep the trains running
- Current EMA ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021
- Negotiations continue for support from April 2021 to March 2022

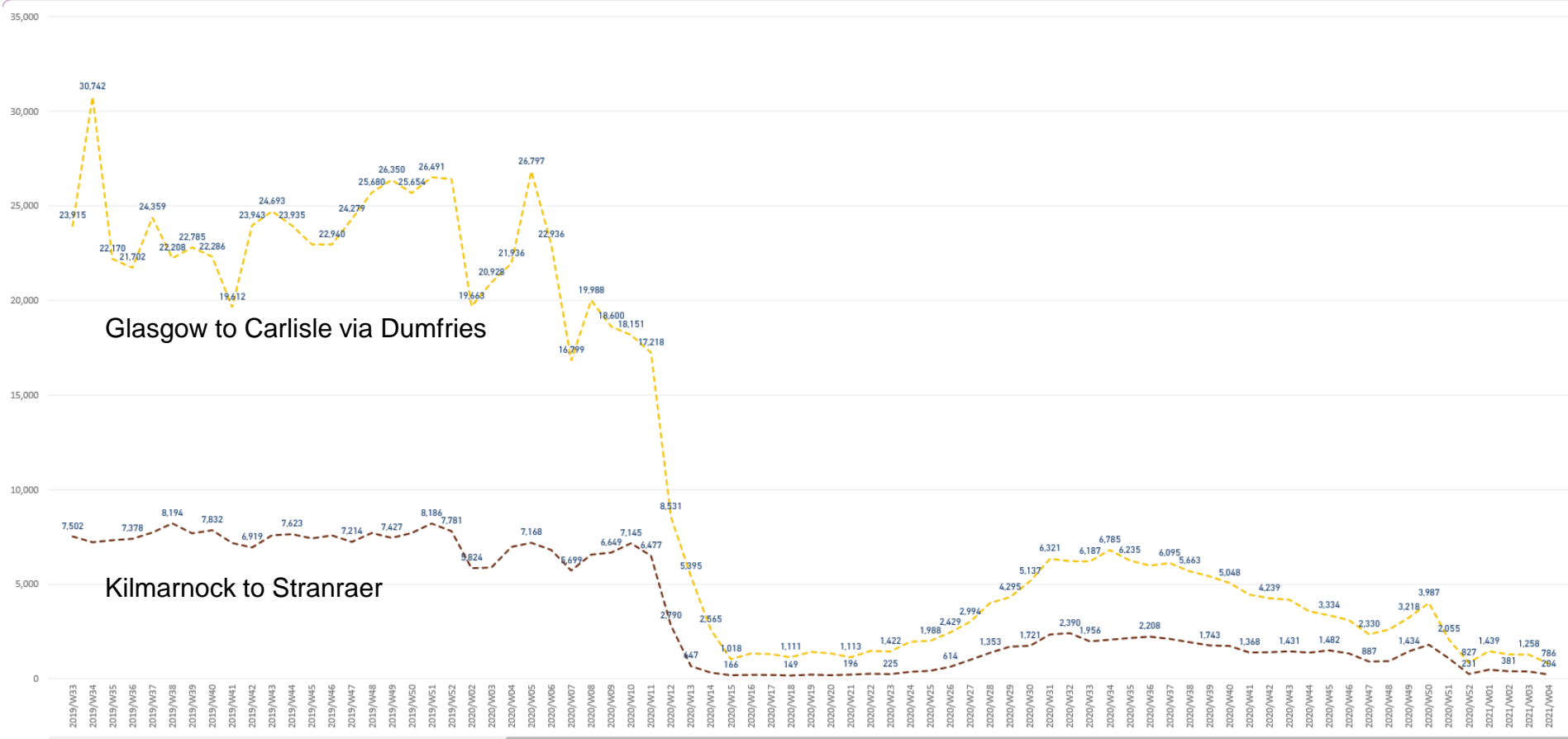
# Current patronage

## Passenger Journeys excl Refunds (k)

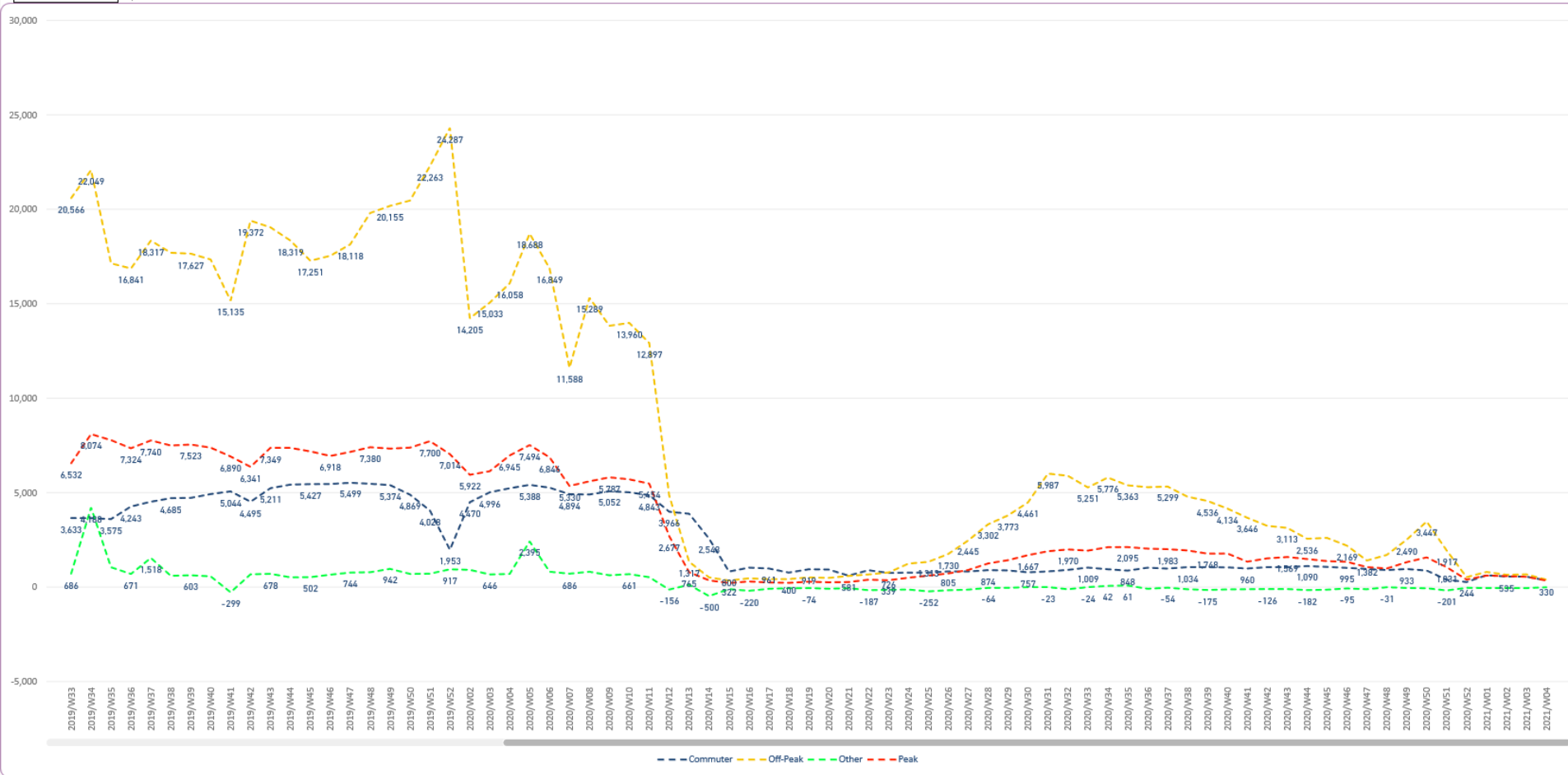
2019 2020



# Current patronage



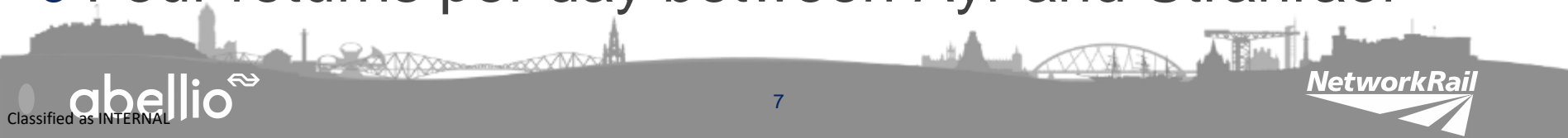
# Current patronage – Ticket type



# December 2020 Timetable



- Local services between Glasgow and Barrhead suspended and calls added to services between Glasgow, Kilmarnock, and Dumfries
- Six returns per day between Glasgow and Dumfries
- Two hourly off-peak service between Dumfries and Carlisle
- Two hourly service between Ayr and Girvan
- Four returns per day between Ayr and Stranraer



# 9<sup>th</sup> January Timetable Change



- Reduced timetable between Ayr, Girvan, and Stranraer due to Network Rail signal box opening hours being limited to 12 hours.
- Last return service between Stranraer and Ayr withdrawn



# 1<sup>st</sup> February Timetable Change

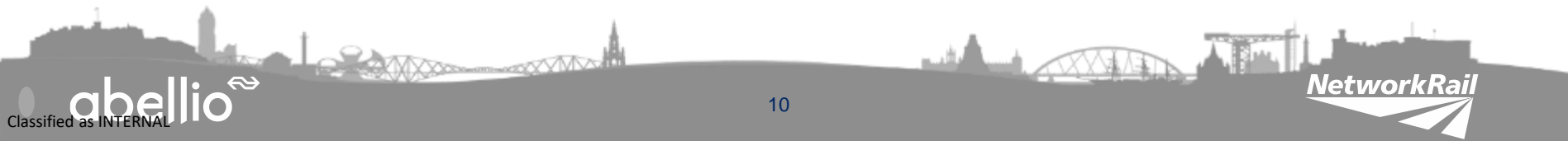


- Reduced services across Scotland due to the reduction in demand
- Sufficient capacity for forecast demand until May timetable
- No further change south of Ayr
- Services between Glasgow, Kilmarnock, Dumfries and Carlisle finish earlier
- Last trains:
  - 17:57 Carlisle to Glasgow (18:35 from Dumfries)
  - 19:20 Carlisle to Dumfries
  - 16:11 Glasgow to Carlisle
  - 19:13 Glasgow to Dumfries
  - 18:41 Dumfries to Carlisle

# May 2021 Timetable Change



- Reverting to the same level of service as December 2020
- Reviewing service level between Glasgow and Barrhead and around Dumfries to ensure that it meets the needs of our passengers



- Where do we go from here?
- Focus on maintaining the high performance that we have seen
- Timetables to be developed that meet future needs of passengers rather than simply assuming we revert to the pre-COVID timetable
- Passenger travel patterns will be different, therefore our timetable needs to accommodate that

Thank You



## EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21

### 1. Reason for Report

1.1 SWestrans external auditors have published the plan of work they intend to undertake for the 2020/21 financial year, based on their analysis of risks facing SWestrans.

1.2 The plan highlights the audit work necessary to ensure the SWestrans has in place sound arrangements for producing accurate financial statements, for maintaining an effective internal control environment and for managing its performance. By discussing the work plan and the risks on which it is based, the Board can obtain an understanding of the control environment in operation within SWestrans and of the assurances available from external audit work.

### 2. Background

Grant Thornton have been appointed by the Accounts Commission as the Council's external auditors for the financial years 2016/17 to 2020/21. This is the fifth year they will be providing the service to SWestrans. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic the appointment has been extended by a year to 2021/22.

### 3. Key Points

3.1 An audit plan has been prepared which will lead to a professional audit opinion on the accounts of SWestrans. The plan sets out the responsibilities of the external auditor and SWestrans and the timetable to be followed. It also identifies the reporting arrangements for the work and a list of outputs which are expected to be delivered.

3.2 In the plan SWestrans external auditors state they will:

- Audit the financial statements and provide an opinion on them; and
- Consider SWestrans corporate governance arrangements relating to internal control and reporting, prevention and detection of fraud/irregularity, standards of conduct and the prevention and detection of corruption.

3.3 The audit plan identified the main risk attaching to SWestrans financial statements. Reviewing the plan allows the Board to become better informed about how and why the external auditor has prioritised certain risks over others. The Board can also form a view as to the risks associated with the audit process itself.

### 4. Consultations

The Proper Officer has been consulted and is in agreement with its terms.

PUBLIC

<b>5. Implications</b>	
<b>Financial</b>	The fee which has been agreed for the SWestrans 2021/21 audit is included in the plan document.
<b>Policy</b>	No policy implications from this report
<b>Equalities</b>	No equalities implications from this report
<b>Climate Change</b>	No climate change implications from this report
<b>Risk Management</b>	The audit plan relates to the known risks R04 – Capital funding R06 – Overspending R07 – Revenue funding R10 – Procurement R11 – Contract disputes R12 – Third Party liabilities R14 – Withdrawal of DGC Governance support R15 – Cyber crime

**6. Recommendation**

Members of the Board are asked to note and comment on the external audit plan for 2020/21 in the Appendix.

Janet Sutton - Report Author Finance Officer Tel: 01387 260105 Date of Report: 05 March 2021 File Ref:	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG1 8PN
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**APPENDIX – External Audit Plan 2020/21**

# South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Financial year ending 31 March 2021

External Audit Planning Update - DRAFT

Board Meeting

26 March 2020



**Your key Grant Thornton  
team members are:**

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The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you as part of our audit planning process. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the organisation or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and Audit Scotland (under the Audit Scotland Code of Practice 2016). We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.



# Plan overview

The audit plan for the financial year ended 31 March 2021 sets out our risk based audit approach. This plan is reported to those charged with governance. Planning is a continuous process and we will continue to review our risk assessment and planned approach.

## 03

### Wider Scope Audit – smaller body arrangements

In accordance with Audit Scotland's Code of Practice, we feel it is appropriate to continue to treat you as a smaller body under the Code. In 2020/21 we will consider the South West of Scotland Transport Partnership ('SWestrans') arrangements for ensuring financial sustainability as well as your governance arrangements in place to support disclosures contained within the annual governance statement included within your financial statements.

## 01

### Materiality

We have calculated planning materiality using gross prior year expenditure as our benchmark (same as prior year):

- £92,160 planning materiality
- Performance materiality of £69,120 (75% of planning materiality)
- Trivial is capped at £4,508

## 04

### Other audit matters

We summarise other audit matters for the SWestrans awareness. This includes:

- The revised ISA 540 standard relating to Accounting estimates and the additional considerations required at planning. For SWestrans we anticipate this to relate to depreciation.
- In accordance with the Code and planning guidance we also complete and submit a number of deliverables in year including sharing intelligence with Audit Scotland.
- Consideration of going concern in accordance with Practice Note 10.

## 02

### Financial statement audit risks

At planning, in accordance with the ISAs (UK) and FRC Practice Note 10 we have identified the following significant financial statement audit risks:

- Management override of controls (ISA UK 240)
- Risk of fraud in expenditure (cut-off) (FRC PN10)

## 05

### Our Audit Fee

Audit fees were shared by Audit Scotland with SWestrans in December 2020. Our fee agreed with Officers is:

- £10,240 which is set at the baseline fee.
- This fee includes £850 related to Audit Scotland pooled costs and £490 related to Audit Scotland central costs
- Audit fees are paid to Audit Scotland who pay us.
- We reserve the right to review our fee during the audit should significant delays be encountered and/or new technical matters arise.

# Introduction

## Purpose

This document provides an overview of the planned scope and timing of the external audit of SWestrans for those charged with governance.

We are appointed by the Accounts Commission as the external auditors of SWestrans for the 6 year period (2016/17 until 2021/22).

## Respective responsibilities

Audit Scotland has issued a document entitled Code of Audit Practice ('the Code') dated 2016 covering this audit appointment period. This summarises where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from the audited body. Our respective responsibilities, and that of SWestrans are summarised in Appendix 1 of this plan. We draw your attention to this and the Code.

## Scope of our audit

The scope of our audit is set in accordance with the Code and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK). We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on:

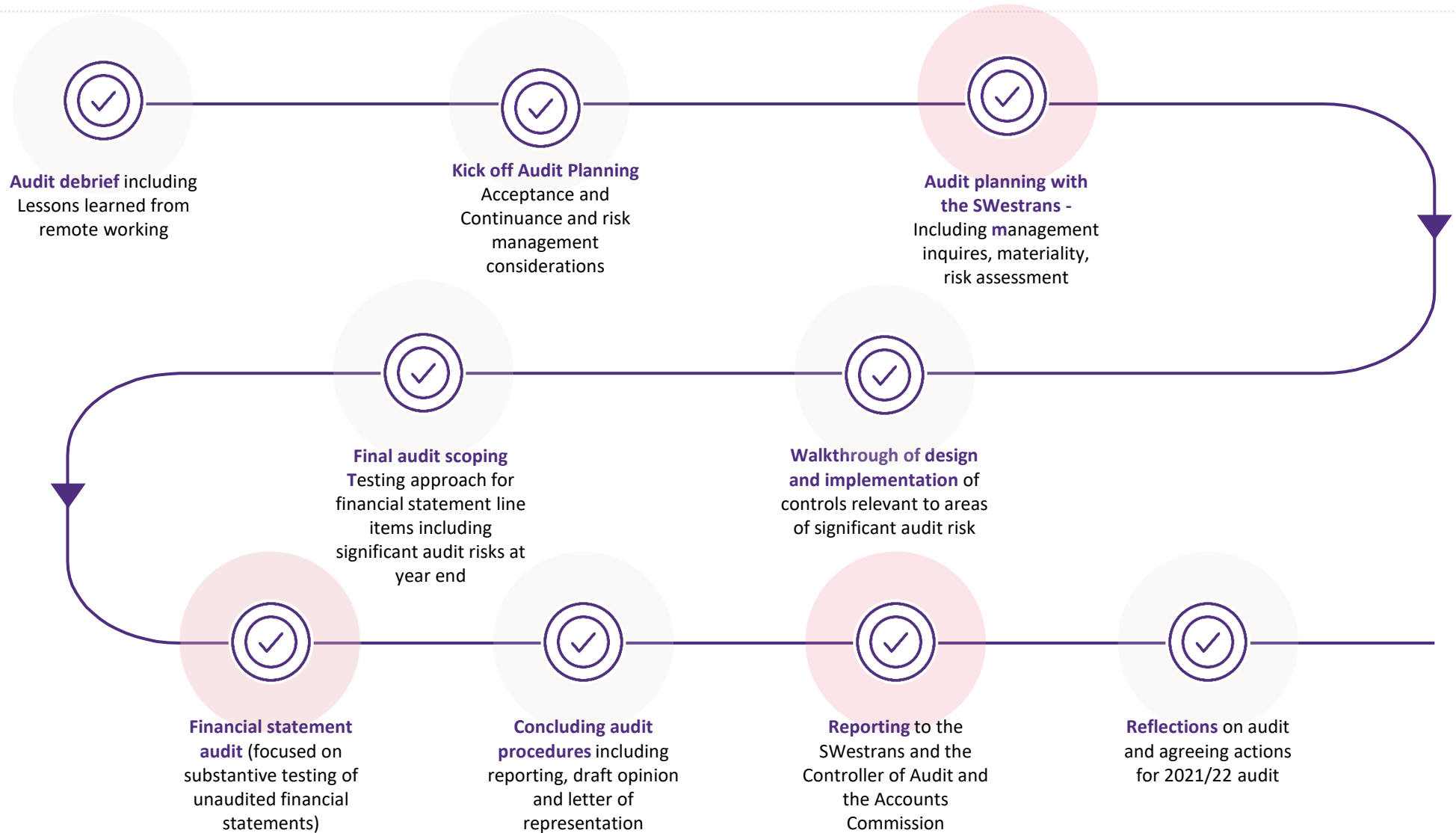
- SWestrans' financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance (the SWestrans' Board)

The audit of the financial statements does not relieve Officers or SWestrans of your responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the SWestrans to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. We will consider how the SWestrans is fulfilling these responsibilities.

Our audit approach is based on a thorough understanding of the SWestrans and is risk based.

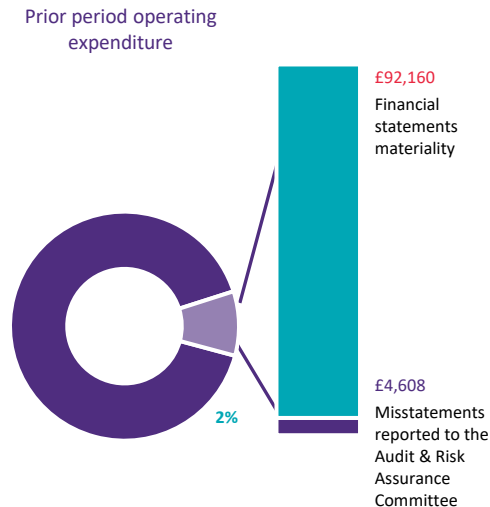


# Audit approach



# Materiality

Financial statement materiality is determined based on a proportion of the total operating expenditure. We have determined **planning materiality** to be £92,160, which equates to approximately 2% of your prior year total operating expenditure in-year.



**Performance materiality** represents the amount set for the financial statements as a whole to reduce the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceed materiality. We use this to determine our testing approach to the financial statements. We have set this at 75% of planning materiality (£69,120). This is based on our understanding of the SWestrans including no material or unadjusted errors in the prior year.

Materiality reflects our professional judgement of the magnitude of an omission or misstatement that, individually or in the aggregate, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of the users of the financial statements.

Under ISA 260 (UK) 'Communication with those charged with governance', we are required by auditing standards to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are '**clearly trivial**' to those charged with governance. We have determined this threshold to be £4,608 being 5% of financial statement materiality.

**We will update our materiality based on the unaudited 2020/21 financial statements. During the course of our audit engagement, we will continue to assess the appropriateness of our materiality.**

# Significant audit risks

Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK) as risks that, in the judgement of the auditor, require special audit consideration. In identifying risks, audit teams consider the nature of the risk, the potential magnitude of misstatement, and its likelihood. Significant risks are those risks that have a higher risk of material misstatement.

## Management Override of Controls (as required within Auditing Standards – ISA 240)

Our risk focuses on the areas of the financial statements where there is potential for management to use their judgement to influence the financial statements alongside the potential to override of internal controls, related to individual transactions.

Our work focuses on critical estimates and judgements as set out within the financial statements, including accounting policies. In addition, we specifically consider cut-off (expenditure) and the use of manual journals during the year, and in creating the financial statements where controls may be overridden by management. These are inherently the areas in which management has the potential to use their judgement to influence the financial statements. We will obtain an understanding of the business rationale of significant transactions that we become aware of that, based on our audit knowledge and understanding, are outside the normal course of business for the entity, or that otherwise appear to be unusual.

## Risk of Fraud in Expenditure (as recommended in FRC Practice Note 10 for Public Sector entities) (Completeness / Occurrence)

Operating expenditure is understated or not treated in the correct period (risk of fraud in expenditure). Operating expenditure is understated or not treated in the correct period (risk of fraud in expenditure). SWestrans expenditure includes recharges from the Council for the costs of administrative and operational support to SWestrans. In addition, SWestrans provides subsidy payments to local bus network which is recognised as expenditure during the year. With the focus on financial performance on at least breaking even each year, there is a risk Officers may be incentivised to fraudulently record expenditure. We consider the risk to be particularly prevalent around the year end and therefore focus our testing on cut-off of non-pay expenditure.

Our testing includes a specific focus on year end cut-off arrangements, where it may be advantageous for management to show an enhanced/different financial position in the context of reporting in-year to Scottish Government and the need to achieve the financial targets set.

As set out in ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper recognition of revenue. In 2019/20 the SWestrans received £3.5 million of funding from Dumfries and Galloway Council and £259,000 grant funding from the Scottish Government. While material, this funding is formally agreed during the budget setting process and confirmed from final funding allocations from each body. Total revenue and receivables at the year end are agreed to third party confirmation (signed accounts). Consequently, we consider there to be a lower opportunity to materially misstate this revenue stream. We therefore rebut the presumed risk of improper recognition of revenue.

# Other matters

## Auditor Responsibilities

We have a number of audit responsibilities as set out in the Code and planning guidance:

- We audit parts of your Remuneration Report in your Annual Report and check whether these sections of your Annual Report have been properly prepared (opinion)
- We read the sections of your Annual Report which are not subject to audit and check that they are consistent with the financial statements on which we give an opinion (opinion)
- We carry out work to satisfy ourselves that disclosures made in your Annual Governance Statement are consistent with the financial statements and that the report is prepared in accordance with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016).
- We consider our other duties under the Code and planning guidance (2020/21), as and when required, including:
  - Supporting Audit Scotland in Section 22 reporting.
  - Providing regular updates to Audit Scotland to share awareness of current issues
  - Notifying Audit Scotland of any cases of money laundering or fraud
  - Review of Central Government Technical guidance prior to issue by Audit Scotland

## Internal control environment

Throughout our audit planning and fieldwork we will continue to develop our understanding of the overall control environment (design) as related to the financial statements. In particular we will:

- Consider procedures and controls around related parties, journal entries and other key entity level controls.
- Perform walkthrough procedures on key controls around identified risk areas including: Requisition funding; material expenditure streams; journal entries; and, material areas of management estimate including depreciation.
- Our focus is design and implementation of controls only. We do place reliance on controls when it comes to our year end financial statement audit work.

## Other material balances and transactions

Under International Standards on Auditing, "irrespective of the assessed risks of material misstatement, the auditor shall design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transactions, account balance and disclosure". All other material balances and transaction streams will therefore be audited. However, the procedures will not be as extensive as the procedures adopted for the risks identified in this report.

## Going concern assessment

As auditors, we are required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding, and conclude on:

- whether a material uncertainty related to going concern exists; and
- the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements.

