



SWESTRANS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

**Case for Change Equalities Duties
Report**

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Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) Process	1
1.3	RTS Case for Change	2
1.4	Purpose and Objectives	2
1.5	Document Structure.....	3
2	Approach to Equalities Duties	4
2.1	Introduction	4
2.2	Overall Approach.....	4
2.3	Equalities Assessment Framework	4
2.4	Summary of the Equalities Evidence Base	7
3	Assessment of Equalities Issues.....	12
3.1	Introduction	12
3.2	Equalities Issues Coverage in the Case for Change.....	12
3.3	Assessment of RTS Objectives	16
3.4	How has this EqIA informed the Case for Change?.....	20
4	Next Steps	21
	Bibliography.....	22

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Equalities Duties Report has been prepared to accompany a Case for Change Report which will underpin the development of a new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the South West Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SWestrans), which covers the area contiguous with the boundaries of Dumfries and Galloway Council.
- 1.1.2 Stantec UK Ltd has been commissioned by SWestrans, to assist with the preparation of the new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The RTS will set out a new long-term vision for transport across the region for the period up to 2042. It is intended the new RTS will set out a clear framework for how transport and mobility will be provided, developed and improved in the region to meet the aspirations for a sustainable and economically active area over the next 20 years and beyond.
- 1.1.3 The current SWestrans RTS was published in 2008 and set out a vision to deliver 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 RTS is now due for review and revision work commenced in 2019 through the South West Transport Study (AECOM and Stantec, 2020) which was prepared to inform Transport Scotland's Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 and has provided an extensive evidence base to inform the RTS.
- 1.1.4 Working collaboratively with Stantec, SWestrans has produced a Case for Change Report (the 'Case for Change') which seeks input and views from stakeholders on the type and level of change needed to the transport system in the south west of Scotland to inform the development of the Strategy. This builds upon and takes account of comments and information received from a stakeholder and public consultation exercise held in 2018 (as part of the South West Scotland Transport Study) and a stakeholder consultation in 2022 (specifically for the RTS) which is reported in the Case for Change document.

1.2 The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) Process

Overview

- 1.2.1 Equalities issues are becoming increasingly prevalent in transport planning. Policy needs to recognise the different ways people interface with and experience the transport network. This trend towards a greater focus on inclusion is well articulated by the Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) (Transport Scotland, 2020), which targets reducing inequalities as one of the four central priorities which now underpin national transport policy and its subsequent delivery plan.
- 1.2.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process is therefore being undertaken through the Strategy's development to apply relevant equalities duties and identify likely equalities impacts arising from RTS preparation. This EqIA is being undertaken in tandem with the development of the emerging RTS to allow assessment findings to influence the content of the RTS on an iterative basis.
- 1.2.3 Relevant equalities duties are being used as tools to inform and embed key equalities issues within the emerging RTS from the outset. Acting together with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) being carried out for the emerging RTS, this integrated approach allows the environmental, social, and economic implications of all strategy components to be tested at the earliest opportunity and for any uncertainties or issues identified during the impact assessment process to be addressed during RTS preparation.

Relevant Equalities Duties

- 1.2.4 The only equalities duty applicable to SWestrans on a statutory level is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This EqIA will however also address the Fairer Scotland and Child Rights and Wellbeing duties insofar as relevant to the RTS on a voluntary basis.
- 1.2.5 This report is accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment Framing Document (Stantec, 2022) which provides an evidence-based suite of key equalities issues which should be considered in the emerging RTS and taken account of in the EqIA process. It also sets out an equalities assessment framework explaining how each of the applicable equalities duties would be applied and reported against throughout the development of the RTS in a way which helps to address the identified key equalities issues.

1.3 RTS Case for Change

- 1.3.1 In accordance with the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, SWestrans submitted the first RTS for the south west of Scotland which was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2008. The emerging RTS is being developed to replace the current RTS and to set out a new long-term transport vision, outcomes, and strategic objectives for the Dumfries and Galloway region, aligned with the NTS2 amongst other strategic and regional policy contexts.
- 1.3.2 The Case for Change provides a consolidated evidence base to identify the main transport problems experienced within the SWestrans area and sets out a series of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) and RTS Objectives to underpin the development of the new RTS. In doing so, the Case for Change seeks to ensure the RTS is founded on an evidence base which reflects the latest understanding of problems, opportunities and issues in the region, including reflecting travel behaviour changes arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.3.3 As detailed further in **Section 3**, the Case for Change includes the identification of relevant TPOs and associated proposed RTS Objectives. With reference to the applicable equalities duties (discussed in **Section 2**), this report provides a proportionate assessment of the coverage of key equalities issues within these 'substantive components' of the emerging RTS and thus their likely equalities impacts. This forms part of a multi-stage appraisal and strategy development process which will include a future consultation on the full Draft RTS and an accompanying Equalities Duties Report.
- 1.3.4 At this early stage, the Case for Change does not identify individual 'options' (e.g. policies, proposals, actions, or other interventions) or spatially defined schemes but rather forms the starting point for the subsequent development and appraisal of various types of options to achieve the proposed RTS Objectives. All options will be developed, sifted and appraised through Stage 2 – Preliminary Options Appraisal of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process. Details of options development, appraisal and how the application of relevant equalities duties has informed the selection of options (including consideration of reasonable alternatives) will then be set out in the full Draft RTS and an accompanying Equalities Duties Report later in 2022.

