

Annual Statement on Sustainable Economic Growth 2021/22

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, section 32(1)(a) requires listed public bodies to publish a statement on sustainable economic growth as soon as possible after the end of the financial year.

The following statement sets out the steps that Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has taken in 2021/22 to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions. Further information is available at:

spt.co.uk/spt-across-the-region/about-spt/documents/finance/.

Introduction

SPT was established by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 which created Scotland's seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs). SPT's role involves planning and delivering transport solutions for all modes of transport across the west of Scotland, in conjunction with our 12 constituent councils and industry partners.

Sustainable economic growth and contribution to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework

SPT, together with its partner organisations, contributes to sustainable economic growth by planning and delivering regional transport improvements, and through the operation and support of transport services. The regional economy is directly supported by SPT's on-going investment and expenditure programme. This programme spans all modes of travel. It seeks to improve connectivity, accessibility, reduce emissions and provide attractive, seamless and reliable travel. These are key elements of sustainable economic development. In 2021/22, we published reports covering each of our council areas, highlighting projects, initiatives and services delivered by SPT over the previous 5 years, thereby contributing to sustainable economic growth, and looking at the future. These reports are available at: spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/spt-in-your-area/.

Our Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), approved by Scottish Ministers, and associated Delivery Plan, is a key statutory activity for SPT which sets out when and how transport projects and proposals are to be delivered. SPT works closely with its constituent councils, Transport Scotland and others to ensure that transport policy and programmes in the west of Scotland are properly co-ordinated, efficiently delivered and focused on contributing to sustainable economic growth.

During 2021/22, SPT continued to develop a new RTS for the west of Scotland. The new RTS will set out a new long-term vision and strategy for an improved transport system to underpin a more sustainable and growing economy; enable a healthier, more inclusive and fairer society; and reduce the impact of transport on the environment. It is anticipated that the new RTS will be approved by the Partnership in 2022/23 and submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval thereafter. Further information on the current status of the RTS is available at: spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/regional-transport-strategy/vision/.

In 2021/22 we invested £25.793 million in regional transport improvements. This included £9.968 million on Subway Modernisation, enhancing the attractiveness of public transport and active travel, to encourage modal shift, stimulating regeneration, reducing harmful emissions, and improving access to jobs and services. Expenditure was lower than had been originally planned with various issues being highlighted

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including on-going issues as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, availability of contractors, supply chain issues and staff resource constraints.

In terms of operation of transport services we incurred net expenditure of £36.431 million in direct support of transport services in 2021/22. This included £12.187 million of support from SPT to join up communities by subsidising local bus services in areas not served by the commercial bus market, an increasing challenge given the significant recent decline in bus patronage and market contraction. SPT's Subway service carried 8.0 million passengers (2020/21: 2.5 million) in 2021/22 against a pre Covid patronage of 13.2 million in 2019/20. Buchanan Bus Station, the largest bus station in Scotland, which typically handles around 12 million passengers per year had reduced passenger numbers in 2021/22, compared to pre pandemic numbers. However there were still over 1 million bus service departures departed from SPT bus stations in 2021/22, enabling vital access to employment, education, services and key retail centres across the country.

In terms of SPT's own staff training and development policies, these result in a highly trained and professional workforce which is ideally placed to meet the future needs of the economy.