The Public Audit Forum has been designated by the Financial Reporting Council as a "SORP-making body" for the purposes of maintaining and updating Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (PN 10). It is intended that auditors of public sector bodies read PN 10 in conjunction with (ISAs) (UK).

PN 10 has recently been updated to take account of revisions to ISAs (UK), including ISA (UK) 570 on going concern. The revisions to PN 10 in respect of going concern are important.

In particular, PN 10 allows auditors to apply a 'continued provision of service approach' to auditing going concern, where appropriate. In considering going concern we will refer to Audit Scotland's Going Concern publication (December 2020).

Within our wider scope work we will conclude on SWestrans' arrangements to ensure financial sustainability.

## Wider Scope Audit – smaller body arrangements

For smaller bodies the Audit Scotland Code of Practice permits auditors to not apply the full wider scope audit. In our judgement, taking into account the nature of SWestrans' operating activity and income and expenditure streams, we feel it is appropriate to continue to treat you as a smaller body under the Code. However, in accordance with Audit Scotland planning guidance, we will update our understanding of your arrangements for ensuring financial sustainability as well as your governance arrangements in place to support disclosures contained within the annual governance statement included within your financial statements.

## Accounting estimates

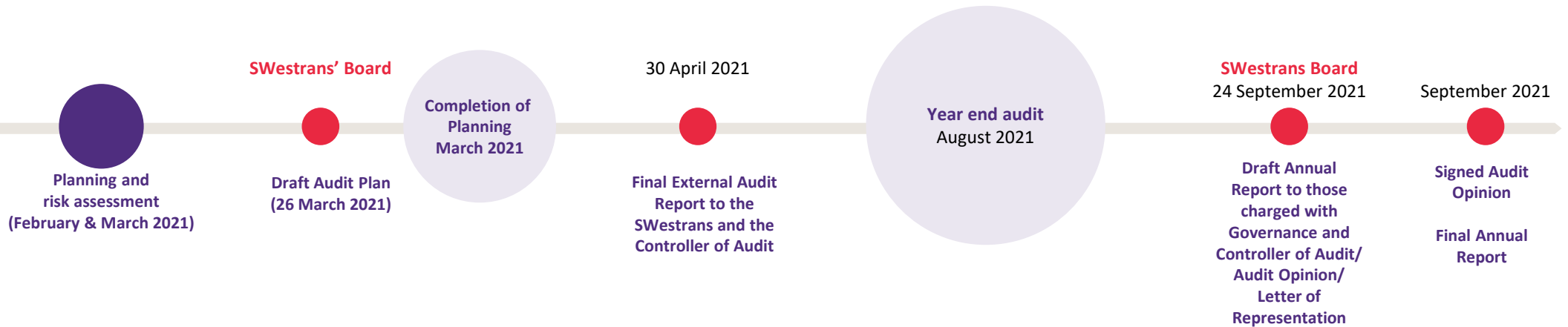
Under ISA (UK) 540 auditors are required to understand and assess an entity's internal controls over accounting estimates, including:

- The nature and extent of oversight and governance over management's financial reporting process relevant to accounting estimates;
- How management identifies the need for and applies specialised skills or knowledge;
- How the entity's risk management process identifies and addresses risks relating to accounting estimates;
- The entity's information system;
- The entity's control activities in relation to accounting estimates; and
- How management reviews the outcomes of previous accounting estimates.

To ensure compliance with this revised auditing standard, we will be requesting further information from management and those charged with governance during our audit. Based on our knowledge of the SWestrans we have identified limited material accounting estimates for which this is likely to apply such as depreciation.

Further detail is set out in [Appendix 4](#)

# Audit timeline



## Client responsibilities

Where clients do not deliver to the timetable agreed, we need to ensure that this does not impact on audit quality or absorb a disproportionate amount of time, thereby disadvantaging other clients. Where additional resources are needed to complete the audit due to a client not meeting their obligations we are not able to guarantee the delivery of the audit to the agreed timescales. In addition, delayed audits will incur additional audit fees.

## Our requirements

To minimise the risk of a delayed audit, you need to ensure that you:

- produce draft financial statements of good quality by the deadline you have agreed with us, including all notes, the Annual Report and the Annual Governance Statement
- ensure that good quality working papers are available at the start of the audit, in accordance with the working paper requirements schedule that we have shared with you
- ensure that the agreed data reports are available to us at the start of the audit and are reconciled to the values in the accounts, in order to facilitate our selection of samples for testing
- ensure that all appropriate staff are available (or as otherwise agreed) over the planned period of the audit
- respond promptly and adequately to audit queries.



# Quality and adding value through the audit

Our overall approach for the audit is clear and upfront communication, founded on our public sector credentials and a methodology to ensure delivery of a quality audit.

The diagram opposite summarises our key approach to adding value to you throughout our audit.

Our methodology is risk based. We comply with Auditing standards and as a Firm we are regulated by the FRC. We taking findings on audit quality seriously and continue to invest as a Firm through our audit investment plan. The audit investment plan is supported by a specific national Public Sector audit plan.

We comply with Audit Scotland's quality arrangements including submitting an annual quality report over our Audit Scotland portfolio. As part of Audit Scotland's quality arrangements, ICAS review our work on a rotational basis. Audit Scotland's quality report can be found at [www.audit-scotland.co.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.co.uk)

Our wider quality arrangements are set out in our annual transparency reports which are available on our website ([www.granthornton.co.uk](http://www.granthornton.co.uk)).

## Project management

- Use of Inflo to track progress and deliverables throughout the audit
- Clear roles and ownership of responsibilities within our team
- Clarity over expectations and timetable
- Track record delivering public sector audits on behalf of Audit Scotland

## Clear reporting

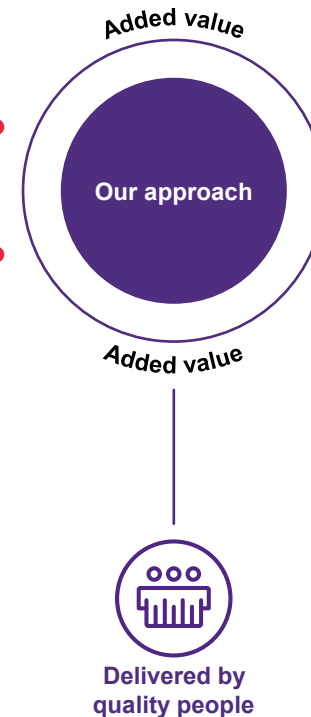
- Clear audit outputs at planning and within our final Annual Report
- Practical, risk based, recommendations for you to take forward
- Our judgements and conclusions set out transparently and in clear language
- Communication to SWestrans' meetings to present our findings and support wider dialogue

## Pragmatism and early attention of issues

- Accessible and proactive engagement team
- Working with you to reach the right solution – flexing the workplan, recognising Covid-19
- Audit director takes ultimate decision on technical matters, consulting with our technical experts where required

## Public sector understanding

- Using our public sector insight to inform our audit and identify improvements you could make
- Experienced audit team including an audit team who specialise in public sector audits.



# Audit Fees

Across all sectors and firms, the FRC has set out its expectation of improved financial reporting from organisations and the need for auditors to demonstrate increased scepticism and challenge and to undertake additional and more robust testing. This includes the revised ISA (UK) 540 (revised): Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures.

As a firm, we are absolutely committed to meeting the expectations of the FRC over audit quality and public sector financial reporting. This includes, for Audit Scotland contracts, meeting the expectations of the Audit Scotland Quality Team and the ICAS quality framework.

## Relevant professional standards

Audit Scotland set the baseline audit fee. We can increase the fee, from the baseline, for the inclusion of additional risks, new technical matters or specific client matters identified. We are required to consider all relevant professional standards, including paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the FRC's [Ethical Standard \(revised 2019\)](#) which state that the Engagement Lead must set a fee sufficient to enable the resourcing of the audit with partners and staff with appropriate time and skill to deliver an audit to the required professional and Ethical standards.

## Audit fees for 2020/21

Service	Fees £
External Auditor Remuneration	8,900
Pooled Costs	850
Contribution to Audit Scotland costs	-
Contribution to Performance Audit and Best Value	490
<b>2020/21 Fee</b>	<b>10,240</b>

## Additional Fees (Non-Audit Services)

Service	Fees £
At planning stage we confirm there are no non-audit fees	Nil

## Fee assumptions

In setting the fee for 2020/21 we have assumed that the SWestrans will:

- prepare a good quality set of accounts, supported by comprehensive and well-presented working papers which are ready at the start of the audit
- provide appropriate analysis, support and evidence to support all critical judgements and significant judgements made in preparing the financial statements
- provide early notice of proposed complex or unusual transactions which could have a material impact on the financial statements.

# Independence

## Auditor independence

Ethical Standards and ISA (UK) 260 require us to give you timely disclosure of all significant facts and matters that may bear upon the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm or covered persons relating to our independence.

We encourage you to contact us to discuss these or any other independence issues with us.

We will also discuss with you if we make additional significant judgements surrounding independence matters.

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention.

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard (Revised 2019) and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Ethical Standard.

Our team complete annual fit and proper declarations including independence confirmations on a client by client basis as well as completing timesheets. The work of our Ethics team is overseen by the Ethics partner and all staff undergo ethics training in year.



# Appendices

# Responsibilities

The Code sets out auditor responsibilities and responsibilities of the audited body. Key responsibilities are summarised below. Please refer to the Code for further detail.

## SWestrans Board

Responsibilities include:

- Preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view
- Maintaining accounting records
- Establishing and maintaining systems of internal control
- Effective internal controls including controls to achieve objectives and secure value for money
- Establish arrangements for proper conduct of affairs including legality of transactions
- Arrangements for prevention and detection of fraud, error, irregularity, bribery and corruption
- Appropriate corporate governance arrangements and arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of governance

## External Audit

Responsibilities include:

- Comply with professional engagement and ethical standards
- Provide an ISA compliant audit and opinion on the financial statements
- Demonstrate compliance with the wider scope public audit as detailed in the Code and applicable guidance
- Liaise with and notify Audit Scotland when circumstances indicate a statutory report may be required. This includes sharing awareness of current and/or sector issues
- Notify Audit Scotland of any known or suspected frauds greater than £5,000
- Contribute to relevant performance studies (as set out in the planning guidance for the year)



# Communication

ISA (UK) 260 as well as other ISAs set out prescribed matters which we are required to report to those charged with governance (the SWestrans Board). Our reporting responsibilities are set out below. We communicate all matters affecting the audit on a timely basis, to management and/or the Board.

Our communication plan	Audit Plan	Annual Report (considered our ISA 260 Report)
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	•	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit, including planning assessment of audit risks and wider scope risks	•	
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	•	•
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence. Relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence. Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged. Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence	•	•
Significant matters in relation to going concern	•	•
Views about the qualitative aspects of SWestrans' accounting and financial reporting practices, including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures		•
Significant findings from the audit		•
Significant matters and issues arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		•
Significant difficulties encountered during the audit		•
Significant deficiencies in internal control identified during the audit		•
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		•
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		•
Non-compliance with laws and regulations		•
Unadjusted misstatements and material disclosure omissions		•
Expected modifications to the auditor's report or emphasis of matter		•

# Fraud responsibilities

The term fraud refers to intentional acts of one or more individuals amongst management, those charged with governance, employees or third parties involving the use of deception that result in a material misstatement of the financial statements. In assessing risks, the audit team is alert to the possibility of fraud at SWestrans.

As part of our audit work we are responsible for:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud in particular in relations to management override of controls.
- leading a discussion with those charged of governance (the SWestrans Board) on their view of fraud. Typically we do this when presenting our audit plan and in the form of management and those charged with governance questionnaires.
- designing and implementing appropriate audit testing to gain assurance over our assessed risks of fraud
- responding appropriately to any fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

As auditors we obtain reasonable assurance the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

We will obtain annual representation from management regarding managements assessment of fraud risk, including internal controls, and any known or suspected fraud or misstatement. We also make inquires of internal audit around internal control, fraud risk and any known or suspected frauds in year.

## Anti-Money Laundering Arrangements

As required under the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds Regulations 2017 there is an obligation on the Auditor General (as set out in the planning guidance) to inform the National Crime Agency if he knows or suspects that any person has engaged in money laundering or terrorist financing. Should we be informed of any instances of money laundering at SWestrans we will report to the Auditor General as required by Audit Scotland.

The primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with management and those charged with governance including establishing and maintaining internal controls over the reliability of financial reporting effectiveness and efficiency of operations and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

It is the SWestrans' responsibility to establish arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularity. This includes:

- developing, promoting and monitoring compliance with standing orders and financial instructions
- developing and implementing strategies to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularity
- receiving and investigating alleged breaches of proper standards of financial conduct or fraud and irregularity.

Throughout the audit we work with the SWestrans to review specific areas of fraud risk, including the operation of key financial controls. We also examine the policies in place, strategies, standing orders and financial instructions to ensure that they provide a strong framework of internal control.

All suspected frauds and/or irregularities over £5,000 are reported to Audit Scotland by us as your auditors on a quarterly basis.

# Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures (ISA 540 revised)

## Introduction

Under ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018) auditors are required to understand and assess an entity's internal controls over accounting estimates, including:

- The nature and extent of oversight and governance over management's financial reporting process relevant to accounting estimates;
- How management identifies the need for and applies specialised skills or knowledge related to accounting estimates;
- How the entity's risk management process identifies and addresses risks relating to accounting estimates;
- The entity's information system as it relates to accounting estimates;
- The entity's control activities in relation to accounting estimates; and
- How management reviews the outcomes of previous accounting estimates.

As part of this process auditors also need to obtain an understanding of the role of those charged with governance, which is particularly important where the estimates have high estimation uncertainty, or require significant judgement. At our audit planning stage we have not identified any material accounting estimates or judgements but will consider these throughout our audit.

Specifically do **SWestrans** members:

- Understand the characteristics of the methods and models used to make the accounting estimates and the risks related to them;
- Oversee management's process for making accounting estimates, including the use of models, and the monitoring activities undertaken by management; and
- Evaluate how management made the accounting estimates?

## Additional information that will be required for our March 2021 audits

To ensure our compliance with this revised auditing standard, we will be requesting further information from management and those charged with governance during our audit for the year ended 31 March 2021. Based on our knowledge of the SWestrans we have identified limited material accounting estimates for which this is likely to apply including depreciation.

### The SWestrans' Information systems

In respect of the SWestrans' information systems we are required to consider how management identifies the methods, assumptions and source data used for each material accounting estimate and the need for any changes to these. This includes how management selects, or designs, the methods, assumptions and data to be used and applies the methods used in the valuations.

When the models used include increased complexity or subjectivity, as is the case for many valuation models, auditors need to understand and assess the controls in place over the models and the data included therein. Where adequate controls are not in place we may need to report this as a significant control deficiency and this could affect the amount of detailed substantive testing required during the audit.

If management has changed the method for making an accounting estimate we will need to fully understand management's rationale for this change. Any unexpected changes are likely to raise the audit risk profile of this accounting estimate and may result in the need for additional audit procedures.



## Estimation uncertainty

Under ISA (UK) 540 we are required to consider the following:

- How management understands the degree of estimation uncertainty related to each accounting estimate; and
- How management address this estimation uncertainty when selecting their point estimate.

For example, how management identified and considered alternative, methods, assumptions or source data that would be equally valid under the financial reporting framework, and why these alternatives were rejected in favour of the point estimate used.

The revised standard includes increased emphasis on the importance of the financial statement disclosures. Under ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018), auditors are required to assess whether both the accounting estimates themselves and the related disclosures are reasonable.

Where there is a material uncertainty, that is where there is a significant risk of a material change to the estimated carrying value of an asset or liability within the next year, there needs to be additional disclosures. Note that not all material estimates will have a material uncertainty and it is also possible that an estimate that is not material could have a risk of material uncertainty.

Where there is material estimation uncertainty, we would expect the financial statement disclosures to detail:

- What the assumptions and uncertainties are;
- How sensitive the assets and liabilities are to those assumptions, and why;
- The expected resolution of the uncertainty and the range of reasonably possible outcomes for the next financial year; and
- An explanation of any changes made to past assumptions if the uncertainty is unresolved.

## Planning enquiries

As part of our planning risk assessment procedures have made formal inquiries of management. We would appreciate a prompt response to these enquiries in due course.

## Further information

Further details on the requirements of ISA (UK) 540 (Revised December 2018) can be found in the auditing standard on the Financial Reporting Council's website:

[https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/Ofa69c03-49ec-49ae-a8c9-cc7a2b65382a/ISA-\(UK\)-540\\_Revised-December-2018\\_final.pdf](https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/Ofa69c03-49ec-49ae-a8c9-cc7a2b65382a/ISA-(UK)-540_Revised-December-2018_final.pdf)



## DRAFT REVENUE EXPENDITURE BUDGET 2021/22

### 1. Reason for Report

To seek agreement to the draft revenue budget for the financial year 2021/22

### 2. Background

2.1 The Scottish Government has offered £259,250 revenue funding for 2021/22, the same level as applied since 2011/12.

2.2 Funding of £100,000 is also provided in kind by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

2.3 Dumfries and Galloway Council at its meeting of 4 March 2021, agreed its budget for 2021/22. At this meeting there were no changes to the Swestrans Funding identified, therefore the revenue budget for SWestrans will remain at the same level as previously at £4,308,789.

### 3. Key Issues

3.1 The total available draft revenue funding of £4,308,789 is as indicated in Table 1.

Item	Cost £
Staff Costs	110,848
Supplies & Services	960
Administration Costs	20,193
Procured Services	4,128,038
Central Support	48,750
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,308,789</b>

Table 1 – 2021/22 Revenue Funding

4. Implications	
<b>Financial</b>	It is intended to provide monitoring reports to Board meetings on a regular basis throughout financial year 2021/22
<b>Policy</b>	No policy implications from this report
<b>Equalities</b>	No equalities implications from this report
<b>Climate Change</b>	No climate change implications from this report
<b>Risk Management</b>	Revenue budget relates to two known risks: R06 – Overspend R07 – Revenue funding

### 5. Consultation

The Proper Officer (Finance) has been consulted and is in agreement with the terms of this report.

**6. Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members of the Board agree the draft revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out in Table 1.

Janet Sutton - Report Author  
Tel:01387 260105

Date of Report: 05 March 2021  
File Ref:

Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick  
Lead Officer  
The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership  
Cargen Tower  
Cargen Business Park  
Dumfries  
DG1 8PN

## DRAFT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2021/22 – 2023/24

### 1. Reason for Report

This report provides the Board with information on the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24, a community-led scheme seeking funding support and a review of Capital funding by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

### 2. Background

2.1 At its meeting on 4 March 2021, Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed a balanced budget. At this meeting there were no changes to the Swestrans Capital Funding identified.

2.2 The capital budget for 2021/22 to 2023/24 is within an indicative 10 year Capital Investment Strategy. The draft funding allocation for SWestrans is £800K for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

2.3 The funding allocation for 2021/22 does not include slippage (£250K) as reported to the Board at its meeting on 20 November 2020 at this stage. This was reported to Dumfries and Galloway Council's Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee on 11 February 2021.

2.4 At its meeting on 29 June 2018, the Board received a report on opportunities to develop short path links between communities to enable functional walking and cycling trips for everyday activities. On 28 January 2021, the Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust (KPT) submitted a request for match funding to enable progress with their community-led active travel path between Penpont and Thornhill.

2.5 At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee of Dumfries and Galloway Council considered a report on the Further Development of the Capital Investment Strategy which included information on a review of the structure of asset class capital programmes. SWestrans capital funding is one of the asset classes included in this review.

### 3. Key Points – Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24

3.1 The draft capital programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24 is detailed in Table 1:

<b><u>SWestrans Capital Programme 2021/22 – 2023/24</u></b>	<b>Total Budget Allocated 2021/22</b>	<b>Total Budget Allocated 2022/23</b>	<b>Total Budget Allocated 2023/24</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
Local Bus Network	270,000	270,000	400,000	940,000
Rail Station Parking	300,000	300,000	0	600,000
Active Travel Network	230,000	230,000	400,000	860,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>2,400,000</b>

Table 1 – SWestrans amended Capital Programme 2021/22 – 2023/24

3.2 Each of the elements of the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/22 is discussed briefly below and it is anticipated, at this stage, that full expenditure can be achieved in the coming financial year:

- Local Bus Network – purchase of 1 Ultra Low Emission low floor buses to replace an existing leased bus asset. The agreed bus shelter renewal/replacement programme and associated works.
- Rail Station Parking – the phases of new parking development at Lockerbie Station will continue within the 2021/22 financial year. It is hoped that the £300K allocation will be supplemented by the agreed £250K slippage from 2020/21 following the Council’s review of capital spending.
- Active Travel Network – It is anticipated that additional grant funding will be available from the Scottish Government in 2021/22 similar to that provided since 2018/19 and this will require match funding of £130K from SWestrans. This leaves a funding allocation of £100K available to develop and identify opportunities to assist in improving local walking and cycling schemes across the region including development of short path links between communities.

A request has been received from KPT for future funding commitment towards an active travel link from Penpont to Thornhill which is discussed in more detail in section 4.

#### Future years funding needs

3.3 As indicated in paragraph 2.5, the Council is undertaking a review of the structure of asset class capital programmes. SWestrans annual capital funding, currently set at £800k, is one of the asset classes included in this review.

3.4 Following a number of national updates to plans/strategies including the Climate Change Plan, National Transport Strategy, Strategic Transport Projects Review and the National Planning Framework there is now a significant focus on interventions for transport and connectivity.

3.5 All future investment decisions will be assessed against their contributions to supporting these plans/strategies and how they impact against the wider climate change targets. Embedding the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and Sustainable Investment Hierarchy in decision making will be necessary to promote walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people.

3.6 Our region has adopted some of the most ambitious climate change targets in Scotland and all Community Planning Partners (inc. SWestrans) will need to identify and coordinate appropriate capital investment opportunities and programmes to achieve these aspirations.

3.7 SWestrans has through its capital programme provided significant investment in accessible buses, bus infrastructure and active travel infrastructure all of which sit high on the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy and support active and sustainable transport across the region.

3.8 We currently have 29 buses leased to operators to deliver our supported bus network. A summary of the vehicles including their registration year and estimated replacement year is shown below:

- 2010 – 5 buses (replacement due 22/23)
- 2011 – 2 buses (replacement due 23/24)
- 2012 – 5 buses (replacement due 24/25)
- 2013 – 3 buses (replacement due 25/26)
- 2015 – 7 buses (replacement due 27/28)
- 2017 – 3 buses (replacement due 29/30)
- 2019 – 2 buses (replacement due 31/32)
- 2020 – 2 buses (replacement due 32/33)

3.9 The timetable for the public sector vehicle fleet within the Climate Change Plan update is shown below:

- By 2024: the majority of new buses are zero emissions.
- By 2025: the need for any new petrol and diesel light commercial vehicles in public bodies phased out; and the delivery of the first Active Freeways; segregated active travel routes on main travel corridors.
- By 2030: the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans phased out; conditions created to phase out the need for all new petrol and diesel vehicles in Scotland's public sector fleet; and car kilometres reduced by 20%.

3.10 This creates significant challenges for SWestrans and our partners to achieve a replacement of our bus assets to meet this timetable. Particularly as our annual capital allocation is £800K and one full sized ultra-low emission bus currently costs in the region of £300K. A replacement programme would require 4 buses per year to be replaced each year from 2022 at an estimated cost of £1.2M per year.

3.11 The other key area of our capital delivery is active travel and our ability to bring significant investment through matching our budget allocation against national funding schemes. A 30% match brings 70% funding to our region and the benefit of this approach is shown clearly in the scheme development and request from KPT discussed in section 4 where a £0.5M local investment would elicit £1.3M external funding.

3.12 However, as also highlighted in section 4, we are constrained in meeting our active travel ambitions for linking communities across the region by the relatively low level of funding we are able to allocate at this time. The KPT work has indicated the likely level of support such a link would cost and there are a number of other such links in development. Therefore, an appropriate increase in annual spend on active travel is also considered to be an essential element to meet our climate change targets.

3.13 As indicated in Table 1, our active travel spend should be £400K per year from 2023/24. An appropriate enhancement would be to raise this to £600K per year.

3.14 The Council's review requested that information be gathered that will be used to help advise Council Members when considering future funding levels for asset

classes including the allocation of funding being carried forward from the current financial year. The review also included a section on 'Assessment of Required Annual Funding Level Going Forward – Bids'.

3.15 A response was required by 19 March 2021 and has been completed and returned by the Lead Officer. It takes cognisance of the future challenges identified in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.13 and has requested consideration of an increase in our core annual capital allocation from £800K to £1.8M from 2022/23.

3.16 The Board are asked to consider the elements discussed above on future spend and determine if any changes to the submitted request for an increase in core funding, as indicated in paragraph 3.15, should be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

#### 4. Key Points – Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust

4.1 As indicated in paragraph 2.4 the Board has received reports and updates on its ambition to assist communities develop and deliver short path links between communities to facilitate everyday walking and cycling.

4.2 SWestrans officers, in partnership with officers from Dumfries and Galloway Council, are assisting communities with bids to national funding streams such as the Sustrans Scotland and Transport Scotland's flagship active travel programme, Places for Everyone.

4.3 KPT have been at the forefront of this community-led approach since 2018 and are seeking to develop and deliver a path between Penpont and Thornhill. The commitment from Trust members has been an exemplar in community involvement and consultation for such a large and challenging Active Travel project. The project has now reached a point where a funding commitment of 30% is required to drawdown a 70% investment in the regions active travel network from Sustrans.