1.4 Purpose and Objectives

- 1.4.1 This report has been prepared by Stantec to assess the extent to which the Case for Change Report addresses relevant equalities considerations. This forms part of the process of discharging relevant statutory equalities duties in the preparation of the new RTS.
- 1.4.2 The objectives of this report are to:
 - i. Assess the coverage of key equalities issues in the 'key issues' identified within the Case for Change report;

- ii. Assess the extent to which the proposed RTS Objectives address identified key equalities issues by testing their compatibility with the requirements of applicable equalities duties through applying an assessment framework and associated guide questions; and
- iii. Recommend changes which should be incorporated into the emerging RTS to improve the coverage of equalities issues and to enhance the ability of the document to tackle such issues.

1.5 Document Structure

1.5.1 This report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 – Approach to Equalities Duties:** provides an overview of how applicable equalities duties are being addressed in the development of the emerging RTS, including the outline assessment framework and evidence base which has informed the work.
- **Section 3 - Assessment of Equalities Issues:** reports the findings of the consideration of the coverage of key equalities issues within the Case for Change; and an initial appraisal of the compatibility of the draft RTS Objectives against the requirements of the relevant equalities duties. This includes how the EqIA process has informed the Case for Change.
- **Section 4 – Next Steps:** explains how comments received following consultation which is now to be undertaken on the Case for Change and this Equalities Duties Report will be taken into account and how applicable equalities duties will continue to be applied in future stages of the RTS development process.

2 Approach to Equalities Duties

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This section outlines the requirements of each of the three equalities duties and details the criteria which will be used to iteratively assess all substantive components of the emerging RTS. Taken together, these criteria comprise an Equalities Assessment Framework which will be used to test, refine and assess all substantive components of the emerging RTS in relation to likely equalities impacts.
- 2.1.2 A description of the process followed in the consideration of equalities issues at the Case for Change stage is provided in Section 2.2 to guide understanding of the findings presented later in **Section 3**. Section 2.3 then sets out an overview of the principal requirements of the three equalities duties considered in this report together with a series of 'framing questions' which have been developed to support the consideration of the requirements. Finally, Section 2.4 presents a summary of the evidence base which is set out in the Equalities Impact Assessment Framing Document and which has also informed the consideration of key equalities issues in the development of the RTS Case for Change.

2.2 Overall Approach

- 2.2.1 The approach to the consideration of equalities issues, and the key requirements of the three relevant duties, has involved:
- liaison between the transport planning, environmental assessment and equalities assessment teams through the **preparation and appraisal of the Case for Change**;
 - **initial review of the draft Case for Change** document to identify the extent of coverage of equalities issues and to **feedback findings and recommendations** to the transport planning team for incorporation in the updated Case for Change. This review included the baseline documentation and analysis of transport issues and problems as well as the draft transport planning objectives (TPOs) and draft RTS Strategic Objectives;
 - **initial assessment of the substantial elements of the updated Case for Change document** through consideration of the compatibility of the proposed RTS Strategic Objectives with the equalities assessment framework; and
 - **reporting of further recommendations in relation to equalities issues** as the RTS process continues through the options development and assessment at the next key stage in its development.

2.3 Equalities Assessment Framework

Public Sector Equality Duty

- 2.3.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out a 'public sector equality duty' (PSED). This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The duty covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The PSED also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.
- 2.3.2 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 require listed authorities to undertake an impact assessment in relation to the needs outlined in section 149(1) of the Act

and take account of the results of the assessment in development of the policy. The approach to the assessment has been informed by reference to the Scottish Government's general guidance on the PSED (Scottish Government, 2016) and guidance on application of the duty in Scotland (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2016).

- 2.3.3 The following guide questions have been designed to allow for testing the implementation of the PSED. They provide a transparent framework to assess the extent to which emerging RTS components promote equality of opportunity, including the removal of physical and cultural and informational barriers to accessing and benefiting from the transport system.

Assessment Framework: Public Sector Equality Duty

Will the emerging RTS and its associated delivery mechanisms...

- *Result in any likely different or disproportionate effects on persons with protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010?*
- *Result in any unintended consequences for protected characteristic groups?*
- *Promote social cohesion and integration between people with different protected characteristics?*
- *Advance the SWestrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council equalities outcomes¹?*
- *Provide equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?*
- *Promote public realm and design choices that provide a safe, secure, and accessible environment for all?*
- *Promote better health outcomes by facilitating active travel?*
- *Support the removal of barriers to travel and the improvement of equal access to travel?*
- *Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?*

The framing questions will be applied in relation to the three key parts of the Duty:

- *Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation;*
- *Advancing equality of opportunity; and*
- *Fostering good relations.*

The second of these aims involves:

- *Removing or minimising disadvantages affecting people due to their protected characteristics;*
- *Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and*
- *Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*

