



**Community  
Transport  
Association**

**Response to  
Consultation on  
SESTRAN Draft Strategy**

24 January 2007

The Community Transport Association

The CTA is a rapidly growing national charity giving voice and providing leadership, learning and enterprise support to member organisations, which are delivering innovative transport solutions to achieve social change. CTA UK promotes excellence through providing training, publications, advice and information on voluntary, accessible and community transport.

Voluntary and community transport exists to meet the travel and social needs of people to whom these would otherwise be denied, providing accessible and affordable transport to achieve social inclusion.

The CTA is the representative body for third sector passenger transport operators in the UK. CTA Member organisations are involved in the provision of transport, especially accessible services.

The CTA is part-funded by the Department for Transport, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department for Regional Development (Northern Ireland).

### **CTA's Response to Consultation**

The CTA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the SEStran Draft Regional Strategy. The responses to the questions asked in the report are shown on the following pages.

### **Contact Details**

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QUESTION 1

Overall, do you agree with the analysis of the issues presented and conclusions reached?

**Agree**

QUESTION 2

Overall, do you agree with the objectives presented in the RTS?

**Agree.**

QUESTION 3

In general, do you agree with the policies set out in the draft RTS ?

**Disagree. The 39 policies in the document are wide ranging and cover most of the issues which people in the SEStran area will have, but CTA feels the list of policies is lightweight with regard to accessibility and social inclusion. None of the policies mention Community Transport (CT) or Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), which are likely to provide some of the best and most cost effective transport solutions for people in rural parts of the SEStran area and for people who cannot use conventional services. CT and DRT can also have an important role to play in access to health services, which is a major problem in the SEStran region. CT and DRT solutions may be implicit in a few of the policies such as policies 26 and 27, but without explicit reference in SEStran's policies the strategy is diminished. This strategy document is inevitably "top down", but would be a stronger document if it allowed within its policies for the "bottom up" approach and flexibility which CT and DRT provide. CT and DRT can help plug the gaps which may arise in future transport provision and which SEStran may not have foreseen.**

QUESTION 4

Overall do you agree that the targets are appropriate?

**Agree**

QUESTION 5

Are the targets.....

**About right**

## QUESTION 6

Do you have any specific comments about the targets?

**CTA agrees with the targets set. We would comment that with regard to those matters which we are particularly concerned with – accessibility, affordability and generally services for people who are marginalised in whatever way – setting of targets should recognise that needs are as important as numbers. In other words transport for all is our aspiration with a recognition that for some small sections of society transport provision can be more expensive and thus needs support.**

## Question 7

We have prioritised a number of strategic transport movements by scale and public transport mode share. Do you agree that these are appropriate?

**We neither agree nor disagree.**

## Question 8

Overall, do you agree that the types of network measures which have been identified address these movements?

**We neither agree nor disagree.**

## Question 9

We have also identified a number of strategic corridors. In general do you think this is an appropriate way of thinking about transport in the SEStran area?

**We neither agree nor disagree.**

## Question 10

Please state any comments you have on the corridors or network measures.

**We have no strong views on this matter.**

Question 11

In general, do you agree that these region wide measures are appropriate?

**Agree.**

Question 12

Do you have any comments on the region wide measures?

**It should be borne in mind that each and every community transport and voluntary sector transport provider is independent, has its own board of trustees or management committee, and its own constitution. Topic 33: Regional co-ordination of community and accessible transport services should be sensitive to this independence and be alive to the considerations of volunteers. There is sometimes a lack of understanding and sensitivity from public sector organisations towards the voluntary sector and how it works, which can lead to worthwhile initiatives becoming unstuck.**

Question 13

Should SEStran support road user charging on the Forth Road Bridge?

**CTA does not have an opinion on this matter**

Question 14

Should SEStran support road user charging on the Forth Road Bridge?

**CTA does not have an opinion on this matter.**

Question 15

What position should SEStran take on the continuation of tolls on the Forth Road Bridge?

**CTA does not have an opinion on this matter**

Question 16

Are these (Initiatives for specific areas and groups) appropriate themes for the RTS address.

**Agree, though the third point (the travel needs of the disabled) should be extended to include elderly people and others who might be socially excluded.**

**We would also advise that SEStran may come in for criticism for using terminology such as “the disabled” in its strategy – many people with disabilities find this term derogatory and offensive. “Disabled people” would be a better use of language.**

Question 17

In general, do you agree that the types of measures within these themes are appropriate

**Agree**

Question 18

Do you have any comments on the initiatives for specific areas and groups?

**CTA welcomes the strategy document’s initiatives in section 11. We would highlight that there is a distinction between Community Transport (including demand responsive transport schemes) which is generally controlled and managed locally by volunteers, and demand responsive transport provided by local authorities. Voluntary sector services tend to be much more nimble and responsive to change where this is required.**

**There is a major problem with access to healthcare in the SEStran region. Some CT groups already provide a valuable service in this area but the demands on the CT network for the provision of access to health are growing. Many CT organisations are willing to help with this problem where their capacity and capability allow, but the stumbling block is that usually public authorities are not paying the true cost of the delivery of these services. Realistic funding can overcome this problem and we would urge SEStran to scrutinise the issue of access to health services.**

**Whilst there is a growing demand for access to health services from the CT network, CTA would like to ensure that funding for CT is not solely for healthcare and/or employment services as the Initiatives for Specific areas and Groups might imply. CT initiatives are often developed to address broad issues of social exclusion and inequality,**

**and frequently provide a range of differing transport needs tailored to meet the needs of people in their local communities.**

**CTA feels that the draft strategy is not as strong a document as the National Transport Strategy for Scotland with regard to how it aims to tackle social inclusion. Social inclusion ranks alongside economic growth and the reduction of carbon emissions as the main strand in the National Strategy but this weight of support is not evident in the SEStran strategy.**

**CTA wishes to see a transport system for everyone in the SEStran region, including those who are marginalised for whatever reason and cannot use mainstream services. Our members provide a lifeline to those who cannot use public or private transport for whatever reason. A perennial problem for the CT network is short term commitment from funders and shortfalls in the level of funding given, which fuels instability. CT projects are always subsidised but are run as efficiently as possible. We would encourage SEStran to commit towards longer term funding for the CT network in its area and towards a policy of full cost recovery for CT groups in its funding.**

Question 19

What priority should be given to each category?

**CTA wishes to see a high priority given to each of network measures, region wide measures and initiatives for specific areas and groups. We would comment that Initiatives for Specific Areas and Groups might be perceived as a soft option as it deals with the transport needs of a small section of the population, but who are also the most marginalised members of our society. CTA would urge for a strategy focused on needs as well as the numbers of passengers/users.**

Question 20

In general do you support this draft Regional Transport Strategy as presented?

**Yes, but apart from section 11 on Initiatives for Specific Areas and Groups, we feel it is light on community and voluntary sector transport provision. We would like to see greater prominence in the strategy towards the solutions which CT and DRT can provide.**

Question 21

Do you have any other comments on the draft strategy?

**CTA feels that the strategy should take a lead from the National Strategy for Scotland, particularly in addressing social inclusion. This would result in greater prominence to CT solutions. CTA would be happy to work with SEStran in compiling a strategy for CT in its area.**