4.4 On 28 January 2021, KPT wrote to the Chair and Lead Officer seeking support from SWestrans and indicating that a similar request was being sent to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

4.5 KPT has been successful in receiving 100% funding to Stage 3: Developed Design this an advanced stage of design which has been developed by TP&E, the consultancy arm of Cycling Scotland. The Places for Everyone Fund has 5 stages (Stage 0: Strategic Definition; Stage 1: Preparation and Brief; Stage 2: Concept Design; **Stage 3: Developed Design**; Stage 4: Technical Design; Stage 5: Construction). The trust advises that there have had several meetings with officers in the Council and these suggest that the path and associated carriageway measures are fully in line with Council policies and practical objectives on the ground. Therefore, a planning application to Dumfries and Galloway Council is expected to be submitted in the near future.

4.6 KPT have also sourced 50% funding support from the Scottish Land Fund for the necessary land purchases to achieve a safe off-road path.



4.7 KPT is now seeking a commitment from prospective partners to assist with the funding of the construction of the path, preferably in time for them to move onto Stage 4 Technical Design (pre-construction) stage of the project in May to ensure they stay on schedule to begin Stage 5 Construction in the spring of 2022.

4.8 The construction costs are estimated at some £1.85 million including VAT which the KPT cannot reclaim (to be clarified by the Technical Design) of which Sustrans are likely to provide some £1.3 million (70%) and are therefore looking for a commitment to the remainder of the costs in order for Sustrans to accept an application to proceed to Stage 4 Technical Design which they would 100% fund.

#### High Level Assessment

4.9 KPT has provided an Options Appraisal and Concept Design report and developed design details for the full length of the proposed path, which also includes:

- Traffic calming measures on the outskirts of Penpont;
- Improvements to the carriageway at Burnhead;
- Improvements to kerbs and footways along the whole length of the path;
- The installation of pedestrian-controlled traffic lights at Nith Bridge;
- A new footway on the Thornhill side of Nith Bridge – to be built to adoptable standards; and
- A new crossing of the traffic triangle on Gill Road, on the outskirts of Thornhill.

4.10 The project aims to deliver 4km route between Penpont and Thornhill for residents and visitors to access services, including employment, education, health, tourism and retail. Currently the settlements are connected only by the A702, a rural 60mph road which has no footway provision and limited opportunity for footway development within the road corridor.

4.11 A feasibility study was undertaken in 2019 to review the potential and appetite for a route. The study identified that there was considerable local appetite for a route to be delivered to support locals in undertaking more active everyday journeys. The study also identified that although landownership would require to be formalised to allow the path to be built, there was landowner support for the concept of a path.

4.12 SWestrans officers are not qualified to undertake an assessment of the developed designs provided. However, it is our opinion that they do meet the stated objectives to provide a safe off-road active travel link between the communities with some significant interventions at the critical pinch-points along the route as indicated in paragraph 4.9.

4.13 In terms of policy fit for such active travel links, there have been a number of national publications which reference and support this approach. The Climate Change Update, National Transport Strategy 2 and STPR2 Phase 1 clearly emphasise the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy which prioritises the development and provision of active travel interventions and integration with public transport. Also, the Board has been clear that such ambitions from communities to improve safe active travel links between communities should be supported within the resources available.

### Funding

4.14 As indicated in section 3 of this report, SWestrans currently has a limited budget allocation of some £100K per year to support active travel improvements across the region. Therefore, any commitment to KPT requires to be within this overall allocation should the Board determine a wish to commit a contribution.

4.15 The request from KPT indicates that construction is planned from spring 2022, subject to them receiving the required commitment to the 30% match funding needed. Therefore, any funding committed would be from the 2022/23 financial year.

4.16 Sustrans will recognise either funding of this group or provision of parts of the infrastructure as standalone projects in a phased approach with partners as direct match funding. It is understood that indirect matching opportunities from other local authority active travel infrastructure will also be recognised.

4.17 This is the first community led project that has been successful in getting a project to the stage of detailed design and as such provides proof of concept for other such communities with similar ambitions across the region to leverage further outcomes-based investment locally from central funding sources.

4.18 It is considered that a funding commitment of at least £50K in 2021/22 and £50K in 2022/23 would be appropriate for SWestrans. The Board are asked to consider the information above and determine what level of funding support can be committed to assist in enabling this significant investment in our regions active travel infrastructure.

## **5. Key Points – Dumfries and Galloway Council Capital Financial Code**

5.1 At Dumfries and Galloway Council's Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee on 17 November 2020, Members agreed the implementation of a Capital Financial Code which is now an official Financial Code of the Council and published on the Council website.

5.2 As part of the Council's review of Financial Procedures and Procurement Standing Orders this Code had been operated on a trial basis during 2019/20 to ensure that there were no significant adverse impacts, primarily in relation to project delays. Following the trial period, the Capital Strategy Group and Strategic Asset Board reviewed the implications of the code, made some final amendments to the code and developed a final version which is now approved.

5.3 A key element of the code is to seek to clarify the level of delegated authority provided to officers when implementing capital investment decisions and to set out clear parameters beyond which further Member approval is required, for example where project costs or timings are likely to vary from the approved programmes initially agreed by Members. As part of this process, the relevant service committees and the SWestrans Board will be asked to further consider the delegated authority parameters for the individual asset class capital programmes alongside the detailed 3-year budget for 2021/22 to 2023/24'.

5.4 A draft 'Capital Investment Strategy Rules Practice Note – Variations to the Agreed SWestrans Asset Class' is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

5.5 Regular capital programme reports are brought to the Board throughout each financial year and these include variations for decision as appropriate. Therefore, officers would advise that no changes are needed to the current limits set at the 'Delegated Authority to Lead Officer, SWestrans' section. However, the Board are asked to review these limits and determine if they are appropriate.

## **6. Key Points – Dumfries and Galloway Council Asset Class Review**

6.1 As indicated in paragraph 2.5, Dumfries and Galloway Council is reviewing the structure of its asset class capital programmes. SWestrans capital funding is one of the asset classes included in this review.

6.2 Apart from the work discussed in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.16 to determine future spending needs it is also proposed to merge of the currently separate Fleet/Vehicles (£660K) and SWestrans (£800K) asset classes into a combined Transport asset class.

6.3 It is stated that this merger would allow the Communities Committee to consider the proportion of available funding to be invested between the Council's own fleet and the SWestrans capital programme. Similar to the SWestrans fleet, the Council's fleet will also require a significant increase in funding to meet the timetable for public sector vehicles with the Climate Change Plan update.

6.4 If this proposed merger is accepted then the Swestrans Board would be required to submit an annual bid/request for funding to the Communities Committee to allow this to be fully considered when the Committee considers the allocation of funding within the Transport asset class programme. This would also allow levels of progress/slippage against previously considered plans to be taken into account as part of this assessment.

6.5 As this is a significant change to existing practice, the Council is seeking the Boards view on this proposal and in particular the need to bid/request annually for a funding allocation rather than maintaining the status quo of an annual award of core funding.

6.6 Officers consider the requirement to bid for funding annually creates uncertainty and risks our ability to meet our required future capital needs as outlined in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.16. It is considered that a level of stable core funding is necessary particularly given the long lead times to purchase vehicles. However, an option that provides a level of core funding with an ability to bid into a combined Transport asset class would be an option but only if this combined asset class was sufficiently enhanced beyond the current £1.46M to meet both our and the Council's needs in relation to climate change targets.

6.7 The Board are asked to consider this proposal and determine a position which will then be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

<b>7. Implications</b>	
<b>Financial</b>	It is intended to bring regular reports to the Board on the progress with the capital programme.
<b>Policy</b>	No change in policy. This work fulfils SWestrans policy objectives.
<b>Equalities</b>	Provision of good quality infrastructure will enhance travel choice and experience for those with protected characteristics.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Provision of good quality infrastructure that enhances opportunity for increased uptake of active and sustainable travel will have a positive impact on climate change objectives.
<b>Risk Management</b>	Progression of the Capital Programme relates to two known risks: R02 – Public image. R04 – Capital Funding.

## **8. Recommendations**

Members of the Board are asked to:

- 8.1 agree the draft Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24 outlined in Table 1;
- 8.2 consider future years funding needs and determine if any changes to the submitted request for an increase in core funding, as indicated in paragraph 3.15, should be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council;
- 8.3 consider the information in section 4 of the report and determine what level of funding support can be committed to Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust;
- 8.4 review the limits at the 'Delegated Authority to Lead Officer, SWestrans' section of Appendix 1 and determine if they are appropriate; and
- 8.5 consider the proposal to merge Asset Classes, as highlighted in section 6 of the report, and determine a position which will then be intimated to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Douglas Kirkpatrick - Report Author Tel: 01387 260136	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN
Date of Report: 14 March 2021 File Ref: SW2/meetings/2021	

**Appendix 1** - Capital Investment Strategy Rules Practice Note – Variations to the Agreed SWestrans Asset Class

## Capital Investment Strategy Rules Practice Note – Variations to the Agreed SWestrans Asset Class

Project/Programme funding allocations within this asset class will be agreed by the SWestrans Board for the upcoming 3 year period on an annual rolling basis. Variations to approved funding allocations, beyond levels which may be approved under authority delegated to the Lead Officer, SWestrans, will require the following approvals:-

### Variations to Total Project/Programme Costs (Over and Underspend)

- Where it is identified that a project/programme is likely to exceed the agreed budget then this must be reported to the SWestrans Board in advance of the increased spend being committed/incurred.
- Where it is identified that a project can be delivered at a cost below the agreed budget level then the resultant underspend should be returned for reallocation by the SWestrans Board.
- Where the nature/details of a project requires a material revision (eg. increase in scope) then this must be reported to the SWestrans Board in advance of the increased spend being committed/incurred.

### Variations to Timing of Project/Programme Costs (Acceleration and Slippage)

- Where it is identified that net spending on a project/programme is likely to vary from the agreed annual profile (ie. variation to timing of spend but not to total project/programme costs) then this must be reported to the SWestrans Board in advance of a commitment to the revised spend profile. This covers both project/programme acceleration and slippage.
- Where a project within this asset class has a duration of more than 3 years then the total financial profile of the project must be reported to the Swestrans Board when the initial 3 year budget is agreed.

### Virement Between Approved Project/Programme Budgets

Any virement of funding between project/programme funding allocations must be reported to the Swestrans Board in advance of the virement being undertaken.

### Delegated Authority to Lead Officer, SWestrans

The Lead Officer, SWestrans may approve variations to individual project/programme funding allocations within the following limits:

Overspends	£25k or 10% (whichever is the greater)
Acceleration	£25k or 10% (whichever is the greater)*
Slippage	£25k or 10% (whichever is the greater)
Virement	£25k or 10% (whichever is the greater)

\*In agreeing project/programme acceleration the Lead Officer will ensure that overall acceleration across the asset class does not exceed the delegated limits agreed Finance, Procurement and Transformation Committee.

In all cases where delegated authority is used, variations to project/programme funding allocations will be subsequently reported to the SWestrans Board.

It should be noted that for individual projects with a value of £500k or more then an individual budget monitoring template is required to be completed in respect of the project as part of the budget monitoring process.

As part of the quarterly budget monitoring process the 3 year agreed budget should be continually updated to take account of projected overspends, acceleration, slippage and virements.

## EQUALITIES REPORTING

### 1. Reason for Report

To advise Members of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations.

### 2. Background

2.1 SWestrans is a listed public body under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations, and as such we have a duty to publish an Equalities Mainstreaming Report, attached as **Appendix 1**, and a new set of Equality Outcomes, every 4 years, to enable us to better perform the Equality Duty. We are also required to provide a progress update on the Equality Outcomes set every 2 years. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic all listed bodies were permitted, by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, to postpone publishing reports that were due in April 2020 to 30 April 2021.

2.2 The General Equality Duty requires public authorities to, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.3 The public sector equality duty covers the following protected characteristics - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### 3. Key Points – Equalities Outcomes

3.1 Under the Equalities Act 2010, all public authorities are required to implement and publish Equality Outcomes and to report on progress made towards achieving these outcomes.

3.2 As required we have been developing a new set of equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025. These draft outcomes are:

- EO1: Everyone will be able to easily access and understand the local bus service information they need.
- EO2: Public transport services are more flexible to meet the identified travel needs of those who need them most.
- EO3: Access and affordability issues are reduced through new transport solutions developed with partners.
- EO4: Our work is informed by a greater understanding of the transport and travel needs, barriers faced and experiences of people with protected characteristics.

3.3 A report outlining these draft equality outcomes in more detail is attached as **Appendix 2**. The Board are asked to review and agree these draft equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025.

<b>5. Implications</b>	
<b>Financial</b>	There are no financial implications.
<b>Policy</b>	There are no policy implications.
<b>Equalities</b>	Our statutory duties in respect of equalities are the subject of this report.
<b>Climate Change</b>	There are no climate change implications.
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no risk management implications.

## **6. Recommendations**

Members of the Board are asked to:

- 6.1 note SWestrans duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations;
- 6.2 note the SWestrans Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021 as shown at Appendix 1; and
- 6.3 review and agree the draft SWestrans Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025 as shown in Appendix 2.

Report Author: Kirsty Dunsmore / Josef Coombey	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN
Date of Report: 11 March 2021 File Ref: SW2/Meetings/2021	

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - SWestrans Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021
- Appendix 2 - SWestrans Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025





# **Equalities Mainstreaming Report**

**March 2021**

## 1. Introduction

The Public Sector Equalities Duty was established by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is referred to as the General Equality Duty. Specific duties were created by secondary legislation in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The General Equality Duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people;
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate on public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics The Equality Act 2010 refers to are:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex (Gender)
- Gender reassignment (Transgender identity)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

As a statutory Regional Transport Partnership SWestrans is a listed public body in The Equality Act 2010 and is subject to The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

The purpose of the specific duties in Scotland is to help those authorities listed in the Regulations in their performance of the General Equality Duty.

The specific duties require a listed public authority to:

- Report on mainstreaming the general equality duty;
- Publish equality outcomes and report progress;
- Assess new or revised policies and practices;
- Review existing policies and practices;

- Gather, use and publish employee information;
- Publish gender pay gap information;
- Publish an equal pay statement;
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.

SWestrans is committed to fulfilling the duties set out by The Equality Act 2010 and reporting on the areas which are relevant to the organisation as required by the Specific Duties 2012. To advance our ability to meet the requirements of the Act in December 2020, SWestrans officers took part in a virtual workshop with the other Regional Transport Partnerships and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. This session was useful for the RTPs to share information on equalities issues in their areas and discuss ways in which equality outcomes can be adopted to tackle discrimination and promote mainstreaming equalities in our day to day business.

## **2. RTP Equalities Duty**

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 placed a duty on Scottish Ministers to create Regional Transport Partnerships covering the whole of Scotland. SWestrans is one of seven Partnerships and covers an area contiguous within the boundaries of Dumfries and Galloway Council. The Partnership Board consists of five Councillor members and two external members, one from South of Scotland Enterprise and one from NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

A number of individuals and representatives with a variety of interests have been appointed as Observers to the Board, including diversity groups as well as the transport sector.

The Board is supported by SWestrans Officers, namely, Lead Officer, Governance Officer, Finance Officer and 2 Policy and Projects Officers. SWestrans does not directly employ any staff instead staff are employed on its behalf by Dumfries and Galloway Council, and they are therefore subject to Dumfries and Galloway Council policies and procedures. SWestrans is therefore exempt from the specific duties detailed in The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 in relation to employee information and pay. SWestrans has a responsibility to satisfy itself that Dumfries and Galloway Council is meeting the public sector equality duties in relation to employment on its behalf. SWestrans has determined that Dumfries and Galloway Council has a published Equalities Scheme in place.

As a listed authority SWestrans is required to publish a report on the progress it has made to make the general equality duty integral to the exercise of its functions, in order to better perform that duty. For this reporting cycle the mainstreaming report must be published no later than 30 April 2021 and subsequently at intervals of not more than two years.

SWestrans is also required to publish a set of equality outcomes which will enable the organisation to better perform the general equality duty, by no later

than 30 April 2021. Subsequent progress reports on the equality outcomes set should be published at two year intervals.

We have set new equality outcomes for the period 2021-2025. These are-

EO1: Everyone will be able to easily access and understand the local bus service information they need.

EO2: Public transport services are more flexible to meet the identified travel needs of those who need them most.

EO3: Access and affordability issues are reduced through new transport solutions developed with partners.

EO4: Our work is informed by a greater understanding of the transport and travel needs, barriers faced and experiences of people with protected characteristics.

We have developed these equality outcomes based on transport policy and evidence of national and local transport inequality and believe that fulfilling these outcomes can better help us to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and mainstream equalities into the work that we do.

### **3. Mainstreaming the Equality Duty**

#### **3.1 Regional Transport Strategy**

One of the main functions of RTPs is to develop a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). In developing and delivering the RTS, working with statutory and other key stakeholders, SWestrans seeks to ensure that the connectivity and accessibility needs of all sectors of society and communities are recognised and addressed. SWestrans RTS is due to be renewed in 2021. During the development of the RTS particular focus will be given to consultation with a variety of stakeholders prior to the new strategy being finalised and published.

The current RTS which was published in 2008 is founded on the concept of the Sustainability Triangle, recognising that economic, environmental and social development are mutually dependent, and that progress towards sustainability in each policy element is required if sustainable development overall is to be made real.

Our vision is a transport system for the South West of Scotland that delivers the internal and external connectivity required to sustain and enhance the region's economy and communities whilst minimising the impact of transport on the environment. The set of projects proposed in the Strategy is closely aligned to objectives and strategic outcomes that were set out by the Scottish Government at the time of writing the 2008 RTS. The five high level objectives for transport identified are:

- Promoting economic growth;
- Promoting social inclusion;
- Protecting the environment and improving health;
- Improving safety of journeys;
- Improving integration.

These will be reviewed as part of the 2021 RTS renewal but we will continue to ensure that all protected characteristics are taken into account to allow for non-discriminatory and inclusive objectives for public transport in the region.

We are committed to contributing to the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) priority to reduce inequality and the associated outcomes to ensure everyone in Scotland will share in the benefits of a modern and accessible transport system that:

- Will provide fair access to services we need;
- Will be easy to use for all;
- Will be affordable for all.

### **3.2 Impact Assessments**

SWestrans has adopted the Impact Assessment Toolkit developed by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The impact assessment tool helps us to check whether our policies and practices are fair and inclusive.

An impact assessment must be completed when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, making major decisions (including financial decisions). It gives community representatives, diversity groups and other interested parties the opportunity to participate in decision making that affects them.

The Impact Assessment Toolkit is available on our website

[www.swestrans.org.uk](http://www.swestrans.org.uk)

### **3.3 Operations**

SWestrans is responsible for procuring socially necessary local bus services across the region, these services are delivered by a number of bus operators. SWestrans has a responsibility to satisfy itself that operators who deliver services on behalf of SWestrans meet the requirements of the public sector equalities duties.

Operators are themselves subject to the general requirements of the Equality Acts, both as service delivery organisations and as employers.

When tendering for services SWestrans has access to support provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council's Procurement Team. SWestrans will include terms in contract specification documents requiring conformance with equalities legislation and the equalities aspirations of SWestrans.

### 3.4 Examples of mainstreaming activities

#### *Functions*

- All Board meeting venues are accessible and access issues are considered. Currently Board meetings are being held virtually via MS Teams due to the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Engagement with diversity groups is facilitated through observers to the Board.
- All Board reports are published on our website.

#### *Policy and strategy*

- Strategy and Policies have been subject to Impact Assessment.
- The new Regional Transport Strategy will undergo an Impact Assessment.
- Dumfries and Galloway Councils Impact Assessment Toolkit has been adopted.

#### *Projects*

- All SWestrans projects comply with the General Equality Duty.

#### *Operations*

- All local bus assets are fully accessible for people with a physical impairment.
- Accessible buses are specified on all contracted services.
- When tendering for services SWestrans is responsible for meeting the Duty and in doing so includes terms in contracts requiring conformance with equalities legislation.
- Developing a Community Transport Public Social Partnership to enable a move towards more demand responsive transport across the region to ensure everyone has suitable access to public transport.

## 4. Conclusion

SWestrans acknowledges the importance of mainstreaming the Equalities Act 2010 and the Equalities Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 in our day to day business. We will do this by continuing the mainstreaming activities outlined in this report and working to achieve the equality outcomes set for 2021-2025.

## South West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWestrans)

### **DRAFT** Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

SWestrans is the Regional Transport Partnership (RTP) for the South West of Scotland and was established by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, which created seven RTPs in Scotland. It covers the same area as Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

The Partnership Board includes members nominated by Dumfries and Galloway Council, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, and South of Scotland Enterprise. It has a wide range of strategy and policy responsibilities relating to transport, as well as a number of operational responsibilities, primarily supporting socially necessary bus services and assisting with the delivering of school transport with Dumfries and Galloway Council.

We are committed to contributing to the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) priority to reduce inequality and the associated outcomes to ensure everyone in Scotland will share in the benefits of a modern and accessible transport system that:

- Will provide fair access to services we need
- Will be easy to use for all
- Will be affordable for all

To ensure that equality issues are fully addressed, this outcome report sets out the range of equalities issues facing SWestrans and its operations, the outcomes that we have set and the actions to be taken to meet these outcomes.

### Issue – Bus publicity and journey information

Evidence shows that those with protected characteristics are more likely to use and rely on public transport, especially bus services. Communicating when services are scheduled for, where services are (real time passenger information) and what safety and accessibility measures are in place on these services are all imperative for confidence in the public transport network.

The frequency and nature of the changes made to local bus services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a variety of issues with how we currently communicate service information and timetables to the public.

The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), when addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equalities and human rights, shared that there has been a lack of information and advice about availability of public transport and assistance. Disabled people and/or older people with mobility needs have found the significant reduction in public transport services to be particularly difficult to deal with and often do not have access to reliable and accurate information when they are trying to make travel plans. Furthermore, a recent Disability Equality Scotland (DES) poll shows that people did not know what to do or what services were/are in place.

Whilst these issues have been exacerbated by circumstances in the last year, they existed prior to the pandemic. The Bus Passenger Survey for the South West of Scotland, undertaken by Transport Focus in 2018, showed a decline in passenger satisfaction in bus publicity. These results reflected the removal of the limited real-time information that was previously in place, the decrease in printed timetables, and the increase in passengers using mobile technology to access service information.

As we continue through, and emerge from, the pandemic, there is a need to ensure that our information is regularly updated as travel guidance and services change and that this information is available to all. Providers are increasingly relying on the provision of service information through digital means. This excludes those disabled people or older people who may be less likely to have access to or the skills and confidence to use digital technology and those who cannot afford to be digitally connected. This is an issue likely to be experienced in our region where those using the national concessionary card make up a high proportion of local bus patronage.

We need to improve our understanding of the barriers in accessing information, improve our processes to accommodate people who experience these barriers and promote these. Access to public transport information in a variety of languages and formats is available on request, however this offer has not been adequately publicised and is therefore not utilised.



Inequality	The communication needs of different protected characteristics need to be more considered. Too often people do not have the information required, in the right format, to plan and undertake their journey.
Equality outcome 1	Everyone will be able to easily access and understand the local bus service information they need.
Protected Characteristics Groups Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Race</li> </ul>
General equality duty	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
Link to strategic priority	Contributes to the achievement of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) priority to reduce inequality and outcomes that transport will be easy to use for all and provide fair access to services.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve at-stop bus publicity (as well as improving at-stop facilities)</li> <li>• Improve printed publicity</li> <li>• Improve digital publicity</li> <li>• Improve communications and language to ensure that our information and services are accessible</li> <li>• Engagement with stakeholder groups to understand information gaps</li> <li>• Adopt additional methods of informing our communities</li> </ul>

## Issue – Public Transport Provision

Evidence shows that a lack of public transport services and options disproportionately impacts on disabled people, women and the young and old.

This impact is compounded in rural areas, such as Dumfries and Galloway, where the current level of public transport provision, including accessible transport, and connectivity issues can act as barriers. These barriers contribute to a range of socioeconomic issues including difficulty accessing suitable employment, education and training opportunities and healthcare; and increasing social isolation, out-migration of young people and 'forced car ownership' (transport poverty).

The wider public transport sector faces great uncertainty due to the impact of low patronage associated with COVID-19 restrictions, and the long-term risk that travel demand and behaviour will be sustained. In terms of the bus network within Dumfries and Galloway, this poses a significant challenge as provision across the region was already a complex fragile balancing act in which the inter-dependent factors of commercial local bus, supported local bus and school transport all inter-connect and cannot be sustained individually. There is a real risk of service reduction across our local public transport network.

Retaining transport links is essential as they are often a lifeline service for many for our residents who do not have any alternative transport options. A study of bus passengers in the region showed that 56% cited their reason for using the bus as 'no option to travel by other means' (this is 12% higher than the Scottish average).

There is also a recognition that public transport needs to be delivered in a more flexible way so that people can access the services/opportunities they need at the time they need. Bus service frequencies across much of the region are already low, with some areas having no service in the off-peak periods. It is also more difficult to integrate services in rural areas given the dispersed residents and low population densities. This low demand can lead to high fares for users and/or need for subsidy.

Public transport systems tend to be designed to serve the needs of commuters with traditional 'nine-to-five' working patterns. Public transport timetables and routes are, as a result, not designed to fit travel behaviour that is shaped by unpaid care work and part-time employment. The hours over which bus services in the region operate constrain use of the network early and later in the day e.g., to access shift-based employment and evening social & leisure opportunities (young people). SWestrans welcomes the introduction of free bus travel for those who are aged under 19, however it is essential that there is an appropriate level of service for this benefit to be realised fully.