¹ See Section 2.4

Fairer Scotland Duty

- 2.3.4 The Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) places a legal responsibility on public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. This differs from the PSED which considers only reducing inequalities of opportunity. The Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce the inequalities associated with being disadvantaged. It is closely related to issues of poverty which may affect outcomes across health, housing, education and training and employment prospects.
- 2.3.5 The FSD identifies a need to consider both ‘communities of place’ and ‘communities of interest’ in terms of people who share an experience and are particularly impacted by socio-economic disadvantage (Scottish Government, 2021a). Demographic groups who share one or more of the protected characteristics listed in Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 can be considered ‘communities of interest’, meaning there is a direct link between the Fairer Scotland Duty and the PSED.
- 2.3.6 The following criteria will be applied to testing the performance of the emerging RTS in relation to implementing the FSD. This provides a transparent framework to assess the extent to which emerging RTS components reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from low income, low wealth, and multiple deprivation.

Assessment Framework: Fairer Scotland Duty

Will the emerging RTS and its associated delivery mechanisms...

- *Help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty, inequality in the distribution of household wealth, and levels of multiple deprivation affecting communities?*
- *Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?*
- *Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?*
- *Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?*
- *Improve accessibility to open spaces, and sports facilities for physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?*
- *Promote good local access to existing facilities, services, and employment, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?*
- *Contribute to the achievement of the Duty’s aims and desired outcomes?*

The framing questions will be applied in relation to the two key parts of the Duty:

- *socio-economic disadvantage (influenced by income, wealth, material and area deprivation and socio-economic background); and*
- *inequality of outcome (including education, skills, employment, health and wellbeing, living standards and poverty).*

Child Rights and Wellbeing Duty

- 2.3.7 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires public bodies to consider whether existing and emerging legislation, policy and guidance have an impact on children and young people and to assess what further action is required to ensure compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). There are four general principles of the UNCRC:

- apply rights without discrimination (Article 2);
- best interests of the child to be a principal consideration (Article 3);
- right to life, survival and development (Article 6); and
- right to express and view and have that view taken into account (Article 12).

2.3.8 These articles underpin all other rights in the Convention and will be considered in the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.. The assessment will also review the other articles of the UNCRC and include any considered to be relevant in the detailed assessment.

2.3.9 The following criteria will be applied to test and confirm the implementation of relevant Scottish Ministers' duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the UNCRC in the emerging RTS. They have been formulated with reference to the approach recommended within the Scottish Government's Child Rights and Wellbeing (CRW) Impact Assessment Guidance (Scottish Government, 2021b).

Assessment Framework: Child Rights and Wellbeing Duties

- *Which UNCRC Articles are relevant to the assessment?*
- *How does the intervention relate to, promote, or inhibit the provisions of the UNCRC, other relevant international treaties and standards, or domestic law?*
- *What impact might the intervention have on the rights of children and young people?*
- *Will the rights of one group of children in particular be affected, and to what extent?*
- *Are there competing interests between the groups of children, or between children and other groups, who would be affected by the intervention?*
- *Will the intervention protect and enhance access to high quality community facilities, public services and key amenities for children and young people?*
- *Will the intervention improve access using active travel and public transport to educational, social, and economic opportunities for children and young people?*
- *How will the RTS support or otherwise affect the implementation of relevant UNCRC Articles?*
- *The overall question to be answered in relation to the UNCRC is: to what extent does the policy help progress the realisation of children's rights, and safeguard support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people?*

The framing questions will be applied in relation to the UNCRC articles and taking account of the Scottish Government's wellbeing indicators developed for the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach to children's services provision in Scotland. These are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible & included.

2.4 Summary of the Equalities Evidence Base

2.4.1 This section sets out a summary of the evidence base on equalities issues relevant to the development of transport strategies which was originally presented in full in the Equalities Impact Assessment Framing Document. The evidence is set out here to align specifically with the process of reviewing and assessing the Case for Change. Relevant literature and

information identified as RTS development progresses will be added to the evidence base as appropriate and captured in the reporting of the detailed equalities assessment of the RTS.

SWestrans Equalities Outcomes

2.4.2 SWestrans has established a set of equality outcomes for 2021-2025 (SWestrans, 2022) which provide an important context for the consideration of equalities issues in the RTS. The RTP is committed to the NTS2 priority to reduce inequality and the associated outcomes to ensure everyone will share in the benefits of a modern and accessible transport system that:

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

2.4.3 SWestrans is also committed to fulfilling the duties set out by The Equality Act 2010 and reporting on the areas relevant to the organisation as required by the specific duties under The Equalities Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The organisation's equality outcomes and relevant inequalities are set out in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 SWestrans Equalities Outcomes

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

2.4.4 In reviewing and preparing the new RTS, SWestrans 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. This will support the mainstreaming of the equality outcomes in the planning and delivery of transport services.

Dumfries and Galloway Council Equalities Outcomes

2.4.5 The outcomes presented above for transport also underpin the outcomes framework set out in Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, in particular Outcome 7:

People are well connected (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2017). More broadly, equality of opportunity forms the basis for the equality outcomes established by Dumfries and Galloway Council in relation to its functions as a local authority (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2020).