Inequality	Protected characteristic groups are more likely than most to use public transport and tend to be disproportionately affected by service reductions. The current local transport network is at risk and needs to be more flexible to meet the needs of those who need it most.
Equality outcome 2	Public transport services are more flexible to meet the identified travel needs of those who need them most.
Protected Characteristics Groups Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Gender</li> </ul>
General equality duty	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
Link to strategic priority	<p>Contributes to the achievement of the NTS2 priority to reduce inequality, specifically the outcome to ensure that disadvantaged communities and individuals have fair access to the transport services they need.</p> <p>Links to the Council Plan, 2017-22: Improve public transport timetables across the region, particularly connections between services and campaign for the retention of rural bus routes.</p> <p>SWeststrans has a statutory duty to secure the provision of public transport services it considers appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within its area that are not being met.</p>
Activities	<p><u>Retention of transport links</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with national agencies and transport operators to protect key public transport links</li> <li>• Assist Dumfries and Galloway Council with its Public Transport and Travel Transformation work</li> <li>• Advocate for increased financial support for rural bus services</li> </ul> <p><u>Adapting our services to better suit those who need them most</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making sure the voice of protected characteristics is heard within the new Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan.</li> </ul>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with the Third Sector, NHS and DGC to enhance the capacity of Community Transport and trial new service solutions through the Public Social Partnership.</li><li>• Develop, design and implement a more flexible transport delivery model.</li><li>• Trial Demand Responsive Transport solutions.</li><li>• Work with young people representatives so they can make full benefit of free travel for U22s.</li><li>• Work with the Local Employability and Skills Partnership and South of Scotland Enterprise to identify transport solutions to ensure sustainable, public and active travel access to employment, education and training locations.</li><li>• Review and update the existing local bus Root and Branch Policy to reflect changes in transport demand.</li></ul> |
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### Issue – Transport Affordability and Transport Poverty

Disabled people, people with mental health conditions and people from ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in poverty and women and disabled people are more likely to experience severe material deprivation. Dumfries and Galloway Council's 'Future approach to tackling poverty and inequality for Dumfries & Galloway' (Jan 2021) shares that 'the statistics on poverty and Dumfries and Galloway are stark'. Around one in five Dumfries and Galloway residents live in poverty. On the tighter definition of income deprivation, 11.5% of the population are considered income deprived.

Transport was an issue that came out strongly, particularly from people with lived experience of poverty, through consultation undertaken by the Poverty and Inequality Commission. The National Transport Strategy 2 (Feb 2020) sets out that the single most important factor cited by those on low incomes as the greatest transport-related barrier is cost. People in low income households are excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment or training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. Beyond the practical issues, those living in poverty have told the Poverty and Inequality Commission about feeling isolated, about the anxiety that unreliable transport causes them, and about the stress they feel due to high transport costs putting pressure on already stretched budgets.

People living in poverty are more likely to travel by bus, while those in higher income households are more likely to travel by car. Public transport is therefore important to those on low incomes to allow them access to services and facilities they need. Locally, the price of fares on commercially funded bus services and the lack of integrated ticketing across multiple operators/routes is an issue. An analysis of bus fares against the equivalent cost of travelling by car has highlighted the financial disadvantage placed on those reliant on public transport services (South West Scotland Transport Study, 2020).

Research undertaken by Sustrans stated that over one million people in Scotland also live in areas that are at risk of 'transport poverty'. People are deemed to be at risk of transport poverty when they do not have access to essential services or work due to limited affordable transport options and this then compounds their financial pressures i.e. cannot access employment or need to spend resources on private vehicles. Research into the Poverty and Deprivation Position in Dumfries and Galloway (Dec 2020) found that 39% of data zones in Dumfries and Galloway are considered Access Deprived (Access to Services domain, which looks at travel times to services), equating to 5.7% of Scottish data zones. This is higher than all other comparable local authorities with the exception of Fife. The Council's approach to tackling poverty and inequality includes an objective to reduce the financial pressures on people in poverty, and states that public transport is poor, 'putting increased emphasis on having a private car, a rural poverty penalty for those who cannot afford one'.

Inequality	The affordability of transport and transport poverty is an issue across Scotland and within Dumfries and Galloway, especially in remote rural areas. Protected groups are more likely to be living in poverty and the lack of affordable transport contributes to the socio-economic disadvantages they experience.
Equality outcome 3	Access and affordability issues are reduced through new transport solutions developed with partners.
Protected Characteristics Groups Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Race</li> </ul>
General equality duty	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
Link to strategic priority	<p>Contributes to the achievement of the NTS2 priority to reduce inequality, specifically the outcome to ensure that disadvantaged communities and individuals have fair access to the transport services they need. The strategy identifies that the cost of transport is a barrier, including the Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport will be affordable for all: people have different incomes and our transport system will not exclude people from mobility by making it unaffordable.</li> <li>• We will minimise the connectivity and cost disadvantages faced by island communities and those in remote rural and rural areas, including safeguarding of lifeline services.</li> </ul> <p>Dumfries &amp; Galloway Council's 'Future approach to tackling poverty and inequality for Dumfries &amp; Galloway' is intended to be taken forward by a number of partner organisations. It includes an objective (3.3) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the rural poverty transport penalty through enhancing investment in community transport, and through exploring the development of affordable car loan products, particularly for those seeking employment.</li> </ul>
Activities	The Poverty and Inequality Commission's Transport and Poverty in Scotland Report (2019) made recommendations that, if implemented, would start to move the transport system closer to meeting their principles. Many of these need to be actioned nationally.

Regionally, we will work to:

- Involve individuals and communities with lived experience of poverty in identifying needs, and designing transport services to respond to those needs. We will engage with volunteers with lived experience of poverty through the Tackling Poverty Reference Group.
- Explore a range of ways of making travel more affordable. We will lead on the Council's Transformation review of fees/fares and work with transport operators and Transport Scotland to encourage and assist with integrated ticketing options and reduced fare schemes.
- Examine ways of addressing the transport challenges faced by people on low incomes in remote and rural areas. We will identify areas where affordability of transport services is affecting access to health appointments and employment opportunities and work with partners to pilot and deliver transport solutions.
- We will continue to investigate how new and innovative transport methods (e.g. demand-responsive transport, autonomous vehicles, and Mobility-as-a-Service) can be used to address transport barriers faced by people on low incomes and to connect particularly remote and rural communities.
- Information from Young Scot, the Scottish Youth Parliament and the local 10,000 Voices Study revealed that key issues for young people include the availability and cost of public transport. SWestrans will work to encourage use of the new free bus scheme for U22s – transport affordability issues will only be alleviated for young people if they have adequate access to services. We will also undertake work to mitigate the unintended consequences that the scheme may have on other users, i.e. that it does not drive up the single adult fare.

## Issue – Evidence and Engagement

The National Transport Strategy 2 and Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework both share a vision that 'all disabled people can travel with the same freedom, choice, dignity and opportunity as other citizens'.

There are still problems for disabled people using the transport system in Dumfries and Galloway. This means disabled people sometimes do not feel supported and comfortable when travelling within our region, and sometimes cannot make journeys at all or choose not to make journeys due to the difficulties involved.

Inclusivity plays a key role in achieving an accessible and equitable transport network. The Accessible Travel Framework states that everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure can support disabled people to travel. Involving disabled people in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services and infrastructure leads to increased successful door-to-door journeys, and more often.

However, barriers to transport are not limited to the physical; feedback from the Dumfries and Galloway Equality and Diversity Working Group highlighted that people in our region with protected characteristic groups (such as sexual orientation and race) are affected by social barriers to transport.

SWestrans needs to improve how we support and involve people with protected characteristics in the transport and travel decisions we make to ensure that the existing and future transport network and travel infrastructure reduces and minimises these physical and social barriers. This can hopefully be achieved by participating and engaging more frequently with service users and representative groups to share experiences, feedback, knowledge and learning.

We currently have gaps in evidence for all protected characteristics, but particularly, we have gaps in our evidence for, race, religion and beliefs, gender reassignment and sexual orientation. There is some evidence at a national level that these groups do face inequality when accessing or using transport, but we do not have sufficient data at a regional level. The development of a new Regional Transport Strategy offers an opportunity to carry out a comprehensive travel and transport consultation and engagement for the South West of Scotland which will include a focus on evidence collection around experiences people with protected characteristics have with our transport network.



Issue/Inequality	The difficulties that people with protected characteristics experience when accessing and using public transport and travel infrastructure could be more successfully addressed if more efficient engagement processes and data gathering were put in place.
Equality outcome 4	Our work is informed by a greater understanding of the transport and travel needs, barriers faced and experiences of people with protected characteristics.
Protected Characteristics Groups Supported	All protected characteristics, with a particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> <li>• Race</li> </ul>
General equality duty	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
Link to strategic priority	Contributes to the achievement of the NTS2 Outcome that transport will be easy to use, safe and secure for all.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved data collection and analysis</li> <li>• Improved engagement and consultation with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Protected characteristic groups, especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disabled</li> <li>▪ Sexual orientation</li> <li>▪ Race</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Equality Working Groups and third sector organisations</li> <li>○ Transport operators on identified accessibility barriers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Involve Protected Characteristic groups throughout the development of a new Regional Transport Strategy to identify barriers and a transport work plan/programme of support and improvements</li> <li>• Use the Place Principle</li> </ul>

## SWESTRANS ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

### 1. Reason for Report

To agree the SWestrans Annual Report 2019/20.

### 2. Background

2.1 The former Scottish Executive published guidance on Regional Transport Strategies in March 2006. Paragraphs 112 and 133 of the Guidance require the preparation of an annual report to be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

2.2 The report should cover the operational and financial year from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. It should include a report of performance against the objectives, targets and performance indicators set out in the Regional Transport Strategy and should be sent to constituent Councils and others who have provided funding.

### 3. Key Points

3.1 The draft Annual Report 2019/20 is attached as the **Appendix** to this report.

3.2 It is intended that the Annual Report would be submitted to Scottish Ministers as set out in the guidance referred to in paragraph 2.1.

4. Implications	
<b>Financial</b>	There are no financial implications.
<b>Policy</b>	This report complies with our policy requirements.
<b>Equalities</b>	There are no equalities implications.
<b>Climate Change</b>	There are no climate change implications.
<b>Risk Management</b>	The Annual Plan relates to the known risks: R03 – Strategic direction R05 – RTS delivery

### 5. Recommendation

Members of the Board are asked to agree the SWestrans Annual Report for 2019/20 as attached at the Appendix.

Report Author: Josef Coombey  Date of Report: 7 March 2021 File Ref: SW2/meetings/2021	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN
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**APPENDIX – SWestrans Annual Report 2019/20**

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019/20

The Annual Report of the South West of Scotland Transport Partnership, outlining its resources and outputs for financial year 2019/20.

# Annual Report

## 1. FOREWORD

This is the annual report of the South West of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SWestrans), which details the resource utilisation and activities of the Regional Transport Partnership for the financial year 2019/20.

As a Model 3 Scottish Regional Transport Partnership, SWestrans has responsibility for procuring socially necessary public transport for the Dumfries and Galloway region. The work of the South West of Scotland Transport Partnership during 2019/20 was again a balance of service provision through its revenue budget, and service development through capital budgets.

As in previous years, the Partnership undertook a range of initiatives covering a number of transport modes, which sought to address the key locations, sectors and themes identified in the Regional Transport Strategy. The Partnership's officers and Board members have continued to participate in the development of active travel, bus, rail, road and in the development of the National Transport Strategy and upcoming second Strategic Transport Projects Review amongst many other initiatives.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 placed a duty on Scottish Ministers to create Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) covering the whole of Scotland. The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWestrans) was established by the Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005, and the Transfer of Functions to the South-West of Scotland Transport Partnership Order 2006.

The SWestrans area is the same as that covered by Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

A statutory requirement of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 is that each Regional Transport Partnership produces a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy was agreed by the SWestrans Board on 25 April 2008 after an extensive consultation exercise and approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2008. The RTS Delivery Plan was agreed by the Board on 27 March 2009.

The Scottish Executive published guidance on Regional Transport Strategies in March 2006. Paragraphs 112 and 133 of the Guidance require the preparation of an annual report to be submitted to Scottish Ministers. The report should cover the operational and financial year to 31 March. It should include a report of

performance against the objectives, targets and performance indicators set out in the RTS and should be sent to constituent Councils and others who have provided funding. This report covers the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

SWestrans is subject to additional reporting requirements in respect of:

- Public Sector Equalities Duties.
- Public Sector Climate Change Duties.
- Public Sector Reform Act 2010.
- Public Sector Records Management.
- Freedom of Information.
- Publication Scheme.

This Annual Report is an integrated report in respect of these additional statutory and voluntary reporting requirements.

### 3. THE BOARD

#### 3.1 Members

The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Board consists of seven members. Five of these are local councillors nominated by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The other two are referred to as 'external members'. One member each is nominated by NHS Dumfries and Galloway and the local enterprise body (in 2019/20 this changed from Scottish Enterprise to the interim South of Scotland Enterprise Agency and subsequently the South of Scotland Enterprise). SWestrans has opted to give voting rights to external members.

The Members of the SWestrans Board on 1 April 2019 were:

- Andrew Wood (Chairman) - Dumfries & Galloway Council
- David Bryson (Vice Chairman) - External Member (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- Alistair McKinnon – External Member (Scottish Enterprise)
- Richard Brodie – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- John Campbell – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Adam Wilson – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Davie Stitt – Dumfries & Galloway Council

The 5 Council Member substitutes on 1 April 2019 were:

- Ian Carruthers
- Archie Dryburgh
- Andrew Giusti
- Sean Marshall
- Ronnie Tait

On 26 September 2019, Dumfries and Galloway Council reviewed some of its nominations to outside bodies which included SWestrans. It was agreed that appointments to SWestrans from the Council be appointed on a proportionate basis by the Political Groups of the Council. Following this agreement, there was one change in members appointed by the Council, with Graham Nicol replacing Davie Stitt. There were also changes to the substitutes with Katie Hagmann joining the Board for the first time.

Following the sad passing of Graham Nicol in October 2019 there was a further change in board membership with the Conservative group nominating Ronnie Tait as their board member (moving up from a substitute). There remained a vacancy for a substitute to be nominated by that group on behalf of the Council.

Alistair McKinnon stepped down from the board at the end of September 2019, and at the 13 December 2019 meeting, it was agreed that David Rennie would be appointed to the Board subject to ministerial approval. On 8 January 2020, confirmation was received that the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity had approved this appointment. Both Scottish Enterprise and SWestrans recognised that this appointment is likely to be on an interim basis pending the full establishment of the new South of Scotland Enterprise Agency.

The Members of the SWestrans Board on 31 March 2020 were:

- Andrew Wood (Chairman) - Dumfries & Galloway Council
- David Bryson (Vice Chairman) - External Member (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- David Rennie – External Member (Scottish Enterprise)
- Richard Brodie – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- John Campbell – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Ronnie Tait – Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Adam Wilson – Dumfries & Galloway Council

The Council Member substitutes on 31 March 2020 were:

- Ian Carruthers
- Katie Hagmann
- Jim McColm
- Davie Stitt

### 3.2 Observers

The terms of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 provide for the appointment of: “one or more observers, that is to say, persons who may... participate in proceedings of the Partnership but who may not hold office in it or participation its decisions.”

SWestrans has adopted an inclusive approach to requests for Observer status. The benefit of this is a wide range of sector interests and specialist expertise is available to the Board.

The list of Observers on 1 April 2019 was as follows:

- David Anderson
- Beverley Armstrong      Dumfries & Galloway College
- June Hay      Outdoor Access Forum
- Audrey Laidlaw      Network Rail
- Hugh McCreadie
- John McCutcheon      Stranraer Town and Rural Trust
- Fraser Smith      Stagecoach Scotland
- Graham Whiteley
- Rhian Davies      Sustrans
- Christopher Craig      Thornhill Station Action Group

The majority of Observers receive Board Papers electronically.



## 4. MEETINGS

### 4.1 Dates

There were 6 annual scheduled Meetings of the Board with provision for special meetings where urgent business needs to be discussed. Meetings were held on the following dates, with all taking place at Cargen Tower, Dumfries:

- 10 May 2019
- 28 June 2019
- 20 September 2019
- 13 December 2019
- 24 January 2020

A further meeting was scheduled for 20 March 2019 but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 4.2 Agendas

Item	10 May 2019
1	Sederunt and Apologies
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Minutes of Meeting on 08 March 2019
4	Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20 – Update
5	Transport (Scotland) Bill - Stage 1
6	Bus Passenger Survey 2018
7	STAG Appraisals Update
8	Rail Update
9	Infrastructure Commission - Call for Evidence
10	Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-24 - A Consultation Draft
11	Regional Transport Partnerships Chairs Meeting – 5 December 2018
12	Any Other Business Which The Chairman May Decide Is Urgent Due To The Need For A Decision

<b>Item</b>	<b>28 June 2019</b>
1	Sederunt and Apologies
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Minutes of Meeting on 10 May 2019
4	Revenue Budget Outturn Report 2018/19
5	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 for the Period Ending 31 May 2019
6	Draft Annual (Unaudited) Accounts 2018/19
7	Capital Expenditure Programme 2018/19 Outturn Report
8	STAG Appraisals Update
9	Rail Update
10	Calendar of Meetings
11	Regional Transport Partnerships Chairs Meeting 6 March 2019
12	Any Other Business Which The Chairman May Decide Is Urgent Due To The Need For A Decision
13	Future Transport Governance (Confidential)
14	Local Bus Tenders 2020 (Confidential)

<b>Item</b>	<b>20 September 2019</b>
1	Sederunt and Apologies
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Minutes of Meeting on 28 June 2019
4	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 for the Period Ending 31 August 2019
5	Report by External Audit on the 2018/19 Audit of South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

6	Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22 - Update
7	STAG Appraisals
8	Rail Update
9	National Transport Strategy - Draft for Consultation
10	South West Scotland - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change
11	Any Other Business Which The Chairman May Decide Is Urgent Due To The Need For A Decision
12	External Board Member - Local Enterprise Agency (Confidential)
13	Local Bus Tenders 2020 (Confidential)

<b>Item</b>	<b>13 December 2019</b>
1	Sederunt and Apologies
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Minutes of Meeting on 20 September 2019
4	Board Membership Update
5	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 for the Period Ending 30 November 2019
6	Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22 - Update
7	Rail Update
8	Climate Change Duties - Reporting 2018/19
9	Consultation: Big Climate Conversation - The Role of Public Sector Bodies in Tackling Climate Change
10	Any Other Business Which The Chairman May Decide Is Urgent Due To The Need For A Decision
11	Local Bus Services - Contracts (Confidential)

Item	24 January 2020
1	Sederunt and Apologies
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Minutes of Meeting on 13 December 2019
4	Board Membership Update - Local Enterprise Agency
5	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 for the Period Ending 31 December 2019
6	Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22 - Update
7	Rail Update
8	Local Bus Service - Dumfries to Sanquhar Sunday Evening Journey
9	Consultations (LEZ/ESF)
10	North Channel Partnership
11	Risk Management Update
12	Any Other Business Which The Chairman May Decide Is Urgent Due To The Need For A Decision

## 5. GOVERNANCE

### 5.1 Members

The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Board consists of seven Members. Five of these are local councillors nominated by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The other two are referred to as 'external members'. One Member each is nominated by the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Board and local enterprise body.

### 5.2 Key Governance Documentation

Good governance is essential to any public body, and SWestrans has developed a series of governance documents to ensure the effective management of the organisation. The key governance documents for SWestrans are as follows:

- Standing Orders.
- Financial Regulations and Financial Codes.
- Procurement Standing Orders.
- Members' Code of Conduct.
- Guidance for Observers.

### 5.3 Annual Accounts 2019/20

Draft Annual Accounts for 2019/20 were considered by the SWestrans Board at its meeting on 19 June 2020. These were prepared to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards and proper accounting Practice. The draft unaudited accounts were submitted prior to the statutory deadline of 30 June 2020, and to Grant Thornton, who are the appointed external auditors for SWestrans. The draft accounts were published on the SWestrans website and the Council's website during this period. The Final Accounts were received by the Board at its meeting on 18 September 2020 prior to being signed by the Treasurer.

#### Revenue Expenditure

The expenditure for 2019/20 was £4,607,947. This was funded by:

- Grants from the Scottish Government totalling £259,250 for core costs and the progression of the Regional Transport Strategy;

- Dumfries and Galloway Council also contributed £100,000 to the core running costs, £323,681 towards depreciation of assets and £3,397,805 in respect of payments made to Bus Contractors and £17,818 capital grant; and
- Other contributions totalling £509,342 which included Dumfries and Galloway College (£181,501), Strathclyde Passenger Transport (£211,808), Scottish Borders Council (£40,401), NHS Dumfries and Galloway (£70,000) and Barony College (£5,632).

#### 5.4 Internal Audit

No internal audit was carried out during 2019/20.

#### 5.5 External Audit

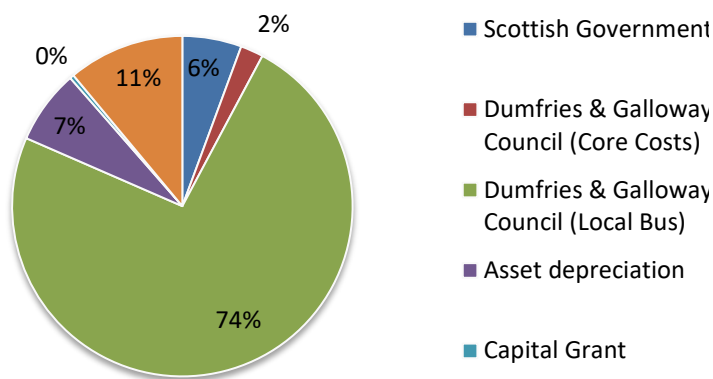
##### Audit of Accounts

Regulation 6 of the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985 (as amended) requires that a certified abstract of accounts and the external auditor's report to Board Members on those accounts should be laid before a meeting of the Board no later than two months following their receipt. The partnership's external auditors for 2019/20 were Grant Thornton UK LLP.

The external auditor is required to audit the Transport Partnership's financial statements in accordance with the relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Accounts Commission.

The International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA 260) requires auditors to communicate matters relating to the audit of the financial statements to those charged with the governance of a body in sufficient time to enable appropriate action. The

#### SWestrans Funding Sources 2019/20



Senior Audit Manager therefore provided a report to the Board highlighting the points arising from his team's work.

The external auditor's report on the audit of SWestrans' 2019/20 Annual Accounts to the Board, (in line with the requirements of the International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA 260)), was approved by the Board on 18 September 2020, prior to the deadline of 30 September 2020.

The Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the South West of Scotland Transport Partnership and the Accounts Commission for Scotland indicates that the Partnership's financial statements give a true and fair view and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The International Standard on Auditing 580 (ISA 580) requires auditors to obtain assurances from the proper officer on certain issues relating to the annual accounts. Following approval by the Chairman on behalf of the Board, the Senior Audit Manager signed off the audit certificate.

As part of their responsibilities the external auditor is required to submit, at the conclusion of each year's audit, a final report addressed to both the Members of the Board and to the Controller of Audit.

There are no qualifications in the audit report on the Partnership's Final Accounts. It is the opinion of the external auditor that the financial statements present fairly the Partnership's financial position and income and expenditure for the year.

## **5.6 Performance Management**

A comprehensive Performance Management Framework has been developed for monitoring and reporting the achievement of SWestrans' strategic objectives.

The elements of the Performance Management Framework include:

- Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan.
- Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring and Review Framework.
- The Annual Report.
- The Business Plan.
- The Risk Management Plan.

The RTS Monitoring and Review Framework is described in more detail in Section 8.5.

## 6. FUNCTIONS

Under the provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 the following transport functions have been transferred from Dumfries and Galloway Council to SWestrans:

- Formulation, consultation and publishing of policies.
- Promotion of passenger transport services.
- Procurement, management and administration of service subsidy agreements.
- Management and administration of concessionary travel schemes.
- Quality Partnership schemes.
- Ticketing schemes.
- Provision of information.

SWestrans is a Model 3 Regional Transport Partnership. This means that one of the functions transferred to it from Dumfries and Galloway Council is responsibility for procuring socially necessary public transport services.

The 2005 Act also allows SWestrans to share responsibilities with Dumfries and Galloway Council in what is known as a “concurrent powers” arrangement. Interventions that could be undertaken on this basis include those where the Council and SWestrans share responsibility, such as promotion of Traffic Regulation Orders to introduce bus priority measures on the Council’s roads. Other passenger transport functions, notably schools transport, remain the responsibility of Dumfries and Galloway Council.

SWestrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council work in close partnership to continue delivering passenger transport in an integrated fashion to ensure economies of scale and value for money.



## **7. STAFFING AND RESOURCES**

### **7.1 Key Staff**

SWestrans employs no staff directly. Staff are employed by Dumfries and Galloway Council on behalf of SWestrans, and either attached to the Partnership, or provide significant support to it in addition to their Council roles. During 2019/20 these staff resources included:

- Lead Officer – Douglas Kirkpatrick
- Finance Officer – Janet Sutton
- Policy and Projects Officer – Josef Coombey
- Policy and Projects Officer – Kirsty Dunsmore

Other Dumfries and Galloway Council staff can be invited to advise the Board on an ad hoc basis.

### **7.2 Other Business Needs**

Some business requirements of SWestrans are provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council on its behalf. These include:

- Human Resources.
- Financial and Legal Services.
- Governance Support.
- Communications and Office Accommodation.
- Technology Solutions and Business Support.

### **7.3 Secretary to the Board**

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires a Regional Transport Partnership to appoint a Secretary to the Board. This function is fulfilled by Claire Rogerson a Governance Officer from Dumfries and Galloway Council's Democratic Services.

### **7.4 Chairman of the Board**

Andrew Wood was the Chairman of the Board for the 2019/20 period, being appointed by the SWestrans Board on 30 June 2017. The Chairman represents SWestrans on the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Partnership.

### **7.5 Vice-Chairman of the Board**

David Bryson was the Vice-Chairman of the Board for the 2019/20 period, appointed to this position by the SWestrans Board in July 2012.

## 8. STRATEGY, POLICY, LOBBYING AND ENGAGEMENT

### 8.1 The Regional Transport Strategy

A statutory requirement of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 is that each Regional Transport Partnership produces a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy was agreed after an extensive consultation exercise and approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2008. The RTS is the key guiding document for SWestrans, and includes its Vision, Objectives and Policies. All policy development is referred back to this document.

In performing its duty, a Transport Partnership shall have regard to any guidance in that respect given to it or to Transport Partnerships generally by the Scottish Ministers and to any current National Transport Strategy established by the Scottish Ministers.

#### National Transport Strategy

A new National Transport Strategy (NTS) was developed in 2019/20 and will have a significant impact on the refresh of the SWestrans RTS which would be required to align our regional delivery to the national vision, policy and outcomes. At the Board meeting on 20 September 2019, the Board agreed a response to the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) a Draft for Consultation.

The infographic consists of four horizontal panels, each with a distinct background color and a circular icon on the left. Each panel contains a bold heading and a bulleted list of three points.

- Reduces inequalities** (Orange background, equals sign icon):
  - Will provide fair access to services we need
  - Will be easy to use for all
  - Will be affordable for all
- Takes climate action** (Dark blue background, leaf icon):
  - Will help deliver our net-zero target
  - Will adapt to the effects of climate change
  - Will promote greener, cleaner choices
- Helps deliver inclusive economic growth** (Light blue background, bar chart icon):
  - Will get people and goods where they need to get to
  - Will be reliable, efficient and high quality
  - Will use beneficial innovation
- Improves our health and wellbeing** (Red background, heart icon):
  - Will be safe and secure for all
  - Will enable us to make healthy travel choices
  - Will help make our communities great places to live

The NTS2 was published in February 2020 and set out priorities for Scotland's transport system over the next 20 years (in graphic on previous page). The updated vision is that: we will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system helping to deliver a healthier, more prosperous and fairer Scotland for communities, business and visitors.

Importantly, overarching all the Policies, to address the challenges and achieve the Priorities there is an embedded Sustainable Travel Hierarchy for decision making which will promote walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. Promotion of efficient and sustainable freight transport for the movement of goods, particularly the shift from road to rail will be prioritised.

In addition, at the national level the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy will be used to inform future investment decisions and ensure transport options that focus on reducing both inequalities and the need to travel unsustainably are prioritised. There is also a need to focus on maintaining and safely operating existing assets, taking due consideration of the need to adapt to the challenges, opportunities and impacts of climate change. Investment promoting a range of measures, including innovative solutions, to make better use of existing capacity will then be considered, ensuring that existing transport networks and systems are fully optimised. Only following these steps will investment involving targeted infrastructure improvements be considered.

All future investment decisions will be assessed against their contributions to supporting this Strategy, and in particular how they impact against the Takes climate action outcomes and wider climate change targets.

### South West Scotland Transport Study

SWestrans input into the development of The Scottish Government's second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) continued in 2019/20.

At the Board meeting on 20 September 2019, the Board agreed a response to the Draft Report 'South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change'.

The Final Report 'South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change' was published on 28 January 2020. The Report and suite of accompanying documents is a significant piece of work feeding into both STPR2 and SWestrans' new Regional Transport Strategy.

The report presented the context for the appraisal of interventions for the South West of Scotland and has considered the rationale for improvements to road, rail, public

transport and active travel on the key strategic corridors in the region, with a focus on access to the ports at Cairnryan.

In line with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), the study identified the key transport problems and opportunities in the area. Evidence-based problems have formed the basis for the development of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) and the generation, sifting and development of a wide range of interventions across all modes in the study area, which have subsequently been appraised and packaged.

Based on detailed data analysis and an extensive public and stakeholder engagement programme, a number of problems have been identified around the key themes of:

- Average Journey Times
- Mobility
- Journey Time Reliability
- Connectivity
- Environmental Impact
- Cost
- Safety

The multi-modal problems identified through these exercises have subsequently been mapped against the themes and used to help inform the development of TPOs for the study:

- TPO1: Reduce journey times across the strategic transport network in the study area to the ports at Cairnryan.
- TPO2: Reduce accident rates and the severity of accidents on the trunk road network in the South West of Scotland.
- TPO3: Improve the resilience of the Strategic Transport Network across the South West of Scotland.
- TPO4: Improve journey quality across the road, public transport and active travel networks in the South West of Scotland.
- TPO5: Improve connectivity (across all modes) for communities in the South West of Scotland to key economic, education, health and cultural centres including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Ayr, Kilmarnock and Carlisle.

Following the development of the TPOs, and a process of option sifting and packaging, 23 multi-modal option packages across the study area were identified for further appraisal through the STPR2 process. As part of the sifting exercise a number of options were sifted out, including local options and options out with the study area. These have been identified for further development by partner organisations and third parties.

The options recommended for taking forward for further assessment as part of STPR2 are presented below:

1. Improved transport integration at main hubs Package of measures to improve integration of transport at main transport hubs and interchanges (e.g. Stranraer, Dumfries and Lockerbie), including improved integration of bus and rail times, improved cycle connectivity to rail stations and ticket integration.
2. Development of the Strategic Active Travel Network Package of measures to develop the Strategic Active Travel Network in the South West of Scotland to better connect communities to key destinations, including cycle paths parallel to trunk roads and improvements to the National Cycle Network.
3. New Rail Stations on the Glasgow South Western Line New rail stations on the Glasgow South Western Line, such as at Cumnock, Thornhill, Eastriggs, Pinwherry, Dunragit and South of Ayr.
4. Enhanced Rail Services on the Glasgow South Western Line Package of measures to enhance rail services on the Glasgow South Western Line, such as rail service, rolling stock and infrastructure improvements and Stranraer Station relocation.
5. New Rail Stations on the West Coast Main Line New station at Beattock.
6. Enhanced Rail Services on the West Coast Main Line Package of measures to enhance rail services on the West Coast Main Line, such as increased services operating from and improved access to rail services at Lockerbie, including increased park and ride provision.
7. New Rail Link between Dumfries and Stranraer Development of a rail link between Dumfries and Stranraer.
8. New Rail Link between Stranraer and Cairnryan Development of a rail link between Stranraer and Cairnryan.

9. New Rail link between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main Line Development of a rail link between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main Line.
10. Enhanced Rail Freight Capacity Enhancement of rail freight capacity, such as freight hubs at Girvan and Barrhill.
11. Development of the Timber Transport Network Package of measures to support the transport of timber freight by road, rail and sea in the South West of Scotland.
12. Development of Enhanced Diversionary Routes and Route Planning Package of measures and improvements to the secondary road network which performs a strategic function when the trunk road network is closed to increase resilience of the transport network.
13. Development of Enhanced Service, Rest Areas and Laybys Package of measures to deliver improved rest provision for all road users in the South West of Scotland, such as truck/lorry stops and rest facilities on the A75 and A77 and enhanced laybys for buses on main routes.
14. HGV Speed Limit Increase HGV speed limit increase to 50mph on the trunk road network in the South West of Scotland.
15. A75 Capacity Enhancements Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A75, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
16. A75 Safety Measures Implementation of targeted measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A75. Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.
17. A77 Capacity Enhancements Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A77, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
18. A77 Safety Measures Implementation of targeted measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and localised junction improvements to improve safety on the A77. Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.

19. A76 Capacity Enhancements Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A76, such as improved overtaking opportunities and town/village bypasses.
20. A76 Safety Measures Implementation of targeted measures, such as route improvements to enhance road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A76.
21. Road Capacity Enhancements between Dumfries and the A74(M) Development of road capacity enhancements between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as partial dualling which would improve overtaking opportunities, and/or bypasses. Package also potentially includes considering the possibility to re-classify the status of the A701 and A709 roads.
22. Road Safety Measures between Dumfries and the A74(M) Implementation of targeted measures between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as road geometry, bends, junction improvements and measures to address pinch points.
23. Junction Improvements (M6) Improvements to the M6 for North to West movements (i.e. coming off the A74(M) north to the A75).

The next steps of STPR2 include a Preliminary Options Appraisal that would undertake a qualitative appraisal of the recommended options above by Transport Scotland.

SWestrans is a stakeholder in the South of Scotland Transport Working Group, which met in 2019/20 to discuss progress on these next stages.

### Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

The Transport (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on Friday 8 June 2018. The aim of the Bill was to make Scotland's transportation network cleaner, smarter and more accessible. The Bill aims to empower local authorities and establish consistent standards in order to tackle current and future challenges, while delivering a more responsive and sustainable transport system for all.

The Bill completed Stage 3 on 11 October 2019, could have a significant impact across our region as its content is enacted. The Bill received Royal Assent on 15 November 2019.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 as passed is wide ranging in scope and covers many themes:

- National Transport Strategy (NTS): to make the NTS a statutory document and place duties on Scottish Ministers in relation to consultation, review and reporting progress

- Low Emission Zones (LEZs): the establishment, modification, effect, and operation of Low Emission Zones.
- Provision of bus services by local transport authorities: This provision facilitates an authority (such as SWestrans or a council) being able to provide local bus services (potentially directly, or through a company) provided it will contribute to the implementation of their general policies.
- Bus services improvement partnerships (BSIPs): facilitates the creation of a statutory partnership between a relevant authority (or authorities) and operator(s) to improve bus services in a specified area(s). SWestrans understand that the allocation/bidding process for elements of the recently announced £500m investment in bus infrastructure and priority measures through the Programme for Government<sup>3</sup> will be predicated on developing a BSIP(s).
- Local services franchises: facilitating the creation of a franchise for local bus services by an authority (or authorities) in a specified area(s).
- Bus service information: places requirement on various bodies to provide a range of information they are responsible for in relation to bus services, to provide better information to the travelling public, and when varying or cancelling a service.
- Ticketing arrangements and schemes: various provisions relating to ticketing arrangements and schemes, technological standards, and the establishment of a National Smart Ticketing Advisory Board
- Workplace parking: facilitates a local authority (or authorities) creating a requirement to have a license to provide parking at workplaces, and to charge employers for that license based on the number of spaces available.
- Regional Transport Partnerships: finance: provisions relating to the ability of RTPs to hold financial reserves.
- Further provisions on travel concession schemes and their application to community transport, pavement parking/double parking, road works, and health board emergency patient transport and community transport. In September 2019, the Board was informed of Dumfries and Galloway Council's Transformation Programme and series of Transformation Events, one of which was to be on Public Transport and Travel. The Board agreed that a position statement from SWestrans be provided to inform this Transformation Event.

SWestrans had strongly advocated for a number of the provisions that are now contained with the Act.

A Transformation Event was held by Dumfries and Galloway Council on 29 October 2019 on Public Transport and Travel and resulted in a number of actions relating to the development and delivery of a new targeted and needs based delivery model. Associated budget savings are believed to be sought in the third year of the Council's three-year budget (2022/23).



## 8.2 Key Locations

The RTS identifies a number of key locations, and SWestrans is involved in initiatives in relation to each of these.

### Dumfries

SWestrans continued to work in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council to investigate and seek improved links to and from Dumfries. Particularly in relation to the real and perceived transport constraints that also restrict economic development, these being:

- Lack of access to West Coast Main Line passenger and freight services;
- Relatively slow rail links from Dumfries to the Central Belt;
- Poor quality of trunk road linkages between Dumfries and the A74(M).

### Stranraer and Loch Ryan

The Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan include aspirations for developments within Stranraer. The details for these aspirations continue to be developed to integrate with and run in parallel with Dumfries and Galloway Council projects.

Work continued on the South West Scotland Transport Study which includes a strong focus on access to the ports at Cairnryan (as detailed in 8.1).

In November 2019, Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed Terms of Reference for the re-establishment of the North Channel Partnership. SWestrans was a member of, and latterly provided the secretariat for, the original North Channel Partnership. The partnership was established in 1999 with its main aim at that time to secure an adequate strategy and investment programme for the landward transport links to the ferry ports of Cairnryan, Belfast and Larne. The partnership last met in 2012.

The re-established partnership will be a joint collaborative arrangement between Dumfries and Galloway Council with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and will include membership of Elected Members and officers of both local authorities. Its function will be to:

- Adopt strategic policy and lobbying positions on projects of mutual interest to both Councils.
- Work jointly on shared economic, tourism, heritage and cultural projects which provide defined and measured benefits for the respective areas.

- Identify and attract funding for joint projects which positively impact on the economy of both regions.
- Strengthen the historic links and strong relationships between the respective Council regions.
- Share best practice on the development of policy, the economy, tourism culture and heritage.
- Identify and prioritise those activities which can create an immediate positive impact on the economy.
- Raise the economic profile of both regions.

In the latter part of 2019/20, SWestrans supported work to prepare a joint action plan was undertaken, building on early scoping activity and outcomes from initial discussions between the Councils.

#### Gretna, Lockerbie, Annan Triangle

Lockerbie is the region's only main line station and is a key regional gateway and point of connection to the Central Belt and into England. The planned development of further car parking spaces through re-configuration of the existing car park at the Station and potential purchase of land continued during the year.

The Board at its meetings throughout 2019/20 were updated on the stages required to progress parking options at Lockerbie Station and the agreed acquisition of land. Full planning permission was granted in March 2020 for the Sydney Place site and instruction for land purchase given. The full process was not completed in 2019/20 and there was some slippage on this element. This need for slippage was exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19 at the end of the financial year.

The Lockerbie Station Liaison Group reconvened on 5 March 2020 at Lockerbie Town Hall following serious performance issues by the primary rail operator, TransPennine Express, serving Lockerbie Station. The meeting was chaired by SWestrans and representatives from the Lockerbie Passenger Group, TransPennine Express, Avanti West Coast, ScotRail and Network Rail were in attendance, as well as local Councillors, Colin Smyth MSP and David Mundell MP. The meeting was open to the public and was well attended (approx. 100). Representatives of the rail industry agreed that they would attend future meetings of the Group.

### Remote Rural Communities

As a Model 3 Regional Transport Partnership, SWestrans is responsible for procuring socially necessary public transport services. Most of the region is rural, and with some 51% of the bus network (including Dumfries) requiring subsidy, SWestrans provides vital lifeline connectivity and social inclusion to many communities.

There are a small number of local bus operators serving Dumfries and Galloway and once again this year the Board and officers were greatly exercised by the ongoing sustainability issues that these operators face. It has become apparent from the issues being faced by operators and the low uptake in the most rural areas, particularly outside of the standard work peaks, that bus services are fragile in areas of the region and cannot sustain a traditional bus service.

Throughout 2019/20 work has continued on social/community transport through the public social partnership (PSP). Further information on the PSP work undertaken in 2019/20 is included within the Community Transport section reported under 8.3 Key Sectors/Themes.

## **8.3 Key Sectors/Themes**

The Regional Transport Strategy also identifies a number of key sectors and themes.

### Roads

The RTS Delivery Plan includes a commitment to securing five additional overtaking opportunities on the A75 and A77.

The RTS Objective to Improve Transport Links is reflected within the Monitoring Framework for the Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan which includes as an indicator 'Percentage of Local Authority Road network classified as Red or Amber by the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey' from Table 5.6 of Scottish Transport Statistics.

Lobbying has been undertaken by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, with both UK and Scottish Governments, which is supportive of both SWestrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council's position on the A77 and A75 trunk roads.

## Bus

Local bus service provision continued to face a number of significant challenges in 2019/20 year. Sustainability issues regarding local bus services were raised by bus operators throughout the year and the Board agreed courses of action to maintain local bus services and prevent the return of contracts.

The Board, at its meeting in June 2019, agreed that a procurement of all the local bus contracts due to terminate in 2020 was undertaken on a like for like basis in August 2019. This procurement enabled the cost required to retain the network to be known early, any areas of high cost to be identified and addressed through negotiation with operators and would enable full and accurate cost information to be fed into the Council's budget considerations from September 2019.

At its meeting in September 2019, the Board was informed of the initial outcome of the tender process and that the full analysis of submissions, utilising the existing SWestrans bus assets available for lease, returned a most economically advantageous like for like network replacement at a total price of £3.71M. This gave a £80K per annum increase (+2.2%).

Following the September 2019 Board, contracts submitted with a price increase of 25% or greater were the subject of negotiation with the operators to determine if the high cost increases quoted could be reduced. The outcome of the negotiation was an overall reduction on three of the contracts of £86.8K, and a like for like network costing £3,624,685 was agreed in December 2019.

Transport Focus presented their Bus Passenger Survey 2018 findings to SWestrans officers in April 2019 and they were reported to the Board in May 2019. The survey measured passengers' satisfaction with their local bus service for a wide range of aspects including the bus stop, waiting for the bus, on the bus, the outside of the bus and the bus driver as well as their overall satisfaction with that bus journey and their rating of value for money.

The survey results, on the whole, were very positive for the region. They are a testament to the value of the ongoing financial support SWestrans provides and the professionalism and hard work of the bus operators in the region. Key performance measures for South West Scotland Transport Region are:

- Overall journey: 94% very or fairly satisfied
- Punctuality: 84% very or fairly satisfied.
- Journey time: 92% very or fairly satisfied.
- Value for money: 66% very or fairly satisfied.
- Bus driver greeting/welcome: 91% very or fairly satisfied.
- Interior cleanliness and condition: 86% very or fairly satisfied.
- Availability of seating or space to stand: 92% very or fairly satisfied.

The survey highlights a number of areas of concern which were to be further investigated. These are:

- Value for money
- Connectivity
- Publicity
- Condition of bus shelters

Evidence gathered from the survey results informed future planning of bus services. SWestrans continued to strive to improve bus services in the South West of Scotland as it is a lifeline service for many residents. The survey highlighted that of passengers surveyed in the South West of Scotland, 56% cited their reason for using the bus as 'no option to travel by other means'. This is 12% higher than the Scottish average (44%).

SWestrans continued its programme of bus shelter replacement and improvement during 2019/20.

## Rail

SWestrans is a member of the West Coast Rail 250 Group, which brings together interested stakeholders to lobby for improvements to and on the West Coast Main Line.

SWestrans has lobbied for improvements to services on the Glasgow and Southwestern Line and on the Stranraer Line, consistent with the aspirations of the RTS Delivery Plan for improved services and station re-openings.

The primary community pressure regarding rail travel has been for new stations at Beattock, Thornhill and Eastriggs. Work continued on the potential development of these rail stations for Dumfries and Galloway.

As required by the guidance, the STAG Part 2 Appraisals were undertaken as fully multi-modal appraisals. Work on the three STAG Part 2 studies were completed in Autumn 2019, and in September 2019, the SWestrans Board agreed that all three final STAG reports, for the Moffat/Beattock, Eastriggs and Thornhill areas would be

submitted to Transport Scotland for assessment to get on the investment “pipeline” process.

The ‘Strategic Business Case’ for each station re-opening (the reports) were submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration and decision on 14 October 2019. Transport Scotland will now consider in detail and either accept or reject each of the Strategic Business Cases.

SWestrans requested that Transport Scotland provide indicative timescales for assessment and decision and were informed that the projects were being considered as part of the STPR2 process.

SWestrans was successful in being awarded a grant from Transport Scotland’s Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF) to complete an appraisal on problems and opportunities relating to access to Kirkconnel station.

## Community Transport / Public Social Partnership

Community Transport provides an important element of transport provision in a rural region such as Dumfries and Galloway, often delivering a service which no other provider can meet.

The Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) continued to make significant progress in 2019/20.

The PSP is a multi-agency partnership between Dumfries and Galloway Council, SWestrans, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and the Community Transport operators/Third Sector, Dumfries and Galloway. The specific aims of this PSP are to develop a genuine and lasting partnership to support the remodelling of the Commissioner(s) transport services and to build the capacity of the community transport sector to be able to deliver these services in the future by:

- Understanding the market
- Increasing capability and capacity
- Responding to changing demand

Three work streams were developed to progress the PSP:

- Work Stream 1 - Transport Service Developments
- Work Stream 2 - Health and Social Care Transport Solutions
- Work Stream 3 - Capability and Capacity building

The progress in 2019/20 in delivering on the PSP has resulted in:

- Ongoing delivery of the 517 Borgue to Kirkcudbright local bus service.
- Initial consultation on the 359 Glentroll to Newton Stewart local bus service
- The continuation of the 2 volunteer car schemes operated by Annandale Community Transport Service (ACTS) and Galloway Community Transport (GCT). This enables patients to access healthcare appointments and has provided transport to a total of 919 patients accumulating 1,781 journeys being provided by volunteers who have contributed 4,254 hours.
- On-going discussion around the development of a transport hub. With the overall vision to make use of the collaborative economy model by working with key transport providers. The use of an interactive web-based scheduling and booking solution will enable the ability to match up supply, resources available from Local Authorities, Community Transport Operators and NHS, to demand, transport requirements of communities to enable them to access employability and training, health, social care services and leisure activities.

At its meeting in February 2020, the PSP Steering Group reluctantly agreed an exit strategy to end the current phase of the PSP in May 2020 due to continuation funding not being secured. However, additional funding was secured in March 2020 and the exit strategy was not implemented.

The PSP model will be a critical building block of the new model of sustainable public transport delivery that is being developed from Dumfries and Galloway Council's Transformation Programme (Public Transport and Travel). This new model is due to be in place by April 2022 and will not succeed without a sustainable and engaged Community Transport sector as a key delivery partner for all services.

### Walking and Cycling

During 2019/20 SWestrans continued to fund active travel infrastructure through its Capital Programme.

A number of walking/cycling infrastructure opportunities to improve functional active travel were progressed with works completed including a new shared path link in Dumfries between Heston Avenue / Waverley Road and minor footway works to improve active travel accessibility in Dunscore, Minnigaff and Garlieston.

The works undertaken through the Regional Active Travel Fund included improvements relating to Dumfries Learning Town, Strategic Minor Works and the Active Travel Disability Fund.

### Health

Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, RTPs have a legal requirement to develop a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for their area which, as well as identifying accessibility, environmental, social and economic objectives, should seek to facilitate access to hospitals and other healthcare facilities. Regional Transport Strategies should identify current transport gaps and opportunities within each Health Board and provide a mechanism to deliver and monitor these objectives.

The Regional Transport Strategy identifies healthcare as a key sector to be supported by the strategy, and this is reflected in the inclusion of Dumfries and Galloway Health Board as a statutory partner in the Regional Transport Partnership.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, together with the Regional Transport Strategies (Health Boards) (Scotland) Order 2006, places a statutory duty on each Health Board to, so far as possible, perform their functions and activities consistently with the Regional Transport Strategies in their area.



NHS Boards therefore have a responsibility to work with RTPs and Local Authorities in developing these strategies to provide local transport solutions and enhance the role of the voluntary and community sector in the design and delivery of access to healthcare.

#### 8.4 Community Planning

SWestrans is a member of the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Partnership, and is represented by the Chairman of SWestrans at meetings.

#### 8.5 RTS Monitoring and Review

There is a statutory requirement on SWestrans to undertake monitoring and review of the Regional Transport Strategy, and a commitment to undertaking this is included within the Strategy.

Paragraphs 112 and 133 of the Scottish Executive Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies indicates that the Annual Report should include performance against the objectives, targets and performance indicators set out in the RTS.

While the Regional Transport Objectives are set out in the Regional Transport Strategy, the local indicators and targets are being developed in the context of the RTS Delivery Plan, taking into account the aspirations of the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Partners Single Outcome Agreement. These are reflected in the RTS Delivery Plan (Revised March 2010).

There is an acknowledged issue with reporting progress against achievement of the RTS to the Board. A baseline year of 2007 has been identified as this was the year in which the Regional Transport Strategy (including the RTS Objectives) was originally agreed by the Board.

A matrix has been prepared to allow comparison of indicator values over a number of years. The matrix is included as **Appendix 1**. The matrix has been populated with data insofar as this is currently available. In respect of gaps the following points should be noted:

- Some datasets are published every two years, and some are published up to two years in arrears.
- Some indicators require modelling work to be undertaken and investigation is ongoing on how this can be obtained.
- Some indicators require aggregation of a number of datasets, and a methodology for doing is to be developed.
- There may be difficulty in obtaining historical values for some indicators.
- Indication of stabilisation of the percentage of the Local Authority road network classified as red or amber by the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey after some decline.

- No reversal of the reduction in number of ferry services per week following the relocation of Stena Line and related introduction of larger ships.
- An decrease in the percentage of children travelling actively to school.

Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) states that Transport Planning Objectives should be expressed with SMART principles in mind – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timed. It is intended that any future refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy would re-examine the RTS Objectives with respect to these SMART principles. This will facilitate the setting of a more focussed basket of indicators.

## 8.6 Public Sector Equalities Duty

A SWestrans Equalities Scheme was approved and adopted at the meeting of the Board on 23 May 2008. Previous equalities legislation was harmonised by the Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 1 October 2010, establishing a single equality duty for the public sector.

Regional Transport Partnerships are listed in the Schedule to The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Under the Specific Duties public bodies were required to publish an equalities mainstreaming report by 30 April 2013, and to publish Equality Outcomes to be reviewed every four years.

The Board agreed its mainstreaming report and Equalities Outcomes on 17 May 2013. These equality outcomes were subject to review by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and following this review fully revised and agreed by the Board at its meeting in January 2015. These are published on the Partnership's website. An Equalities Monitoring progress report was published in April 2017.

## 8.7 Public Bodies Climate Change Duty

Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places duties on public bodies relating to climate change. These duties came into force on 1 January 2011.

There are three duties, which require that a public body must, in exercising its functions, act:

- In the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in or under Part 1 of the Act.
- In the way best calculated to help deliver any programme laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 53 of the Act.
- In a way that it considers is most sustainable.