Equalities Evidence Base Summary

2.4.6 Table 2.2 sets out a summary of key evidence base issues and findings which have been distilled to inform the consideration of equalities issues and potential impacts in the coverage of the Case for Change and its preliminary equalities assessment. The table structures the summary for each of the three separate equalities duties, but it is recognised there are considerable overlaps in the evidence between them.

Table 2.2 Summary of Equalities Evidence Base

Duty	Key Evidence
Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	<p>People in protected characteristics groups typically face a range of issues in accessing and using transport which may affect the extent to which they experience discrimination and disadvantage. People with protected characteristics are more likely to use and rely on public transport, particularly bus services therefore a lack of public transport services and options disproportionately impacts on disabled people, women and the young and old in particular. Key points from the evidence base are summarised here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age: access to transport can act as a significant barrier to some groups, particularly for elderly people, which acts to disadvantage them in terms of reaching essential facilities such as social services and healthcare. Some older people are also disadvantaged through lack of access to, or skills and confidence to use, transport information in digital formats. ▪ Disability: disabled people are less likely to live in households with access to a car. They experience a range of difficulties in accessing and using public transport (and in accessing information) which vary significantly by the groups affected and include difficulties with journey planning. In Dumfries and Galloway disabled people sometimes do not feel supported and comfortable when travelling and may choose not to make journeys at all as a result. ▪ Gender reassignment: Transgender people are likely to have lower incomes and therefore, are at a higher risk of transport poverty. They typically experience hate crimes more regularly than non-protected groups and may have concerns about using public transport or public transport facilities due to fear of harassment or discrimination. ▪ Pregnancy and maternity: pregnant women and people travelling on public transport with pushchairs and children often have complex journey patterns and may experience difficulties in accessing and using services. ▪ Race: people in minority ethnic groups typically take fewer walking and cycling trips than other groups and are often more reliant on public transport, but potentially at greater risk of disadvantage where services are reduced or become more expensive. Some groups are also more likely to experience hate crimes and discrimination creating a social barrier to transport. ▪ Religion or belief: Discrimination, assault or harassment on the basis of religious identity may affect people of certain religious groups more than others, and this may affect their choice to use public transport and public transport facilities. ▪ Sex: women are less likely to drive, are typically more dependent on public transport than men (for a diversity of journey purposes) and are more likely to be subject to harassment or assault, or the fear of these occurring. ▪ Sexual orientation: People in this group may be concerned about being able to access public transport and public transport facilities, especially at night when these may be poorly lit, for fear of harassment or discrimination.

Duty	Key Evidence
<p>Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD)</p>	<p>The requirements of this duty link with those of the PSED since communities of interest considered under the FSD cover those groups with protected characteristics considered under the Equalities Act. Key issues from the evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The evidence indicates clear links between access to, and affordability of, public transport and household income with poorer areas more dependent on bus services but typically less well served. ▪ Transport poverty occurs where a lack of affordable travel options restricts access to employment and services with relatively higher transport costs for people living in areas of high multiple deprivation (often in rural areas) compounding socio-economic disadvantage and outcomes. ▪ In Dumfries and Galloway, where large areas of the region are classed as 'access deprived', the current level of public transport provision can act as a barrier to a range of socio-economic issues including accessing suitable employment, education and training opportunities. ▪ Public transport costs can be significant for those on low incomes and particularly for people in rural areas who travel longer distances and face higher costs. People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. ▪ In rural areas, current levels of public transport provision and connectivity can act as barriers giving rise to a range of socio-economic impacts. There are particular challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic on declining public transport use in Dumfries and Galloway. ▪ In some areas the low density of bus services and rural transport accessibility means many people are 'forced' to own a car for key journeys to work and to access services imposing a cost which disproportionately affects lower income households. ▪ People in groups with protected characteristics (communities of interest) such as elderly or disabled people are also likely to experience inequalities of outcome through the relatively high costs of transport in relation to socio-economic disadvantage.
<p>Child Rights and Wellbeing (CRW) Equality Duty</p>	<p>There are clear overlaps between the requirements of this duty and the issues considered under part of the protected characteristic for 'age' under the PSED. Other points from the evidence base which have been used to inform the Duty assessment are summarised here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key factors affecting the ability of children to access transport are their socio-economic background, geographical location and the accessibility and safety of the public transport available. ▪ The ability to access safe, convenient and cost-effective transport has an impact on the ability of children and young people to access education, public services and economic opportunities, particularly for low income households. ▪ Children and young people in rural areas are typically more dependent on public transport, particularly for accessing education and training, than other age groups. The availability of public transport in rural areas is a significant challenge for young people. ▪ The cost of transport can act as a barrier to accessing employment and education. Young people can be particularly affected by the cost of travelling to college or work, especially if they have to travel some distance or are only earning the lower minimum wage for young people. ▪ Younger people may have a more local focus than the population as a whole suggesting young people from deprived areas may only look for jobs and training in their local area or where easily accessible by public transport.