The Act requires that Scottish Ministers must give guidance to public bodies in relation to their climate change duties, and those bodies must have regard to such guidance. There are a number of public bodies that the Scottish Ministers consider to be 'major players', as they have a larger influence or impact on climate change than others. A list of these in the Guidance includes SWestrans as well as the other Regional Transport Partnerships. An explanation as given as follows:

“Regional Transport Partnerships have an important contribution to make in reducing transport emissions. They are encouraged to consider the need for additional planning and demand management measures to reduce the need for travel and the carbon intensity of travel, and to maximise active travel (e.g. walking and cycling). This may include measures such as infrastructure, road space reallocation, prioritising integrated

public transport and influencing the location of new development through the planning system.”

At the meeting on 19 November 2010 Members of the Board agreed that meeting the public sector climate change duty be mainstreamed within the existing SWestrans performance management and reporting framework, and at the meeting on 15 March 2013 Members of the Board agreed a SWestrans Climate Change Strategy.

At the meeting on 13 December 2019, Members of the Board agreed the submission of the 2019-20 Climate Change Duties Report for SWestrans.

### 8.8 Public Services Reform Act

The Public Services Reform (PSR) (Scotland) Act 2010 received Royal Assent on 28 April 2010. Part 3 of the Act imposes duties on Scottish Ministers and listed public bodies to publish certain information on expenditure and other matters on an annual basis. The list of public bodies in Schedule 8 to the Act includes “any Regional Transport Partnership.”

The provisions in Part 3 impose new duties on Scottish Ministers and each person, body or office-holder listed in Schedule 8 of the Act to publish as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year a statement of any expenditure incurred during the financial year on or in connection with Public relations; Overseas travel; Hospitality and entertainment; External consultancy; Payments with a value in excess of £25,000 (not including remuneration) and the number of members or employees (if any) who received remuneration in excess of £150,000.

SWestrans expenditure on the matters specified by the Public Services Reform Act 2010 is set out in the following table.

<b>SWestrans expenditure 2019/20 on matters specified by the PSR Act 2010</b>	
<b>Public Relations</b> - services are provided for SWestrans By Dumfries and Galloway Council’s Communications Unit	0
<b>Overseas Travel</b>	0
<b>Hospitality and Entertainment</b>	0
<b>External Consultancy</b>	0
<b>External Governance</b> – e.g. external audit and governance support	£13,262
<b>Payments exceeding £25,000</b> - Payments to bus operators (total of 37 payments exceeding £25,000 to bus operators)	£4,096,178
<b>Remuneration exceeding £150,000</b>	0

Each person, body or office-holder listed in Schedule 8 is also required to publish a statement as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year setting out the steps it has taken to promote and increase sustainable growth and to improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy during that financial year. Listed public bodies must have regard to any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers about the various duties to publish information; and any such guidance must be laid before Parliament.

As indicated above, SWestrans operates with an extremely lean business model, leaving little scope for further improvements in efficiency in internal organisation. Nevertheless, the Partnership contributes to increasing sustainable economic growth within the region and for Scotland as a whole. We would summarise these as follows:

- Lobbying at regional, Scottish, UK national and European level for increased investment in transport and connectivity across all transport modes, including Rail, Roads, Ferries, Aviation and Active Travel. This has been achieved through a number of methods, and it is hoped will inform future transport policy i.e. STPR2.
- Innovative approaches to delivery of sustainable public transport services, including review of the local bus network and bus asset procurement as a spend to save initiative and the establishment of a PSP delivery model.
- Progression of a broad range of infrastructure and soft policy interventions (with significant levels of external funding) designed to advance the aspirations of the Regional Transport Strategy, including regionwide bus infrastructure upgrades.

These activities are driven by the vision of the Regional Transport Strategy for:

“...a transport system for the South West of Scotland that delivers the internal and external connectivity required to sustain and enhance the region’s economy and communities whilst minimising the impact of transport on the environment.”

The Regional Transport Strategy and associated Delivery Plan were developed through an extensive consultation process and are fully aligned with both National and Regional Performance Frameworks. As a consequence of this alignment the activities of SWestrans are wholly dedicated to delivering the Government’s purpose, and to improving regional and Scottish economic competitiveness and sustainability.

### **8.9 RTPs Joint Chairs and Lead Officers**

The Chairs of all Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships hold regular joint meetings. The Joint Chairs also hold regular meetings with the Cabinet Secretary, COSLA and the Confederation for Passenger Transport. The Chairman is supported at these meetings by the Lead Officer.

SWestrans hosted the RTP Chairs Meeting on 4 March 2020 in Gatehouse.

## **8.10 Freedom of Information, Records Management, and Publication Scheme**

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) provides individuals with a right of access to all recorded information held by Scotland's public authorities. Information can only be withheld where FOISA expressly permits it. Section 23 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act requires that Scottish public authorities must adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme which relates to the publication of information by the authority and is approved by the Information Commissioner.

At the meeting on 22 July 2011 Members of the Board considered requirements of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) and agreed a Publication Scheme. A Model Publication Scheme was launched by the Scottish Information Commissioner in October 2012. Public bodies may adopt the Model Publication Scheme in its entirety and publish a 'Guide to Information' to assist the public in finding information. The Scottish Information Commissioner has confirmed that public bodies no longer need to publish their own Publication Scheme. All the required information can be published within the Guide to Information. The Guide to Information advises how information can be obtained, and lists information that is available in the appropriate Classes of Information. A SWestrans Guide to Information has been prepared and published on the SWestrans website. Other information not published under these arrangements may be provided on request.

In addition to having a Records Management Policy the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 places an obligation on named public authorities (including transport partnerships) to prepare and implement a Records Management Plan (RMP) which sets out proper arrangements for the management of their records. The Records Management Plan must identify the individual who is responsible for management of the authority's public records, and the individual who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the plan. Records Management Plans must be agreed with the Keeper of the Records of Scotland and regularly reviewed by the authority.

At the meeting on 15 March 2013 Members of the Board agreed to the adoption of the Scottish Information Commissioner's Model Publication Scheme 2013 and the Guide to Information. This information is published on the SWestrans website at [www.swestrans.org.uk](http://www.swestrans.org.uk).

On 1 August 2016, SWestrans received a letter from the Keeper inviting submission of a Records Management Plan (RMP) under the assessment programme for 2016. During 2016/17, SWestrans worked with Dumfries and Galloway Council Records Management Team to ensure that SWestrans is fully incorporated within its updated existing RMP. In June 2017, Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed to include SWestrans within its RMP arrangements.

## 8.12 Communications and Information

Communications, Media and Press Relations support is provided to SWestrans by Dumfries and Galloway Council. This support includes the provision of a dedicated website at [www.swestrans.org.uk](http://www.swestrans.org.uk) and email inbox [swestrans@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:swestrans@dumgal.gov.uk)

Due to a change in Council structure, the website support reduced in 2019/20 and is now largely undertaken by SWestrans officers. SWestrans uses the website to publish information about itself, including meeting agendas, reports and minutes. It is also used to publish studies undertaken by SWestrans which it wishes to place in the public domain. The website includes SWestrans contact information.

## 9. DELIVERY AND PROJECTS

### 9.1 The RTS Delivery Plan

The high level aspirations of the RTS are translated into specific interventions in the RTS Delivery Plan, which was agreed by the Board on 27 March 2009. This document describes the actions SWestrans plans to take to realise its strategy, and the timescales and budgets for implementing these actions.

Since publication of the Regional Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan, a number of planned improvements have been achieved, whilst others have been considered and modified or abandoned. The interventions included in the RTS Delivery Plan are set out in Table 1, attached to this report as **Appendix 2**, and include commentary as to the extent of achievement at 31 March 2020.

There will be a need to consider which interventions can be removed from the revised RTS either because they have been completed, or because they are unlikely to be taken forward during the Strategy period. Interventions will also need to be reviewed in terms of their purpose or related aspects including costs, partnership working and strategic links. New interventions may also need to be included within the Strategy, arising from new opportunities and threats, or the developing environment.

In particular, there is a need to refocus the format of the Strategy to focus on Outcomes, achieved through delivery of objectives through the interventions. The current interventions detailed in **Appendix 2** contain a variety of non-specific descriptions, making them difficult to monitor and report. There is a significant degree of overlap between interventions, with some appearing in more than one package.

## 9.2 Revenue Budget

A detailed summary of the elements of the Revenue Budget 2019/20 is set out in the following table:

	<b>Final Outturn 2018/19</b>	<b>Adjusted Budget 2019/20</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure to 31/3/20</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Staff Costs	110,924	95,848	95,797	-51
Supplies and Services	191	872	872	0
Transport Costs	0	0	0	0
Administration Costs	20,647	18,604	18,604	0
Payments	4,372,762	4,123,997	4,123,997	0
Central Support	44,992	44,945	44,945	0
Capital Charges	349,722	323,681	323,681	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,899,366</b>	<b>4,607,947</b>	<b>4,607,947</b>	<b>-51</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Scottish Government	259,250	259,250	259,250	0
D&G Council	217,040	117,818	117,818	0
Other Contributions	4,450,116	4,230,879	4,230,828	-51
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,809,348</b>	<b>4,607,947</b>	<b>4,607,947</b>	<b>-51</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



### 9.3 Capital Expenditure Programme

Expenditure on the elements of the Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20 was as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>£</b>
Purchase of Accessible Buses	186,126
Bus Infrastructure	71,837
Rail Station Parking	48,144
Active Travel Projects	298,061
<b>Total</b>	<b>604,168</b>

### 9.4 External Funding

No external funding was drawn down in 2019/20.

## Regional Transport Strategy Monitoring

	Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Source	Comment	
1	% age of Local Authority Road Network classified as Red or Amber by the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey	48	47	44	45	47.2	48	48	49	46	47	47	48	48	Scottish Transport Statistics		
2	Number of persons killed or seriously injured in road accidents on D&G roads	170	115	130	72	93	89	76	85	69	72	66	73	88	Reported Road Casualties (Police Scotland)	Due to changes in the the way casualty severities are recorded, figures for serious accidents in 2019 are not comparable with previous years.	
3	Number of ferry services to Ireland per week from D&G ports				100	99	93	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	Ferry Operator Timetables		
4	% age driver journeys delayed by congestion / Congestion delays experienced by drivers	6.3		8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Scottish Household Survey: Local Area Analysis	No longer surveyed	
5	Transport modal split (all journey purposes)																
6	% age Journeys to Work by public or active transport	23.3		27.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Scottish Household Survey: Local Area Analysis	No longer surveyed	
7	% age children walking and cycling to school		48.9	42.9	42.5	44.9	45.2	43.8	45.9	46.8	43.1	42.1	42.2	40.2	Sustrans Hands Up Survey		
	Including scooter/skate		49.2	43.3	43.2	45.5	46.6	46.5	48.9	49.7	45.3	44.4	43.7	42.5			
8	CO2 emissions from transport in D&G (kt)	Transport Total	633.1	610.4	583.8	587	581.4	578.5	578.4	545.9	570.6	585.8	619.5	593.5	-	Department for Energy and Climate Change	2019 figures not yet available
		Per capita	4.3	4.1	3.9	4	3.9	3.8	3.8	-	-	-	-	-			
10	PM10 and NO2 concentrations (Annual Hourly Mean) (µg/m3)	PM10	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	www.scottishairquality.co.uk	No longer measured
		NO2	38	37	35	40	32	33	30	30	32	31	30	29			31
11	Traffic on all roads million veh.km	2,021	2,021	1,998	1,974	1,963	1,927	1,956	2,015	2,073	2,111	2,244	2,212	2,246	Scottish Transport Statistics		

<b>A709 Corridor Upgrade</b>					
It is recognised that major improvements are needed on the A709 corridor in order to provide better connectivity to the Central Belt.					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>A709 Corridor Fastlink</b>	Construction of a new road between Dumfries and Lockerbie to offer enhanced connectivity to Central Scotland	£54m (2002 price base)	Transport Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway Council	STAG Part 1 complete. STAG Part 2 complete and submitted to the Scottish Government and response received.	Considered at Board meeting on 26 March 2010 - to be retained as a Priority Intervention.
<b>Quality Bus Link between Dumfries Railway Station and Lockerbie Railway Station</b>	Quality bus link and enhancements at both stations, including new Accessible Bus provision, access facilities, bus turning facilities, and Real Time Information	£600,000	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Substantially completed under GoSmart programme.	Potential for further improvements at Lockerbie, specifically integration of bus and rail real time information.

<b>Bus Network Quality Strategy</b>					
Package of measures aimed at improving the quality of the bus network, its integration with rail, cycling and walking, and its attractiveness to users. This includes new bus interchanges at key towns, new bus shelters across the network, real-time passenger information at key nodes, accessible buses and increased service frequencies on the rural bus network. The potential to use biofuels and reduce emissions will be examined.					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>New Bus Interchanges at Key Towns</b>	Development of enhanced bus interchange facilities at key towns	£1,000,000	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Newton Stewart, Annan, Gretna, Moffat and Castle Douglas complete	Complete
<b>Accessible Buses</b>	Enhanced bus access with low floor buses and improved stops	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Fully accessible buses specified in all SWestrans contracts.	Ongoing
<b>Increased Service Frequencies on Rural Bus Network</b>	Enhanced bus network with regular stopping patterns and improved frequencies	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Policy Root & Branch Review Complete	Pressure from public sector funding contraction.
<b>Real Time Passenger Information at Key Nodes</b>	Introduction of message systems at key bus nodes to inform passengers of real-time bus movements	£2,000,000	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Extensive provision	System removed in 2016 due to financial savings required.
<b>New Bus Shelters Across Network</b>	Roll-out of enhanced bus shelters across the region offering improved waiting environment	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Shelters provided from Capital Expenditure Programme across region	Ongoing
<b>Development of Bus Information Strategy</b>	Upgrade information at bus stops. Develop Bus/Air/Rail information and Traveline. Develop integrated ticketing strategy	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators, Rail Operators, Airline Operators	New style bus information panels provided across the region	Ongoing
<b>Improved Facilities at Rural Pick-up Points</b>	Low cost improvement measures	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council		Ongoing
<b>Bikes on Rural Buses</b>	Development of policy with operators	TBC	Dumfries and Galloway Council, Bus Operators		Being developed as part of Active Travel Strategy.

<b>Dumfries Southern Bypass</b>					
Construction of a new bypass south of Dumfries with a specific emphasis on improved connectivity to the critical Crichton area and the health and education services located there.					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Dumfries Southern Bypass</b>	Construction of a new bypass south of Dumfries with a specific emphasis on improved connectivity to the Crichton area (includes improvements to radial routes)	£56 million (2002 prices)	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Scottish Government, Developers	STAG Part 1 complete, STAG Part 2 complete.	Further Board consideration required.

<b>Dumfries Town Centre Bus Station</b>					
Development of a new bus station in Dumfries town centre which acts as a key transport node for the wider region. This includes compensatory parking to replace spaces lost to the redevelopment of existing parking stock for the bus station and associated traffic management measures					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Dumfries Town Centre Bus Interchange</b>	Development of a new bus station in Dumfries town centre, possibly at a site of an existing car park with compensatory relocated parking	£4,000,000	Scottish Government, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Study completed. Public consultation exercise completed. Council opted not to progress.	Further Board consideration required.  Now included in Dumfries and Galloway Council's Transformation work on Public Transport and Travel.

<b>Dumfries Town Centre Public Realm Improvements Including Walking and Cycling Enhancements</b>					
Package of measures improving the quality of transport infrastructure in Dumfries town centre. This includes public realm improvements, improved access to the rail station and improvements to walking and cycling routes in Dumfries designed to stimulate further regeneration of the regional capital					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Dumfries Town Centre Public Realm Improvements</b>	Series of improvements to the attractiveness and amenity of the town centre including transport links.	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Private Sector	Friars Vennel, Bank Street, Plainstones and Burns Statue complete.	Complete
<b>Crichton Access Roads</b>	Improved road access to the Crichton	£2,000,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council	Included with Dumfries Southern Bypass	
<b>Dumfries Bus Priority</b>	Improvements on key bus routes in Dumfries	£1,000,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Bus Operators	Concluded with report to Council	
<b>Sustainable Transport Initiatives</b>	Opportunities in Dumfries from development of Southern Bypass	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Bus Operators, Forums	Elements completed as part of GoSMART Dumfries	Potential for further opportunities
<b>Cycling/Walking Improvements Dumfries</b>	Improvements to the cycling/ walking network	£1,000,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Cycling Scotland, Sustrans	Maxwelltown Cycle Path including Connect2 Queen of the South Viaduct complete. Facilities provided as part of GoSMART Dumfries	Further projects being progressed in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Council.
<b>Dumfries Town Centre – Rail Station Access</b>	Improve access arrangements to Dumfries railway station	£300,000	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Completed as part of GoSMART Dumfries	ScotRail published the Dumfries Station Travel Plan in 2019.
<b>Dumfries Park and Choose Network</b>	Development of a series of Park and Choose sites around Dumfries	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Scottish Government, Operators	Substantial development as part of GoSMART Dumfries	
<b>Dumfries Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town</b>	Partnership with Scottish Government and Dumfries & Galloway Council	£6.8 million	Scottish Government, Dumfries & Galloway Council, other partners	Complete	

<b>Rail Services Upgrade</b> Enhanced rail services on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) and the Glasgow and South Western Line (GSWL)					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Improved Lockerbie – Glasgow Service</b>	Improved rail services between Lockerbie and Glasgow	N/A	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	New timetable and rolling stock from May 2014.  New Transpennine Franchise from April 2016.	Continue to lobby for improved services from Lockerbie station.  Lockerbie Station Liaison Group reconvened March 2020.
<b>Improved Lockerbie – Edinburgh Service</b>	Improved rail services between Lockerbie and Edinburgh	N/A	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Some improvements to services realised.	Potential for further improvements.
<b>GSW Service Frequency / Journey Time Enhancements Combined with Gretna Annan Doubling</b>	Improved rail services between Carlisle and Glasgow	N/A	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Timetable improvements from Dec 2017.	Still large gaps within Dumfries – Glasgow timetable which need addressed.  SWestrans submitted a paper detailing the rail timetable needs to Transport Scotland as part of their PfG commitment to review rail in SW Scotland.
	Reinstatement of double track between Gretna and Annan	£36,000,000		Complete	Complete
<b>Stranraer Line Frequency / Journey Time Enhancements</b>	The introduction of additional trains and local line improvements	N/A	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First	Community Rail Partnership established.	Stranraer Line position paper agreed by Board in 2017 and shared with

			Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Partnership study with SPT, Transport Scotland and Passenger Focus for section between Ayr and Stranraer complete	relevant decision-makers.
<b>Rail Services to Prestwick Airport via GSWL</b>	Improved rail services to Prestwick Airport from Dumfries and Galloway	N/A	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Partnership study with SPT, Transport Scotland and Passenger Focus for section between Ayr and Stranraer complete	



<b>Regionwide Rail Stations Strategy</b>					
New rail stations at Thornhill, Eastriggs, Beattock and Dunragit / Glenluce area and accessibility improvements at Lockerbie and Kirkconnel stations					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Region-wide Stations Strategy</b>	New rail stations at locations across the region including Thornhill, Eastriggs, Dunragit/ Glenluce area and Beattock	£7m - £12m	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Original STAG Studies complete for Thornhill and Eastriggs, and submitted to Transport Scotland. Response received.  Advised that new STAG studies required to progress.	STAG Appraisals completed for Eastriggs, Beattock and Thornhill and submitted to Transport Scotland. Included in the South of Scotland Transport Study as options to progress through STPR2.
<b>Accessibility Improvements – Lockerbie Station</b>	Improved access to Lockerbie station, particularly for wheelchair users to the southbound platform	£1,400,000	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Disabled Access project complete	Complete
<b>Accessibility Improvements – Kirkconnel Station</b>	Improved access to Kirkconnel station, particularly for wheelchair users to the southbound platform	TBC	Transport Scotland, Network Rail, First Scotrail, Dumfries & Galloway Council	Network Rail has been asked to consider accessibility improvements. Study into alternatives to a bridge and lifts option being progressed	LRDF bid accepted and £30K available to progress a review.

<b>Stranraer Waterfront and Town Centre Public Realm Improvements Including Public Rail / Bus Interchange Hub and Walking and Cycling Enhancements</b>					
Package of measures improving the quality of transport infrastructure in Stranraer town centre and waterfront area. This includes public realm improvements, improved walking and cycling linkages between the town centre and the waterfront and the development of integrated public transport interchange and associated multi-modal rail / bus / ferry links					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Integrated Public Transport Interchange, Stranraer, and Associated Multi-modal Rail / Bus / Ferry Links</b>	Development of integrated public transport interchange for rail, bus and ferry users. Undertake further study to review possible extension of railway line to Cairnryan	£2,350,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Transport Scotland, Scottish Government, Network Rail, EU-ERDF	StenaLine relocation complete 2011.	Budget allocation for interchange removed and absorbed within regeneration project.
<b>Stranraer Town Centre/ Waterfront Links</b>	Package of measures improving the quality of transport infrastructure in Stranraer town centre including public realm improvements and improved walking and cycling linkages between the town centre and the waterfront and ferry terminals	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Private Sector	StenaLine relocation complete. Service 350 implemented Sep 2013.	Project being taken forward by Dumfries and Galloway Council with assistance from SWestrans officers.

<b>Regionwide Cycling / Walking and Sustainable Travel Projects Including Completion of the National Cycle Network</b>					
Completion of the National Cycle Network – NCR 73 Newton Stewart – Cairnryan to link NCN Network in Scotland to NCN in Northern Ireland via the Loch Ryan ferry terminals. Involves completion of the Dunragit Bypass and Innermessan to Drummuckloch and cycle / walking path between Beattock and Moffat and cycle / walking path between Lochmaben and Lockerbie. An East to West Cycleway along the line of the Southern Upland Way.					
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure 2009-2024</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>	<b>Progress to 2019/20</b>	<b>Timescale and Comments (2019/20)</b>
<b>Lockerbie to Lochmaben Cycle Route</b>	Link to NCN and employment opportunities, providing alternative route to A709, requires bridge over River Annan	£1,000,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Cycling Scotland, Sustrans	Initial design, land issues and external funding opportunities continue to be investigated	The Board agreed to curtail work on this element at its meeting in March 2018.
<b>Moffat to Beattock Cycle Route</b>	Link to NCN extending link from Dumfries and providing off-road alternative to A701	£250,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Cycling Scotland, Sustrans	Path complete between Beattock and Hidden Corner.	Complete
<b>National Cycle Network Completion</b>	Completion of NCN linking Newton Stewart and Stranraer to Cairnryan, linking to ferry terminals and Northern Ireland	£900,000	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Cycling Scotland, Sustrans, Transport Scotland, EU-Interreg4	Works on Newton Stewart to Stranraer complete following the completion of the Dunragit Bypass.	Complete when Transport Scotland do Drummuckloch to Innermessan Scheme on A77.
<b>Sustainable Travel Plan and Associated Projects</b>	Travel Plans for staff of large businesses and public bodies. Marketing of DGTripshare. Bike Scheme. Active Travel Strategy. Consideration of Park & Cycle projects	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, Dumfries South Travel Plan Group, Dumfries & Galloway College	Travel Plan for DGRI and Crichton Royal Hospitals complete. DGTripshare established. Dumfries & Galloway Council Travel Plan complete.	Potential for public sector travel plans in locations other than Dumfries.
<b>Provision of Cycling / Walking Infrastructure at Various Locations across the Region</b>	Cycling / Walking routes to link into National and Strategic routes	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Sustrans, ERDF, Cycling Scotland	Various facilities provided under previous expenditure programmes.	Further /opportunities being taken forward by Dumfries & Galloway Council.
<b>East – West Cycle Route along Southern Upland Way Corridor</b>	Cycling/Walking route to link into national and strategic routes and communities	TBC	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland	Design, land issues continue to be investigated.	On-going

## REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

### 1. Reason for Report

To inform the Board of progress with the planning of a new Regional Transport Strategy.

### 2. Background

2.1 SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) was agreed by the SWestrans Board on 25 April 2008 after an extensive consultation exercise and approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2008. The RTS Delivery Plan was agreed by the Board on 27 March 2009.

2.2 The RTS covers the period up to 2023 and it was originally intended that a review and update of the strategy would be undertaken every 4 years.

2.3 At its meeting on 15 July 2016, the Board agreed to undertake a refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy. At its meeting on 23 September 2016, the Board were informed of the decision, announced at the Dumfries and Galloway Transport Summit in August 2016, by the Transport Minister, Mr Humza Yousaf MSP to a full review of the National Transport Strategy (NTS). The Board were informed that this full review of the NTS would have a significant impact on the refresh of our own RTS which would be required to align our regional delivery to the national vision, strategy and outcomes.

2.4 At the Board meeting on 18 September 2020, the Board noted the publication of National Transport Strategy (NTS2) and the update on the delay to the associated NTS2 Delivery Plan. The NTS2 Delivery Plan was published on 5 February 2021.

2.5 SWestrans has a statutory duty to draw up a strategy for transport within its region.

### 3. Key Points – Regional Transport Strategy 2008 to 2023

3.1 SWestrans current vision is for a transport system for the South West of Scotland that delivers the internal and external connectivity required to sustain and enhance the region's economy and communities whilst minimising the impact of transport on the environment. In doing this, the RTS will:

- Facilitate access to jobs and public services.
- Support key sectors, vibrant places and inclusive communities.
- Enable goods to reach their markets; provide travel choices that promote equality, social inclusion and support quality of life.
- Enhance the quality and integration of public transport.
- Support walking and cycling, not only as a leisure pursuit but as a means of healthy, active travel.
- Add value to the broader Scottish economy and assist the Scottish Government in attaining its national targets for increased sustainable economic growth, road traffic stabilisation, and reduced carbon emissions.