Duty	Key Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="512 331 1385 443">▪ The dispersed nature of the population in Dumfries and Galloway creates very specific public transport needs and challenges (including long travel times to school by public transport) to allow children and young people to access primary and secondary education.<li data-bbox="512 459 1385 566">▪ Children and young people are more vulnerable than other age groups to the adverse effects on health of traffic related noise and air pollution. Safety is also a key issue for children with child pedestrian casualties in Scotland in 2019 accounting for 44% of all pedestrian casualties.

2.4.7 The complete evidence base, structured by the four duties, will be set out with all relevant data sources and citations in the report of the equalities assessment of the draft RTS in 2022.

3 Assessment of Equalities Issues

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section sets out the findings of the initial assessment of the equalities implications of the RTS Case for Change. The results of the consideration of the coverage of equalities issues in the draft Case for Change, and how these were addressed are set out in Section 3.2. The key issues from the initial compatibility assessments of the Case for Change strategic objectives are presented in Section 3.3. A summary of the main findings of the equalities duties assessment and how they have informed the development of the Case for Change is then presented in Section 3.4.

3.2 Equalities Issues Coverage in the Case for Change

Structure of the Case for Change

- 3.2.1 The draft Case for Change document sets out a comprehensive collation and review of transport-related problems, issues, constraints and opportunities in south west Scotland. It provides an initial appraisal and is the first in a three stage process for RTS development.
- 3.2.2 The first part of the Case for Change document (chapters 2 to 5) provides a factual baseline and background to the transport network, services and their use. Chapters 6 and 7 set out the substantial elements of the initial appraisal which comprise a review of consultation feedback and issues, problems analysis from the evidence reviewed and derivation of TPOs and RTS Strategy Objectives.
- 3.2.3 The Case for Change is centred around an extensive set of ‘problems’ which the new RTS should respond to, grouped and analysed (in chapter 7) by transport mode. These specific transport problems were identified through extensive engagement, desk-based research and project team analysis in the development of the RTS. The TPOs were then derived through consideration of the transport and social consequences of the problems which in turn informed the definition of six proposed RTS strategy objectives.
- 3.2.4 Adequate recognition and coverage of identified key equalities issues in the suite of problems which are defined in the Case for Change to underpin RTS development is therefore essential to ensure that all equalities issues and potential impacts are appropriately considered at each stage of RTS development. It also ensures that the problems and associated TPOs respond to a broad range of equalities issues.

Review of Equalities in the Case for Change

- 3.2.5 The review of the Draft Case for Change Report was undertaken to help ensure appropriate coverage of equalities issues in the developing evidence base for the RTS and in the problems analysis. Whilst this was an iterative process (and will continue to evolve), a summary of the principal issues identified from the review and how these have been accommodated in the updated Case for Change is set out in **Error! Reference source not found.** to provide a context for discussion of the coverage of equalities issues in the document.

Table 3.1 Review of Equalities Issues identified in the Draft Case for Change

Section of Draft Case for Change	Equalities Recommendation / Comment	How the EqIA Influenced the Case for Change
Chapter 2: Background and Context		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of key policy providing context for the development of the RTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested that the chapter makes reference to the SWestrans Equality Outcomes 2021 document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included the analysis of the document within the other key drivers (regional / local) section and outlines the equality outcomes SWestrans intend to meet
Chapter 3: Transport Context		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed baseline review of active travel, bus network, rail network, transport accessibility, ports and roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor comments suggested to develop the text in a few places in relation to equalities issues e.g. in relation to the effects of fragile bus services and networks; on the implications of employment access for socio-economic disadvantage; on access to education and health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments accepted and all recommended text has been included A new section on accessibility to stations has been included
Chapter 4: Socio-Economic Context		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline data presented on population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some editorial text additions proposed to provide clear links between socio-economic baseline and equalities evidence base Suggestion to include available baseline population data on disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted text additions Added a section on the percentage of residents with long-term physical or mental health conditions
Chapter 5: Future Context		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of future land use, planning, transport and technology trends and developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor additional comments added to ensure equalities issues are captured and reflected in key sections of the narrative Shared mobility schemes have potential for beneficial equalities impacts where they offer affordable and enhanced accessibility for disadvantaged groups such as non-car owners and communities with poor access to public transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments accepted and resolved Added text to note the potential for beneficial equalities impacts when shared mobility schemes are implemented
Chapter 6: Public & Stakeholder Engagement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out findings of a public and stakeholder engagement processes held to date (2018 and 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A short summary of any relevant equalities duties issues from the stakeholder workshops and stakeholder consultations would be useful (if raised) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific equality themes from the South West Scotland Study and the RTS recent consultation were not raised. A note of this has been added to the analysis
Chapter 7: Developing RTS Objectives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains the process of problem identification, analysis of consequences of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested addition of equalities issue to criteria for consideration of transport problems The table of travel and societal consequences of problems (Table 7.1) includes a good range of reference to equalities / socio-economic impacts and a number of additional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened existing points regarding accessibility to stations

Section of Draft Case for Change	Equalities Recommendation / Comment	How the EqIA Influenced the Case for Change
<p>problems, determination of transport planning objectives and defining RTS objectives</p>	<p>suggestions have been provided to ensure comprehensive coverage of issues relating to each equalities 'duty'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Table 7.2 (transport problems and transport planning objectives) distils a series of proposed transport planning objectives (TPOs) from the analysis of problems and their consequences. There is good recognition and inclusion of references to equalities issues in the TPOs with some further wording suggestions provided by the equalities assessment team to ensure a comprehensive framework ▪ The final section sets out six strategic objectives for the RTS which encompass the range of desired outcomes provided by the TPOs. The objectives integrate well with the range of equalities issues expressed through the three relevant duties. The review of the Case for Change has identified some additional minor wording for the sub-objectives and societal outcomes underpinning each objective which is intended to more explicitly reference protected characteristic groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accepted majority of the comments with the exception of a minor point suggesting changing the phrase certainty (to 'reliability') within the TPO development (as the current phrasing is attempting to differentiate between punctuality and reliability) and the inclusion of the phrase accessibility in the sub-objective of objective 2 (as it is covered in objective 3).

- 3.2.6 The review process identified clear links between socio-economic and equalities issues in the evidence base and the analysis of problems for transport in south west Scotland. Issues of rural peripherality, rural (and urban) deprivation in some areas and socio-economic weaknesses are all linked with transport and accessibility and all have attendant problems for most protected characteristics groups in the region. Equalities issues are well integrated into the Draft Case for Change document and the review process has sought to identify opportunities in some parts of the document to make these more explicit and strengthen connections between equalities outcomes and consideration of transport issues.
- 3.2.7 The findings of the equalities-based review of the Draft Case for Change were incorporated within the document and a brief commentary on the equalities content of the settled version is set out in the following paragraphs.
- 3.2.8 Chapters 1 to 5 of the Case for Change set out an extensive transport, land use and socio-economic baseline. The focus of this information review is to identify key themes, problems, opportunities and issues to underpin the development of objectives to guide and frame the RTS. As a transport baseline therefore, the focus is not specifically on equalities issues – however a number of themes are evident from the document which have clear implications for equalities. These include:
- a large region with a low population density and associated challenges for delivery and maintenance of non-commercial bus services, exacerbated by the decline in public transport use (and increasing funding challenges) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Combined with limited or no rail services in many parts of Dumfries and Galloway, problems of accessibility to key services including education, health, retail and employment are present in significant parts of the regional population, many of which already experience higher levels of deprivation;
 - a population with lower representation of young people compared with the national average in Scotland and a greater proportion of elderly people, and with an overall population decline forecast in the region in the next ten years;
 - limited active travel facilities outwith the main towns which is likely to be deterring greater use of walking and cycling to make shorter journeys, particularly between communities combined with high levels of car ownership (consistent with largely rural areas but also giving rise to equalities issues including of ‘forced’ car ownership);
 - a narrow economic base with many socio-economic indicators below those of the national average in Scotland, with a shortage of skills, lower levels of educational attainment and in some cases reduced opportunities for employment. This is combined with several key areas experiencing an intersection of employment deprivation and poor public transport connectivity; and
 - the rapidly changing role of technology in the provision of transport and accessibility which offers some potential opportunities for beneficial equalities impacts in the longer term (e.g. improved access to services through increased use of active travel or shared mobility services) and some affordably challenges such as the relatively high costs of electric vehicle ownership.
- 3.2.9 A review of relevant national and regional policies (in chapter 2) focuses on prioritisation of sustainable transport to align with legislative commitments and the policy framework established by Scotland’s National Transport Strategy (NTS2). This places tackling of inequalities alongside achieving net zero, delivering economic growth and improving health and wellbeing indicating that equalities issues are being progressed in the RTS as an integrated principle.
- 3.2.10 These themes are developed in the later part of the Case for Change which sets out a framework of transport problems, characterising them by mode and travel aspects, and supported by data from relevant parts of the evidence base including consultation findings. The transport and

societal consequences of the travel behaviours associated with each problem are then interrogated with reference to transport supply side causes. The analysis has taken into account a range of impacts on socio-economic and equalities issues. The key strands include:

- Consultation and engagement meetings held with key stakeholders. Issues raised in consultation covered a range of aspects relevant to equalities, including those on public transport coverage and reliability, accessibility for disabled people to transport infrastructure and vehicles, safety and security of public transport and affordability of public transport.
- Development and analysis of the problem framework with reference to societal impacts of the travel behaviours being affected by transport problems. These have considered impacts on groups with protected characteristics (including age and disability), cost and affordability issues which impact on socio-economic disadvantage and various demographic and economic issues affecting disadvantage particularly in rural areas. These issues underpin the principles in each of the three duties assessments considered for this equalities impact assessment.
- Integration of equalities issues within the problem analysis informed the development of a set of transport planning objectives (TPOs) which articulate the desired outcomes for future transport in south west Scotland. These objectives and the subsequent set of six RTS strategy objectives reflect key socio-economic and equalities themes, with five of the six objectives clearly mapping with the NTS2 priority of 'reduces inequalities'.