3.2 This vision is being delivered through the complementary objectives:

- Improve transport links within Dumfries and Galloway and provide fast, safe and reliable journey opportunities to significant markets, including the national economic centres of Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as northern England and Ireland.
- Contribute to improved economic growth and social inclusion in the region whilst minimising the environmental impacts of transport.
- Support the national transport target of road traffic stabilisation.
- Add value to the broader Scottish economy and underpin increased sustainable national economic growth.
- Assist in getting visitors/tourists to the region from other parts of Scotland, England, Ireland and beyond.
- Making it possible for more people to do business in and from Dumfries and Galloway by providing sustainable connections to key business centres in the Central Belt and other locations such as Ayrshire and Cumbria; Support vibrant places that provide employment, healthcare, educational and other services that people need and want, so that their quality of life is maximised.
- Reduce the constraint of peripherality, both between the region's main settlements and its outlying areas, and between the region and its external markets.
- Capitalise on improvements to critical long distance corridors to create new transport services, nodes and development opportunities for Dumfries and Galloway.
- Pursue certain transport schemes in the context of local and national economic development, while at the same time recognising wider context of economic, social and environmental imperatives.

### 3.3 Six policies are agreed to promote the Strategy:

- **Policy 1** - The Partnership will promote schemes which will not only benefit Dumfries and Galloway but will add value to the broader Scottish economy and underpin increased sustainable national economic growth, aligning to local and national policy objectives.
- **Policy 2** - Transport interventions promoted through the Regional Transport Strategy will support the regional economy in relation to local jobs and also facilitate sustainable connectivity internally as well as externally to key business centres in the central belt and other locations such as Ayrshire and Cumbria.
- **Policy 3** - The Regional Transport Strategy seeks to improve quality of life by promoting vibrant places which provide access for all to employment, healthcare, education and other services.
- **Policy 4** - Transport interventions incorporated in the Regional Transport Strategy seek to address peripherality between the region's main settlements and outlying areas, and between the region and its external markets.
- **Policy 5** - The Partnership will adopt a balanced approach to competing needs, recognising the role transport plays in sustaining local economies while at the same time making use of alternative approaches in locations where different transport policies focused on minimising car use are more appropriate and more effective.

- **Policy 6** - The Partnership will assist the Scottish Government in delivering on its five high level national objectives and the National Transport Strategy. A presumption will be given in favour of transport improvements linked to the strategic vision based on well-defined economic, social and environmental objectives.

#### 4. Key Points – New Regional Transport Strategy

4.1 It is the duty of each Transport Partnership to draw up a strategy for transport within its region (its “transport strategy”). Its transport strategy shall include provision about each of the following matters:

- (a) the respects in which transport in the region needs to be provided, developed or improved having regard to, among other things:
- future needs including those occasioned by demographic and land use changes; and
  - what can be done, taking account of cost, funding and practicability.
- (b) meeting the needs of all inhabited places, in particular, those which the Partnership considers different from the remainder of the region by reason of their remoteness or the sparsity of their populations;
- (c) meeting the need for efficient transport links between heavily populated places;
- (d) how transport in the region will be provided, developed, improved and operated so as:
- to enhance social and economic well-being;
  - to promote public safety, including road safety and the safety of users of public transport;
  - to be consistent with the principle of sustainable development and to conserve and enhance the environment;
  - to promote social inclusion;
  - to encourage equal opportunities and, in particular, the observance of the equal opportunities requirements;
  - to facilitate access to hospitals, clinics, surgeries and other places where a health service is provided; and
  - to integrate with transport elsewhere.
- (e) the order of priority in which different elements of the provision, development and improvement of transport should be undertaken;
- (f) how the Transport Partnership's functions will be exercised so as to fulfil its transport strategy and, if the Partnership considers that the conferring of further functions is necessary for that purpose, what those functions are;
- (g) how the Transport Partnership, so as to enable it to fulfil its transport strategy, will seek to influence its constituent councils or council in the performance of their functions relating to transport; and

(h) the measuring and monitoring of the achievement of the strategy.

4.2 In performing its duty, a Transport Partnership shall have regard to any guidance in that respect given to it or to Transport Partnerships generally by the Scottish Ministers and to any current national transport strategy established by the Scottish Ministers.

4.3 The National Transport Strategy 2 and its first Delivery Plan are now in place and therefore all the Regional Transport Partnerships are undertaking or planning to undertake a new RTS.

4.4 The process to undertake a RTS is set out in guidance and requires the following elements with consultation throughout:

- Issues and Objectives (Main Issues Report)
- Transport Options, and Appraisal
- Draft Strategy
- Final Strategy
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

4.5 It is expected that the new RTS will take a minimum of 18 months to complete and cost in the region of £50K to £80K to deliver as there is a need to engage suitably qualified external assistance. Procurement of this assistance is factored into timelines.

4.6 Officers have discussed approaches and timelines to develop a new RTS with other RTPs and Transport Scotland and believe that the high-level modular approach below is achievable:

#### **Module 1 – Issues and Objectives (Jul21 – Nov21)**

- Main Issues Report – utilising the significant work/outputs from the South West Scotland Transport Study
- SEA
- Stakeholder Consultation
- Public Consultation

#### **Module 2 – Transport Options and Appraisal (Dec22 – Apr22)**

- Draft Strategy and Delivery Plan
- SEA
- EqIA
- Consultation

#### **Module 3 - Final RTS (May22 – Sep22)**

- Final RTS and Delivery Plan
- EqIA
- Consultation
- Ministerial Approval

4.6 SWestrans currently has no identified budget within its revenue allocation for developing a new RTS and work is underway to identify what flexibility, if any, can be achieved within our existing funding for this purpose. It is anticipated that the £50K to £80K cost will be split equally across the next two financial years.

4.7 As the Board are aware, funding for our statutory activities comes from our constituent Council (Dumfries and Galloway Council). It is considered prudent, given the short timescales, that a formal request for funding assistance is submitted to the Council indicating that the work to fund a new RTS within our own resources is underway.

4.8 The Board are asked to note the progress to develop a new Regional Transport Strategy and agree that a formal request for funding assistance be submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

<b>5. Implications</b>	
<b>Financial</b>	SWestrans currently has no identified budget within its revenue allocation for developing a new RTS and work is underway to identify what flexibility, if any, can be achieved within our existing funding for this purpose.
<b>Policy</b>	Policy implications are included within the report.
<b>Equalities</b>	An EqIA is a critical element of the RTS.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Climate issues will be a focus of the RTS.
<b>Risk Management</b>	The need for a current RTS and Delivery Plan relates to a number of known risks: R03 – Strategic Direction; R04 – Capital Funding R05 – RTS Delivery; R07 – Revenue Funding

<b>6. Recommendations</b>
Members of the Board are asked to:
6.1 note the progress to develop a new Regional Transport Strategy; and
6.2 agree that a formal request for funding assistance be submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Report Author: Douglas Kirkpatrick Tel: 01387 260136	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN
Date of Report: 7 March 2021 File Ref: SW2/Meetings/2021	



## STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

### 1. Reason for Report

1.1 To update Members of the Board on the Union Connectivity Review, the Levelling Up Fund and the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2).

1.2 To agree a response to the Strategic Transport Projects Review Phase 1 consultation.

### 2. Background

2.1 Officers submitted a response to the Call for Evidence for the Union Connectivity Review on 30 December 2020 following email input from Board members. On the 10 March 2021 the Department for Transport published the Union Connectivity Review Interim Report.

2.2 The Levelling Up Fund was announced in the UK Government's 2020 Spending Review to support communities in realising its levelling up vision. A Prospectus for the Fund was published in March 2021.

2.3 At the Board meeting on 20 September 2019, the Board agreed a response to the Draft Report 'South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change'.

2.4 The Final Report 'South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change' was published on 28 January 2020.

2.5 On 27 February 2020, Transport Scotland published a national report and a series of eight draft Case for Change Reports for the STPR2.

2.6 At its meeting on 29 September 2020, the Board received an update on STPR2 including advice that Transport Scotland intended to take a phased approach to STPR2, with Phase 1 reporting along the original planned timescales and focusing on recommendations which "lock in", in transport terms, the positive benefits and travel behaviors of individuals and provide a step change in investment which supports the priorities and outcomes of the NTS2. Phase 2, which will complete the review, will report later in 2021.

2.7 The STPR2 Phase 1 report and accompanying suite of documents was published on 3 February 2021 and are available through the link below:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/update-and-phase-1-recommendations-february-2021-stpr2/>

### 3. Union Connectivity Review

3.1 On 30 June 2020, the Prime Minister announced an independent review, led by Sir Peter Hendy, of how the quality and availability of transport infrastructure across the UK can support economic growth and quality of life across the whole of the UK.

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The union connectivity review (UCR) will provide independent advice to the UK Government. It will focus on transport's ability to maximise economic potential and to improve quality of life and will outline a series of specific recommendations that will individually and collectively contribute to this outcome.

3.2 SWestrans submitted a response on the Union Connectivity Review Call for Evidence in December 2020.

3.3 On the 10 March 2021 the Department for Transport published the Union Connectivity Review Interim Report in advance of the Final Report which is to be published in Summer 2021. With respect to the interests of Dumfries and Galloway the Interim Report identifies:

- Among a list of key concerns – “A higher capacity and faster connection on the A75 from the ferry port at Cairnryan to the M6 corridor for freight and passengers to and from Northern Ireland”.
- A project has been commissioned to consider a fixed link between Northern Ireland and the British mainland to “assess the feasibility of such a link, and an outline cost and timescale for the link and the associated works needed”.
- “A key recommendation from the Review is the possible development of a new UK Strategic Transport Network”.
- “Maritime connectivity between Scotland and Northern Ireland is critical for freight, not only between these countries, but also for goods travelling through Scotland between England and Northern Ireland. This freight flows through the port of Cairnryan; therefore, road connectivity to Stranraer on the west coast is of key strategic importance, specifically the A75 and A77 with the former being particularly important and carrying twice as many freight vehicles than the latter.”
- “Feedback from stakeholders and consultees have identified the following road connections as being of interest to the Review.....A75 to the Port of Cairnryan”.
- “consultation in the early stages of this work suggests widespread approval for this concept, provided it is funded, and that funding is not subtracted from existing funding of the devolved administrations. UK government funding would, like the former EU funding, be used to add to existing funding streams, to enable higher capacity, faster, and more reliable connectivity.”

#### 4. Levelling Up Fund

4.1 The UK Government's Levelling Up Fund will focus on capital investment in local infrastructure to drive regeneration and growth in places in need and areas of low productivity and connectivity. The Fund prospectus sets out how local areas can access the first round of funding.

4.2 The Fund is expected to target a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes. The Fund is jointly managed by HM Treasury (HMT), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

4.3 At the Spending Review, the UK Government committed an initial £4 billion for the Levelling Up Fund for England over the next four years (up to 2024-25) and set

aside at least £800 million for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK Government will use the new financial assistance powers in the UKIM Act to make the Fund available to the whole of the UK, enabling all communities to receive investment and support to recover from the pandemic. As such, up to £4.8 billion until 2024-25 will be available for the Fund across the UK, with at least £800 million invested in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

4.4 In Scotland, funding will be delivered through local authorities. A request has been made to include Regional Transport Partnerships as delivery bodies.

4.5 The prospectus sets out the approach for the first round of the Fund, which will prioritise bids that can demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground in the coming financial year (2021-22). This approach will be kept under review for future rounds. The Fund is open to all local areas and the amount of funding each area receives will be determined on a competitive basis to ensure value for money.

4.6 Capacity funding will be allocated to local authorities most in need of levelling up in England, as identified in the index published alongside the prospectus. It will also be allocated to all local authorities in Scotland and Wales, to help build their relationship with the UK Government for the purposes of the Fund. Dumfries and Galloway has been identified as Priority 1 in the index.

4.7 The Fund will focus investment in projects that require up to £20m of funding. However, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, by exception. Bids above £20m and below £50m will be accepted for transport projects only, such as road schemes, and can be submitted by any bidding local authority. They will be subject to a more detailed business case process and will need to score highly overall. All bids should have the approval of the relevant authority responsible for delivering them.

4.8 The first round of the Fund will focus on three themes: smaller transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world-leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets. For transport investments this includes (but is not limited to):

- Investments in new or existing cycling provision;
- Improved priority for local bus services (e.g. bus priority lanes or signal priority at junctions);
- Enhanced public transport facilities, such as bus stops and stations;
- Accessibility improvements to local transport networks for disabled people;
- Enhancements and upgrades to local road networks (e.g. by passes and junction improvements);
- Structural maintenance works to local roads, including bridges; and
- Multi-modal proposals which combine two or more interventions to enhance transport across modes.

4.9 The Fund is requesting proposals for high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users.

4.10 The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive fund, with funding distributed to places across the UK on the basis of successful project selection. Within the competition, funding will be targeted towards places with the most significant need, as measured by the index. While preference will be given to bids from higher priority areas, the bandings do not represent eligibility criteria, nor the amount or number of bids a place can submit.

4.11 The first round of funding, will prioritise projects which are able to demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground in the 2021-22 financial year. There will be future opportunities to bid in subsequent rounds. It is expected all funding provided from the Fund to be spent by 31 March 2024, and, exceptionally, into 2024-25 for larger schemes.

4.12 To apply for investment from the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, eligible local institutions must submit their bids to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by noon on Friday 18 June 2021.

## 5. Strategic Transport Projects Review

5.1 The second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) is the Scotland-wide review of the strategic transport network across all transport modes. The review will give Scottish Ministers a programme of potential transport investment opportunities for the period 2022-2042 and inform the next Infrastructure Investment Plan.

### South West Scotland Transport Study

5.2 The Final Report 'South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change' and suite of accompanying documents is a significant piece of work feeding into the STPR2.

5.3 The report presents the context for the appraisal of interventions for the South West of Scotland and has considered the rationale for improvements to road, rail, public transport and active travel on the key strategic corridors in the region, with a focus on access to the ports at Cairnryan.

5.4 The study has identified the key transport problems and opportunities in the study area and was undertaken in line with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). Evidence-based problems have formed the basis for the development of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) and the generation, sifting and development of a wide range of interventions across all modes in the study area, which have subsequently been appraised and packaged.

5.5 Based on detailed data analysis and an extensive public and stakeholder engagement programme, a number of problems have been identified around the key themes of:

- Average Journey Times
- Mobility
- Journey Time Reliability
- Connectivity
- Environmental Impact
- Cost
- Safety

5.6 The multi-modal problems identified through these exercises have subsequently been mapped against the themes and used to help inform the development of TPOs for the study:

- TPO1: Reduce journey times across the strategic transport network in the study area to the ports at Cairnryan.
- TPO2: Reduce accident rates and the severity of accidents on the trunk road network in the South West of Scotland.
- TPO3: Improve the resilience of the Strategic Transport Network across the South West of Scotland.
- TPO4: Improve journey quality across the road, public transport and active travel networks in the South West of Scotland.
- TPO5: Improve connectivity (across all modes) for communities in the South West of Scotland to key economic, education, health and cultural centres including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Ayr, Kilmarnock and Carlisle.

5.7 Following the development of the TPOs, and a process of option sifting and packaging, 23 multi-modal option packages across the study area were identified for further appraisal through the STPR2 process. As part of the sifting exercise, a number of options were sifted out, including local options and options outwith the study area. These have been identified for further development by partner organisations and third parties.

5.8 The options recommended for taking forward for further assessment as part of STPR2 are presented below:

1. Improved transport integration at main hubs – Package of measures to improve integration of transport at main transport hubs and interchanges (e.g. Stranraer, Dumfries and Lockerbie), including improved integration of bus and rail times, improved cycle connectivity to rail stations and ticket integration.
2. Development of the Strategic Active Travel Network – Package of measures to develop the Strategic Active Travel Network in the South West of Scotland to better connect communities to key destinations, including cycle paths parallel to trunk roads and improvements to the National Cycle Network.
3. New Rail Stations on the Glasgow South Western Line – New rail stations on the Glasgow South Western Line, such as at Cumnock, Thornhill, Eastriggs, Pinwherry, Dunragit and South of Ayr.
4. Enhanced Rail Services on the Glasgow South Western Line – Package of measures to enhance rail services on the Glasgow South Western Line, such as rail service, rolling stock and infrastructure improvements and Stranraer Station relocation.
5. New Rail Stations on the West Coast Main Line - New station at Beattock.
6. Enhanced Rail Services on the West Coast Main Line – Package of measures to enhance rail services on the West Coast Main Line, such as increased services operating from and improved access to rail services at Lockerbie, including increased park and ride provision.
7. New Rail Link between Dumfries and Stranraer - Development of a rail link between Dumfries and Stranraer.
8. New Rail Link between Stranraer and Cairnryan – Development of a rail link between Stranraer and Cairnryan.

9. New Rail link between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main Line – Development of a rail link between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main Line.
10. Enhanced Rail Freight Capacity- Enhancement of rail freight capacity, such as freight hubs at Girvan and Barrhill.
11. Development of the Timber Transport Network – Package of measures to support the transport of timber freight by road, rail and sea in the South West of Scotland.
12. Development of Enhanced Diversionary Routes and Route Planning – Package of measures and improvements to the secondary road network which performs a strategic function when the trunk road network is closed to increase resilience of the transport network.
13. Development of Enhanced Service, Rest Areas and Laybys – Package of measures to deliver improved rest provision for all road users in the South West of Scotland, such as truck/lorry stops and rest facilities on the A75 and A77 and enhanced laybys for buses on main routes.
14. HGV Speed Limit Increase - HGV speed limit increase to 50mph on the trunk road network in the South West of Scotland.
15. A75 Capacity Enhancements- Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A75, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
16. A75 Safety Measures- Implementation of targeted measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A75. Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.
17. A77 Capacity Enhancements – Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A77, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
18. A77 Safety Measures- Implementation of targeted measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and localised junction improvements to improve safety on the A77. Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.
19. A76 Capacity Enhancements – Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A76, such as improved overtaking opportunities and town/village bypasses.
20. A76 Safety Measures – Implementation of targeted measures, such as route improvements to enhance road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A76.
21. Road Capacity Enhancements between Dumfries and the A74(M) – Development of road capacity enhancements between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as partial dualling which would improve overtaking opportunities, and/or bypasses. Package also potentially includes considering the possibility to re-classify the status of the A701 and A709 roads.
22. Road Safety Measures between Dumfries and the A74(M) – Implementation of targeted measures between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as road geometry, bends, junction improvements and measures to address pinch points.

23. Junction Improvements (M6) – Improvements to the M6 for North to West movements (i.e. coming off the A74(M) north to the A75).

5.9 The next steps include a Preliminary Options Appraisal that would undertake a qualitative appraisal of the recommended options above including an assessment of:

- The likely impacts of the options against the Transport Planning Objectives developed for STPR2;
- The likely impacts of the options against STAG criteria [i.e. Environment, Safety, Economy, Integration, and Accessibility and Social Inclusion];
- Options appraisal against established policy directives; and
- Feasibility, affordability and public acceptability of options.

#### Revised Timescales

5.10 Transport Scotland are taking a phased approach to STPR2, with Phase 1 reporting along the original planned timescales and focusing on recommendations which “lock in”, in transport terms, the positive benefits and travel behaviors of individuals and provide a step change in investment which supports the priorities and outcomes of the NTS2. Phase 2, which will complete the review, will report later in 2021.

### **6. Strategic Transport Projects Review – Phase 1**

6.1 The STPR2 Phase 1 report and accompanying suite of documents was published on 3 February 2021 and includes a consultation which closes on 31 March 2021.

6.2 In order to assess and finalise options for assessment as potential Phase 1 measures, a proportionate approach was developed, considering themes or packages that could potentially meet the short-term requirements, whilst being guided by the overall STPR2 options list.

6.3 The Phase 1 process has resulted in 20 interventions being recommended, against 8 themes (Figure 1). Within the list of themes and interventions, there are no specific priorities, as each component is important in addressing the complex transport needs of our nation. Neither are these interventions the sole responsibility of Transport Scotland to deliver, indeed many will rely heavily on partners to take them forward. However, by including these within Phase 1 of STPR2, Transport Scotland has confirmed its commitment to supporting and working in partnership with others to develop interventions which “lock in” the benefits and travel behaviours of individuals and provide a step change in investment which supports the priorities and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy.



**Figure 1 – Phase 1 Themes and Recommendations**

6.4 A consultation comments form is available online for completion by 31 March 2021. Officers have drafted a response, attached as the **Appendix**, and the Board are asked to consider and agree the response.

<b>7. Implications</b>	
Financial	There are no direct financial implications from the report. However, all publications referred to within the paper do present funding opportunities for our region.
Policy	STPR2 will inform the new SWestrans RTS which will be required to align our regional delivery to the national vision, policies and outcomes.
Equalities	There are no direct equalities implications. Any future policy change may have equalities implications which will be monitored.



Climate Change	Any major infrastructure investment associated with STPR2 will require to consider how it impacts on climate action, how it adapts to the effects of climate change, how it helps deliver a net-zero target and how it will promote greener, cleaner choices.
Risk Management	The Risk Register will be updated as required to mitigate any risk to SWestrans as STPR2 progresses.

## 8. Recommendations

Members of the Board are asked to:

- 8.1 note the publication of the Union Connectivity Review Interim Report;
- 8.2 note the publication of the Levelling Up Fund Prospectus;
- 8.3 note the publication of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Phase 1 report; and
- 8.4 consider and agree the draft response, attached as the appendix, to the consultation comments form for the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Phase 1 Report.

Joe Coombey/Douglas Kirkpatrick - Report Authors	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries, DG2 8PN
Date of Report: 14 March 2021 File Ref: SW2/meetings/2021	

**Appendix** - Draft response to the consultation comments form for the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 Phase 1 Report.

**Introduction**

In 2019, Transport Scotland commenced the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) to help inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years. STPR2 will help to deliver the vision, priorities and outcomes for transport set out in the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) and will align with other national plans such as the National Planning Framework (NPF4) and the Climate Change Plan.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, STPR2 has a two Phased approach, with Phase 1 reporting to the original timescale of Winter 2020/21. Phase 2 will report later in 2021 and will inform the Scottish Government's future investment plans and spending reviews.

**Setting the Policy Context**

The National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) sets the vision for the country's transport system over the next 20 years. At the heart of the strategy is the recognition that we need to deliver a step change in behaviour and provision of attractive, affordable, accessible and sustainable travel options. The actions to take forward the new National Transport Strategy are outlined in the Delivery Plan, published in December 2020. As well as outlining the role of STPR2, it also highlights other parallel workstreams that will deliver on the NTS2 vision and outcomes. This includes the Island Connectivity Plan (ICP), being prepared as the successor to the Ferries Plan 2013-22 and will be closely linked to the outcomes of the STPR2.

In December 2020, the Scottish Government produced its Update to the Climate Change Plan (CCP), which sets out the approach to delivering a green recovery, with a focus on the period up to 2032. The transport related components of the plan build upon the new National Transport Strategy, with a specific commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.

The Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) for Scotland 2021 to 2026 provides additional detail to support the commitments made within the Programme for Government and sets the context of future investment in transport to deliver an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It recognises the need to invest in the areas of the transport sector being considered through STPR2 Phase 1.

By aligning strategy, project and programme funding, the Capital Spending Review (CSR) provides confidence that the announced plans are affordable and fully funded. The review also sends a strong signal on the future need to adjust the balance of investment in favour of renewing and extending the life of existing infrastructure, both on environmental and value-for-money grounds.

The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is being developed alongside a public consultation on the Draft Infrastructure Investment plan and STPR2. This presents the opportunity to embed the importance of "place" across land-use planning and transport. It will also set the context for developing an investment programme that is aligned with the sustainable travel hierarchy presented in the NTS2.

The recommendations in this Phase 1 Report do not constitute the full investment programme of Transport Scotland. They should be considered with the overall government spending commitments on transport outlined in the above documents and Scottish Government budgets. Some of the other Scottish Government transport spending commitments are out of scope for STPR2. For example:

- Asset management of the motorway and trunk road (e.g. routine and cyclic maintenance);
- Measures to improve resilience of the rail network (e.g. operations, maintenance and renewal); and
- Revenue based investment in public transport including ferries and air services (e.g. subsidies for operations and fares).

### **Challenges for Transport and Infrastructure**

Transport's contribution to the climate emergency and net zero targets, means that there is a need to reduce unsustainable travel and deliver modal shift towards walking, cycling and public transport. If we continue as we are now, forecasts suggest a 40% increase in vehicular travel by 2037. However, recent work by the Committee on Climate Change set out the need for a 10% reduction in car kilometres with a modal shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport and the Scottish Government went further in the recent update to the Climate Change Plan setting a 20% target.

To achieve a modal shift of the scale required to address the climate emergency, will require significant changes to the complex travel behaviours of users, operators, and the public and private sectors. In accordance with the sustainable travel hierarchy, STPR2 should prioritise interventions that increase the modal share of shorter everyday trips by walking, wheeling and cycling; short to medium length trips by public transport and longer trips by rail and low emission vehicles.

The COVID-19 pandemic has directly led to a restructuring of STPR2. Phase 1 has been introduced in order to help expedite the development of interventions that can embed, support and extend the increase in travel by sustainable travel modes, and those that can be brought forward to support economic recovery. The scenarios being developed for Phase 2 in STPR2 will be for the medium and longer term (next 20 years) and do not need to consider the details of the present COVID-19 crisis. It is assumed that some effective means of managing coronavirus will be found, whether by vaccination or otherwise. Lasting responses to the crisis do however need to be taken into account, a most obviously example being that a major part of the economy has carried out a very large-scale experiment into the feasibility of consistent working at home.

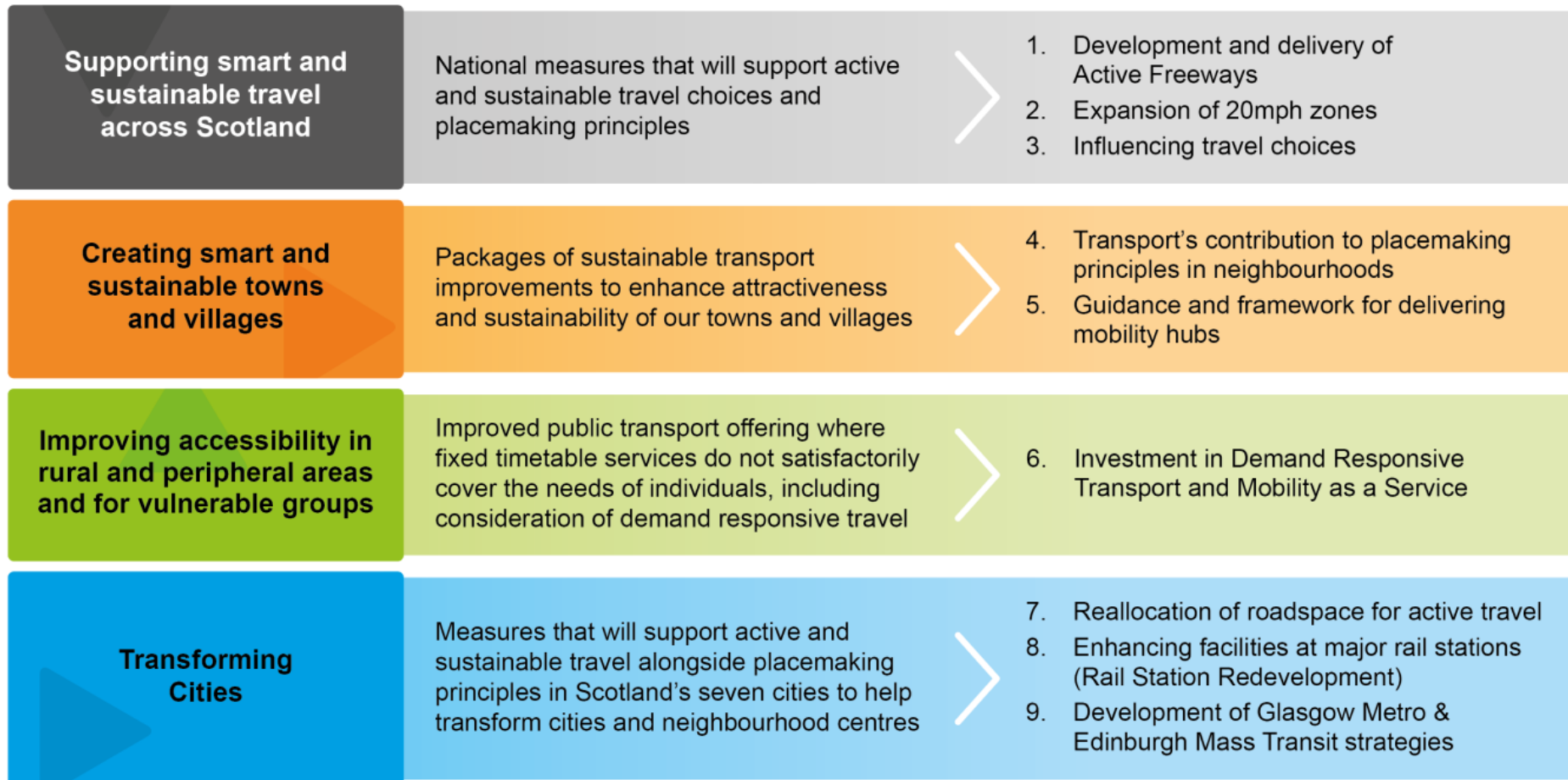
### **Generation and Sifting of Options**

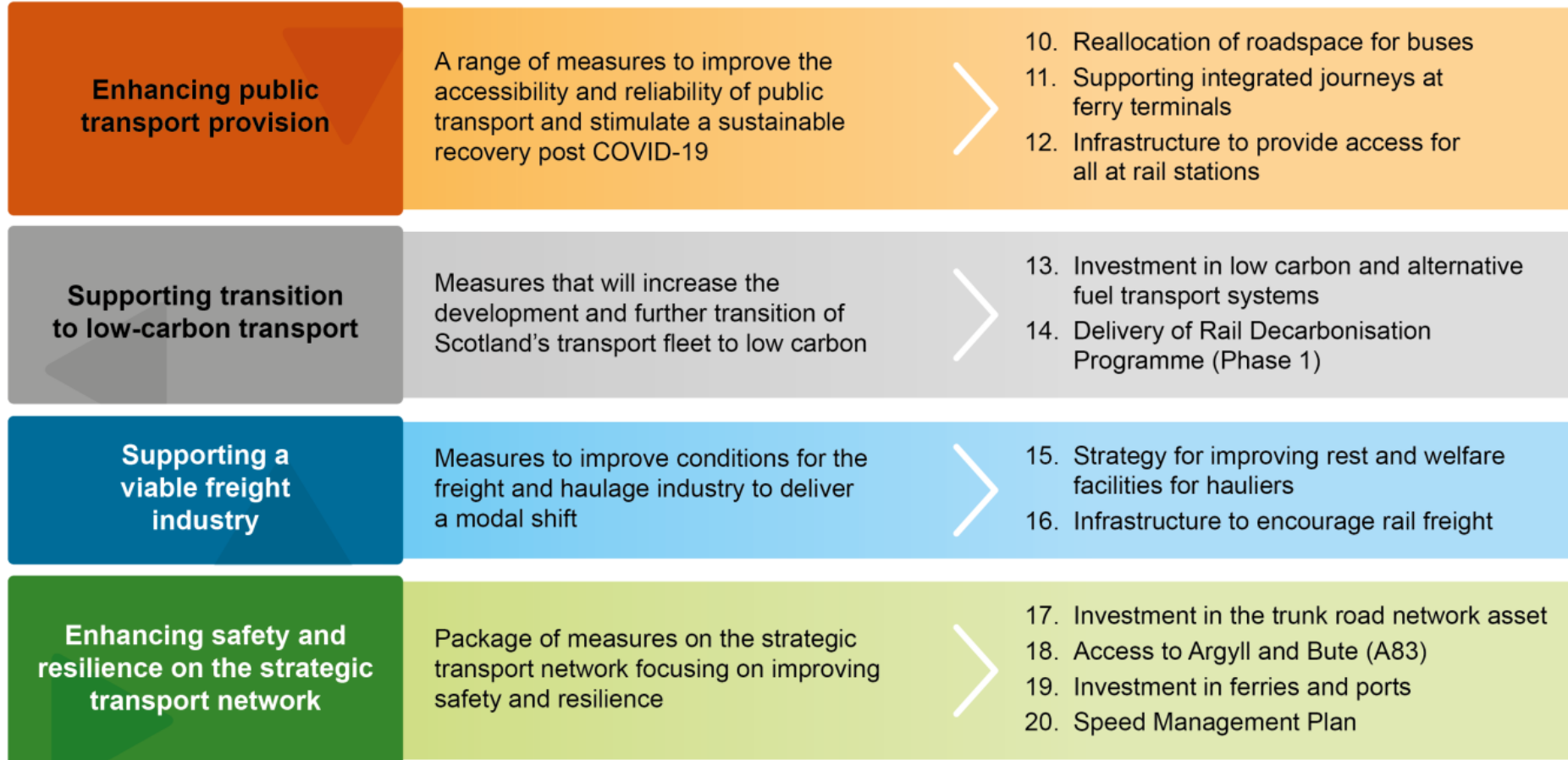
An extensive process of generating and sifting options has been undertaken, involving a collaborative approach with stakeholder groups across the country. Initially, approximately 14,000 options and ideas were collated. These were subsequently reviewed and cleaned to remove duplicates etc, to create a long list of approximately 2,800 options. Following an extensive sifting process, a further review was undertaken, which resulted in approximately 1400 standalone options, which have resulted in 80 groupings (similar types of interventions) to take forward to the Phase 2 appraisal process, which will be undertaken during 2021.

**The Phase 1 Approach and Recommendations**

In order to assess and finalise options for assessment as potential Phase 1 measures, a proportionate approach has been developed, considering themes or packages that could potentially meet the short-term requirements, whilst being guided by the overall STPR2 options list.

The Phase 1 process has resulted in 20 interventions being recommended, against 8 themes (Figure 1). Within the list of themes and interventions, there are no specific priorities, as each component is important in addressing the complex transport needs of our nation. Neither are these interventions the sole responsibility of Transport Scotland to deliver, indeed many will rely heavily on partners to take them forward. However, by including these within Phase 1 of STPR2, Transport Scotland has confirmed its commitment to supporting and working in partnership with others to develop interventions which “lock in” the benefits and travel behaviours of individuals and provide a step change in investment which supports the priorities and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy.





**Figure 1 – Phase 1 Themes and Recommendations**

## STPR2 Comments Forms

### Privacy Statement:

#### Privacy and Your Personal Information

“This activity is being carried out by the STPR2 Consultant Team (Jacobs and AECOM) on behalf of Transport Scotland. The activity is being carried out under the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct and in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines and your data will be aggregated so you will not be identified in the reporting of the feedback findings. We will combine the information you provide with that of other respondents to understand views on the transport related problems and opportunities across different regions and the country as a whole as well as the transport planning objectives. The information gathered will be used to inform the work of STPR2 and data may also be shared with Regional Transport Partnerships and local authorities to assist with regional and local work in their area.

To find out why Transport Scotland collect personal information and how it is used, please see Transport Scotland’s privacy policy and AECOM’s privacy policy data processors. Aggregated data will be shared with Jacobs. Any personal information you provide will be securely stored by AECOM to build an understanding of key issues for consideration in STPR2. Once the project is complete this data will then be deleted.

#### **STPR2: Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report:**

This comments form seeks to understand your views on the **eight Phase 1 themes and associated Phase 1 interventions** within the **STPR2: Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report**. We recommend that you review the material within the report prior to you providing comments. The form should take 10 minutes to complete and all responses are anonymous.

The closing date for comments is midnight on 31 March 2021.

Demographic Questions		
1		<p>Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individual</li> <li>▪ <b>Organisation</b></li> </ul>
2		<p>If responding as an organisation, what is the name of your organisation?</p> <p><b>The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership</b></p>
3		<p>Please indicate which category best describes your organisation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Third Sector or Community group</li> <li>▪ Transport Operator</li> <li>▪ Business Organisation</li> <li>▪ Community Council</li> <li>▪ Local Authority</li> <li>▪ <b>Regional Transport Partnership</b></li> <li>▪ Other Public Sector</li> <li>▪ Academia / Education</li> <li>▪ Other (please specify)</li> </ul>
4	Only for those responding as an individual	<p>Which of these age groups are you in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 16-17</li> <li>▪ 18-24</li> <li>▪ 25- 34</li> <li>▪ 35-44</li> <li>▪ 45-54</li> <li>▪ 55+</li> <li>▪ Prefer not to say</li> </ul>



Comments Form STPR2: Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report		
5		<p>Do you feel the eight themes within the STPR2 Phase 1 capture what needs to be done in the short term, in relation to the transport investment priorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strongly agree</li> <li>▪ <b>Agree</b></li> <li>▪ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>▪ Disagree</li> <li>▪ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
6		<p>Do you feel the themes appropriately address challenges and opportunities described within the report?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Yes</b></li> <li>▪ No</li> </ul>
6b		<p>Please use the space below to provide any further comments on the challenges and opportunities described within the report:</p> <p><b>Please refer to further comments below</b></p>
7		<p>Do you feel that the Phase 1 interventions associated with the eight themes support the priorities and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strongly agree</li> <li>▪ <b>Agree</b></li> <li>▪ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>▪ Disagree</li> <li>▪ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
8		<p>Please use the space below to provide any further comments that you wish to make on the eight themes.</p> <p><b>Please refer to further comments below</b></p>
9		<p>How well do the Phase 1 interventions respond to the uncertainty in travel demand and behaviour that we face in the short term due to COVID-19?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Very well</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Well</li> <li>▪ <b>Don't know</b> / No opinion</li> <li>▪ Poorly</li> <li>▪ Very poorly</li> </ul>
10		<p>How well do the Phase 1 interventions support Scotland's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in the short-term?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Very well</li> <li>▪ Well</li> <li>▪ <b>Don't know</b> / No opinion</li> <li>▪ Poorly</li> <li>▪ Very poorly</li> </ul>
11		<p>Please use the space below to highlight the Phase 1 themes and interventions, that you particularly support:</p> <p><b><u>Theme: Supporting smart and sustainable travel across Scotland.</u></b>  <b>SWestrans is fully supportive of this theme and supports the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy for decision making.</b></p> <p><b>We are particularly supportive of the Influencing Travel Choices intervention as it assists in fulfilling the objectives to promote walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. As noted within the report, recent public health messaging regarding public transport during COVID-19 has had a fundamental impact on patronage levels and the commercial viability of transport operators and routes. It is key that the short-term impacts of COVID-19 are addressed comprehensively to ensure the Priorities set out in the NTS are deliverable in the medium and long term.</b></p> <p><b>In 2019, Dumfries and Galloway Council passed a Climate Emergency Declaration, agreeing to a 12-point plan to reduce carbon emissions in the region to net zero by 2025, and as a Community Planning Partner, SWestrans will assist in the attempt to achieve this. Work to introduce 20mph zones within Dumfries has been taken forward through the Spaces for People programme and it is encouraging to see that this will be expanded across Scotland. Dumfries and Galloway and the Highlands have the most ambitious targets relating to net-zero and we call on the Scottish Government to support us in reaching these targets, including assistance in sustainable travel and meeting the transport commitments set out in the Climate Change Plan.</b></p> <p><b>The Phase 1 report states that “it is clear that efforts over the last decade have not had a sustained impact on the increase in walking and cycling, particularly as a means to travel to work or education”. SWestrans is committed to working with national agencies on influencing travel choices locally and is increasing resources to deliver further</b></p>

		<p>active travel projects across the region. Issues around delivery capacity at a regional and local level need addressed nationally to achieve this efficiently and timeously.</p> <p><b><u>Theme: Creating smart and sustainable towns and villages</u></b>  <b>SWestrans is supportive of the Interventions within this Theme (Intervention 4 – Transport’s contribution towards placemaking principles in neighbourhoods; Intervention 5 - Guidance and framework for delivering mobility hubs). We look forward to further information and discussion around this work. As a Regional Transport Partnership, we consider ourselves in a position to assist as a partner link between national policy and funding and local delivery partners such as our local authority, Dumfries and Galloway and enterprise body, South of Scotland Enterprise.</b></p> <p><b><u>Theme: Improving accessibility in rural, island and peripheral areas and for vulnerable groups.</u></b>  <b>SWestrans is fully supportive of this Theme and associated interventions. We are currently a lead partner in a Public Social Partnership project working with other statutory partners, Community Transport operators and other Third Sector organisations to develop a genuine and lasting partnership to support the remodelling of transport services and to build the capacity of the sector to be able to deliver these services in the future. We have identified and are set to trial new Demand Responsive transport solutions in the near future.</b></p> <p><b>We await the outcome of the Mobility as a Service (MAAS) funding bid for Dumfries and Galloway.</b></p> <p><b><u>Theme: Supporting a viable freight industry</u></b>  <b>With the high HGV traffic flows on the A75 and A77, accessing the ferry ports at Cairnryan, Dumfries and Galloway experiences significant problems arising from the lack of welfare facilities for hauliers. We welcome increased investment in these facilities in proximity to the A75 and A77 Trunk Roads.</b></p>
12		<p>Please use the space below to highlight where you disagree with any the Phase 1 themes or interventions.</p> <p><b>We do not disagree with any of the themes or interventions which have been included and note the opportunities that exist for Dumfries and Galloway. However, we have concerns that some of the interventions are prioritising urban areas. This needs to be addressed for inclusive economic growth to be achieved and to ensure no part of Scotland is left behind in accessing a more sustainable transport network. Rurality effects are often compounded by other challenges that transport infrastructure investment needs to help address including: geographic scale; deficiencies in current infrastructure; low populations, migration of young people, growth in elderly populations; weak economic growth and low wage economies.</b></p>

Whilst we understand that interventions, such as active freeways, will have a greater impact in cities, the description of the work package highlights the high potential for those in rural areas to access their local town centres by bike and improved routes within the towns can help them to do so. Although transport poverty tends to be higher in rural areas, it is also prevalent in suburban areas where car ownership is low and public transport accessibility poor (this is the case in Dumfries, which is used as an example in the Case for Change for this Intervention). It is stated that ‘the Active Freeways programme will bring these benefits to some or all of Scotland’s cities and towns’ – we would expect that the larger settlements within Dumfries and Galloway would benefit from the improvements to deliver high quality, efficient and safe active travel routes, that connect to our wider rural communities.

Whilst we are fully supportive of the ethos and need for ‘Enhancing public transport provision’ we feel that the associated Interventions fall some way short of addressing the rural challenges set out within the NTS. For instance, we are encouraged that the STPR2 will prioritise interventions that increase the modal share of journeys by bus over the next decade and beyond. However, recent funding (Bus Partnership Fund) and the intervention included within Phase 1 (Intervention 10 - Reallocation of roadspace for buses) are capital focussed schemes that are more relevant to, and easily accessed by, urban Authorities/Operators. We are aware that congestion within cities is a major barrier to increasing the modal shift for bus, yet it has been recognised (within the NTS and the development work towards the Transport Act 2019) that the issues run deeper than congestion and affect all areas of Scotland. SWestrans is working hard to not only increase the modal shift for bus but to maintain the service levels that we currently have – the most used form of public transport mode in the region. Evidence gathered from the Transport Focus Bus Survey results in 2018 showed that they are a lifeline service for many residents. The survey highlighted that of passengers surveyed in the South West of Scotland, 56% cited their reason for using the bus as ‘no option to travel by other means’. This is 12% higher than the Scottish average (44%). Whilst we recognise that STPR2 is a capital programme, the interventions could be enhanced to be more inclusive to all of Scotland.

The South West Scotland Transport Study focussed on access to the ports at Cairnryan and the need for improved transport infrastructure to maintain/increase the competitiveness of the ports. These ports are nationally significant and need increased investment from Phase 1 and Phase 2. Intervention 19 – Investment in ferries and ports – focuses on ferry services between mainland Scotland and The Islands. Whilst we recognise this is essential, the Cairnryan Ports not featuring is inappropriate and minimises the importance of both the ports and the onward transport links. We would consider the impacts of leaving the European Union to be immediate and not just be ‘medium term’ and ‘long term’. Interventions around international ports will need to strongly feature in the Phase 2 outputs.

13	<p>Please use the space below to provide any other comments you wish to make on the STPR2: Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report.</p> <p><b>In relation to Phase 1 interventions responding to the uncertainty in travel demand and behaviour that we face in the short term due to COVID-19 (Question 9 and 10), we recognise that “the problem at present is the significant level of uncertainty and lack of robust data, so providing any degree of certainty around these is highly challenging”. Therefore, it is difficult to agree that the interventions put forward will address opportunities and challenges that are not fully known. Assessing interventions against the post COVID-19 Scenarios listed (5.4.3) is a useful exercise, though more work to understand any regional variations in these scenarios is needed to inform future support.</b></p> <p><b>It is important that Transport Scotland deliver on the commitment within the NTS2 Delivery Plan to continue to consider additional support required for public transport and keep this under review in light of the uncertainty and other challenges presented by COVID-19. Though perhaps outwith the scope of STPR2, further detail on how the public transport sector will be supported in recovering from the impact of the pandemic would go a long way in responding to the uncertainty of future travel demand and supporting Scotland’s recovery to the pandemic. This includes ongoing subsidy to support the bus network now that clarification has been provided on how the rail network will be funded at the end of the current ScotRail franchise in 2022.</b></p> <p><b>We do not have a stance on the individual projects but note the inconsistency of committing to large infrastructure projects such as Intervention 18 – Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) and Glasgow Metro and Edinburgh Mass Transit in Phase 1 as opposed to Phase 2.</b></p>
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**STPR2 Transport Options Questions:**

This comments form is aimed at capturing your views on the **STPR2 Transport Options outlined within the Case for Change document**. It also seeks views on the challenges and opportunities related to COVID-19 as well as the STPR2 engagement process to date. We recommend that you review the material within the report prior to you providing comments. The form should take 10 minutes to complete and all responses are anonymous.

The closing date for comments is midnight 31 March 2021.

Demographic Questions		
1		Are you responding as an individual or an organisation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individual</li> <li>▪ <b>Organisation</b></li> </ul>
2	(for those responding as an organisation)	If responding as an organisation, what is the name of your organisation?  <b>The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership</b>
3	(for those responding as an organisation)	Please indicate which category best describes your organisation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Third Sector or Community group</li> <li>▪ Transport Operator</li> <li>▪ Business Organisation</li> <li>▪ Community Council</li> <li>▪ Local Authority</li> <li>▪ <b>Regional Transport Partnership</b></li> <li>▪ Other Public Sector</li> <li>▪ Academia / Education</li> <li>▪ Other (please specify)</li> </ul>
4	Only for those responding as an individual	Which of these age groups are you in? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 16-17</li> <li>▪ 18-24</li> <li>▪ 25- 34</li> <li>▪ 35-44</li> <li>▪ 45-54</li> <li>▪ 55+</li> <li>▪ Prefer not to say</li> </ul>

Comments Form STPR2 Case for Change and Transport Options		
O		Which of the Case for Change reports have you read prior to providing comments? Tick as many that apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Argyll &amp; Bute Case for Change</li> <li>▪ Ayrshire &amp; Arran Case for Change</li> <li>▪ Edinburgh &amp; the South East Case for Change</li> <li>▪ Forth Valley Case for Change</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glasgow City Region Case for Change</li> <li>▪ Highlands &amp; Islands Case for Change</li> <li>▪ <b>National Case for Change</b></li> <li>▪ Shetland Islands Case for Change</li> <li>▪ Tay Cities Case for Change</li> </ul>
5		<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The recommended transport options for STPR2 are strategic covering a range of modes and geographies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strongly agree</li> <li>▪ <b>Agree</b></li> <li>▪ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>▪ Disagree</li> <li>▪ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
6		<p>How well do you feel the transport options recommended for further consideration address the problems, opportunities and objectives for strategic transport connections in Scotland?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Very well</li> <li>▪ <b>Well</b></li> <li>▪ Don't know / No opinion</li> <li>▪ Poorly</li> <li>▪ Very Poorly</li> </ul>
7		Do you have any other comments on the transport options identified?
8		<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is clear what the next steps are when considering the transport options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strongly agree</li> <li>▪ <b>Agree</b></li> <li>▪ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>▪ Disagree</li> <li>▪ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
9		<p>Do you believe that the COVID-19 pandemic will bring about challenges and/or opportunities relevant to planning future transport investment through STPR2? Please select all that apply below (NOTE: this will only be possible for the top two in the list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Yes, challenges</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Yes, opportunities</b></li> <li>▪ No, neither challenges nor opportunities</li> <li>▪ Don't know</li> </ul>



10		<p>What do you believe could be the key medium to longer-term challenges relevant to STPR2 arising from the COVID-19 pandemic on travel demand and patterns in your region / nationally?</p> <p><b>As set out in the Phase 1 Scenario-Planning work and our response to the Phase 1 report.</b></p>
11		<p>What do you believe could be the key medium to longer-term opportunities relevant to STPR2 arising from the COVID-19 pandemic on travel demand and patterns in your region / nationally?</p> <p><b>As set out in the Phase 1 Scenario-Planning work and our response to the Phase 1 report.</b></p>
12		<p>How well do you feel the Case for Change element of STPR2 has engaged with stakeholders and the public?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Very well</li> <li>▪ <b>Well</b></li> <li>▪ Don't know / No opinion</li> <li>▪ Poorly</li> <li>▪ Very Poorly</li> </ul>
13		<p>Have you or your organisation participated in events or previous online surveys in relation to STPR2? Tick all that apply:</p> <p><b>Workshops</b>  <b>Online Survey</b>  <b>Feedback forms</b>  None</p>
14		<p>What worked well and what could have been improved in the Case for Change stakeholder and public engagement?</p>
15		<p>Overall, has the Case for Change element of STPR2 met your or your organisation's expectations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, it has fully met my or my organisation's expectations</li> <li>▪ <b>It has met some of my or my organisation's expectations</b></li> <li>▪ No, it has not met my or my organisation's expectations</li> </ul>
16	<p>Answer only for if you responded to Q15 – It has met some / No, it has not my or my organisations expectations</p>	<p>Please explain why the Case for Change element of STPR2 <b>has not</b> met all your organisation's expectations?</p> <p><b>Though not included within the list of Case for Change studies, the South West Scotland Transport Study amendment was published and SWestrans provided its feedback to Transport Scotland on the South West Scotland Transport Study Initial Appraisal: Case for Change in September 2019.</b></p> <p><b>We expected that the consideration of the A709 in the A74(M) to Dumfries options (SW-21 and SW-22) would remain rather than be removed from the STPR2 Phase 2 process as part of the revised option sifting exercise. We strongly disagree with the rationale for this decision to remove and it remains a strategic transport issue</b></p>

		<p><b>(as highlighted within the Case for Change) and remains an intervention within our Regional Transport Strategy.</b></p> <p><b>SWestrans notes that the consideration of the Development of Enhanced Diversionary Routes and Route Planning (SW-12) option has been removed from the STPR 2 Phase 2 process as part of the revised option sifting exercise. We are disappointed with the lack of engagement on this removal. The case for removal states that ‘local roads are out of scope for STPR2, unless they: Provide access to major ports or airports; Provide access to nationally significant National Planning Framework (NPF4) sites; and / or Facilitate changes to the strategic road network, including in the provision of bus priority of active travel.’ We would welcome further information on what transport interventions this removes from further appraisal as part of Phase 2.</b></p>
17		Please provide any other comments on the Case for Change element of STPR2?