3.2.11 Equalities issues have been shown to be integral to many of the problems and issues considered in the Case for Change and in the derivation of TPOs and RTS objectives. The closely integrated nature of transport with social and economic wellbeing in the region is evident from the baseline data and analysis prepared and equalities issues have been addressed consistently across the transport problems and modes considered. It will be important that the development and testing of options in the next stage of RTS continues to adopt this integrated and broad-based approach to equalities assessment.

3.3 Assessment of RTS Objectives

Strategy Objectives

3.3.1 Chapter 7 of the Case for Change brings together the transport problems and their associated TPOs to derive six proposed strategy objectives for the RTS. Following input from the equalities review of the draft document, the proposed objectives are:

- i. To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and transport hubs.
- ii. To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport across the region.
- iii. To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport across the area.
- iv. To improve integration between all modes of travel and transport in the region.
- v. To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity within the region, and to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan.
- vi. To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region.

3.3.2 Subject to feedback from consultation on the Case for Change (and accompanying SEA and Equalities Assessments) these Strategy Objectives would be taken forward to underpin the generation of a long list of options and a subsequent appraisal of these options.

Compatibility Assessment Findings

- 3.3.3 A summary of the appraisal of the compatibility of the proposed RTS Objectives with the equalities assessment framework has been undertaken as part of this Case for Change equalities assessment. This was completed through application at a strategic level of the question set and criteria in the equalities framework presented in **Section 2** of this report to the emerging draft RTS strategy objectives, sub-objectives and societal outcomes to ensure the proposed objectives fully incorporate equalities considerations and to identify any potential gaps or issues for further consideration in the next stage of the RTS.
- 3.3.4 The findings of the compatibility assessment are presented in Table 3.2 overleaf. Generally, the objectives perform well against the equalities assessment frameworks as they encompass a range of cost, affordability, environmental, health and socio-economic issues which are likely to have beneficial equalities impacts. Each objective has some level of compatibility with one or more of the sets of equalities requirements under the three duties being considered. None of the objectives has been appraised as being incompatible or inconsistent with any of the duties. The first four strategy objectives in particular link clearly with the PSED, FSD and CRW duty frameworks given their clear reference to issues of accessibility and disadvantage.
- 3.3.5 Each objective (including the updated accompanying narratives for the sub-objectives and societal outcomes provided in Section 7.6 of the Case for Change) includes specific reference to social groups, protected characteristics and/or young people. This will help to ensure that the different needs of these groups would be considered through the future options generation and appraisal process of the Strategy's development.
- 3.3.6 The emerging RTS would benefit from the development of an over-arching holistic Vision to bring together the objectives and clarify the outcomes that the RTS seeks to achieve. This would help to ensure that any subsequent options developed mainly to address one RTS Strategy Objective either contribute to or at least avoid adverse effects on the other Strategic Objectives.
- 3.3.7 The high-level assessment provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** demonstrates that in general the proposed RTS Strategy Objectives provide an appropriate platform from which to develop later stages of the RTS including generation and appraisal of transport options which will take full account of relevant equalities issues. This indicates that the RTS Strategy Objectives are generally compatible with the requirements of applicable equalities duties.
- 3.3.8 Going forward the equalities duties (and the SEA process) will be applied to test the individual transport options in order to maximise likely significant beneficial effects and avoid or minimise adverse effects. The equalities framework will also be used to assess the implementation of the RTS as a whole. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be designed so that differential impacts can be measured. Data for these characteristics should be collected wherever possible to allow an evaluation of the equalities impacts of the Strategy and its associated delivery mechanisms.

Table 3.2 Compatibility of Proposed RTS Objectives with Equalities Assessment Framework

Objective	Public Sector Equality	Fairer Scotland	Child Rights & Wellbeing	Commentary
Strategy Objective 1: To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and transport hubs	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	This objective performs strongly against the PSED, FSD and CRW assessment frameworks as there are explicit references to meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics which would include children and young people and to promoting improved connectivity to employment and education locations. The objectives of the three duty frameworks would also indirectly benefit from improved health of people taking part in increased levels of active travel.
Strategy Objective 2: To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport across the region	✓✓	✓	✓	This objective performs strongly against the PSED as there are explicit references (in the sub-objectives) to the accessibility of public transport vehicles and infrastructure for all groups which would advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics. It is assessed as having implicit compatibility with the FSD framework through improving the reliability of public transport services (benefiting people reliant on services to access employment) and with the CRW framework through enhancing facilities, vehicles and information which would be accessed by children and young people.
Strategy Objective 3: To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport across the area	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	This objective performs strongly against the PSED, FSD and CRW assessment frameworks as there is clear compatibility with the purposes of promoting a step change in accessibility for all groups including addressing socio-economic disadvantage and advancing equality of opportunity for protected groups (including potential health benefits). Enhanced opportunities for tourism would also have potential benefits in relation to the FSD through new business and employment creation.
Strategy Objective 4: To improve integration between all modes of travel and transport in the region	✓✓	✓	✓	This objective performs strongly against the PSED as there are explicit references (in the sub-objectives) to the accessibility of public transport vehicles and infrastructure for all groups which would advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics. It is assessed as having implicit compatibility with the FSD framework through improving the reliability and connectivity of public transport services (benefiting people reliant on services to access employment) and with the CRW framework through enhancing information and some facilities which would be accessed and used by children and young people.
Strategy Objective 5: To provide an improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity within	✓	~	~	The objective would have some compatibility with each of the equalities duty frameworks. Road based connectivity measures would not generally directly benefit protected characteristics groups or children/young people but some indirect beneficial effects may occur for example through more reliable journeys and journey times for public transport using

Objective	Public Sector Equality	Fairer Scotland	Child Rights & Wellbeing	Commentary
the region, and to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan				roads in the region and/or from improvements to road safety. Where the objective contributed to inclusive economic growth, there may be some benefits through helping to reduce inequalities of outcome for communities with socio-economic disadvantage although increased road traffic on key routes (eg. to ports) could adversely affect health and wellbeing outcomes for some people including children and young people.
Strategy Objective 6: To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region	✓	✓	✓	This objective has implicit compatibility with the PSED, FSD and CRW assessment frameworks as reductions in the environmental and amenity impacts of transport have the potential to contribute to beneficial outcomes for all groups with protected characteristics including children and young people (who can be disproportionately affected by the environmental impacts of traffic). Where reduced environmental impacts contribute to improved health outcomes this would also benefit these groups and communities which have inequalities of outcome (including health) as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.

Key

Clear reference / compatibility	✓✓		Incompatible	X
Implicit compatibility	✓		No clear relationship	~

3.4 How has this EqIA informed the Case for Change?

- 3.4.1 This assessment focused on assessing the coverage of the identified key equalities issues within all substantive elements of the Case for Change and the extent to which proposed RTS Objectives address these issues and are compatible with applicable equalities duties. The findings of the assessment are documented in this report.
- 3.4.2 Preparing this report and the Case for Change concurrently allowed emerging EqIA findings to inform the final Case for Change Report as published for consultation. In summary, the following updates and recommendations were identified:
- **Equalities evidence base alignment with the three duties.** This report presents a summary of key findings from the equalities evidence base which were originally presented in the RTS EqIA Framing Note. The summary has aligned the main points from the evidence with the three equalities duties to support the ongoing application of the equalities assessment framework to the RTS.
 - **More explicit reference to inequalities in transport problems:** The review of coverage of equalities issues in the draft Case for Change identified a number of areas of the baseline and problems analysis where further reference to equalities issues such as demographic groups and protected characteristics would benefit the document. These amendments, particularly in the analysis of transport problems and definition of TPOs, underpins the generation of Strategy Objectives.
 - **Equalities issues identified in RTS Strategic Objectives:** Following EqIA recommendations from the compatibility assessment presented in this report, the six proposed RTS Strategic Objectives defined within the Case for Change now include specific reference to the accessibility needs of people with protected characteristics. This will help to ensure the differential needs of these groups is appropriately considered through future options generation and appraisal and RTS development processes.
- 3.4.3 This demonstrates that through identifying gaps in the draft document and recommending associated changes, the EqIA process has influenced the preparation of the Case for Change.
- 3.4.4 Following incorporation of the EqIA recommendations summarised above, a formal assessment of the Strategic Objectives in the settled version of the Case for Change was undertaken. The objectives perform well against the equalities assessment frameworks as they encompass a range of accessibility, affordability, environmental, health and socio-economic issues which are likely to have beneficial equalities impacts. The Case for Change and RTS Strategic Objectives are considered to be compatible with the equalities duties and provide an appropriate high-level platform from which to develop later stages of the RTS including generation and appraisal of transport options which will take full account of relevant equalities issues.
- 3.4.5 The review of the settled version of the Case for Change has recommended that an over-arching Vision is established for the RTS. This may be considered post-consultation alongside reviewing all comments received in respect of the Case for Change, with the recommendations used to inform the preparation of the Draft RTS in due course.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1.1 This Equalities Duties Report is being published for consultation alongside the Case for Change report which has been prepared by SWestrans (with support from Stantec) to underpin the preparation of the new RTS for the south west of Scotland. This forms part of a multi-stage process which will include an options appraisal and future consultation on a full Draft RTS.
- 4.1.2 In accordance with best practice, relevant equalities duties have been applied from the outset and in tandem with the development of the emerging RTS to allow key equalities issues to inform the content of the new RTS. All consultation received in respect of the Case for Change Report and this Equalities Duties Report will be reviewed and used to inform and (if required) refine the proposed Strategy Objectives.
- 4.1.3 The next stage will involve the development, sifting and appraisal of individual options to implement the proposed RTS Strategic Objectives (and thereby address all identified TPOs) through Stage 2 – Preliminary Options Appraisal of the STAG process. This will be undertaken in tandem with the application of the Equalities Assessment Framework (as well as the SEA Framework) to test and refine emerging options for potential inclusion within the Draft RTS. Relevant equalities duties (detailed in **Section 2**) will therefore be applied as part of the iterative options development and appraisal process.
- 4.1.4 Outcomes of the appraisal process will inform the preparation of a full Draft RTS, which will be accompanied by a comprehensive Equalities Duties Report for consultation.

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