



Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
Advancing Equality 2025

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Section 1

Introduction



1.1 About SPT

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) is the Regional Transport Partnership ¹ for the west of Scotland and is made up of twelve councils: East Dunbartonshire, East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and the Helensburgh and Lomond area of Argyll and Bute.

The SPT area covers 7000 sq. km and is home 2.21 million people living in 194 localities.

SPT delivers transport solutions across the Strathclyde area and has a number of planning and operational responsibilities that deliver significant benefits to residents and business in the west of Scotland, including:

- Supporting bus services, providing bus infrastructure, and operating regionally significant bus stations;
- Delivering regional transport projects and planning the regional transport network;
- Operating the Subway network;
- Delivering school transport and in many areas transport for pupils with Additional Support Needs;
- Providing demand responsive and community-based transport;
- Acting as the Secretariat for the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme; and
- Supporting the integration and continued development of smart ticketing.



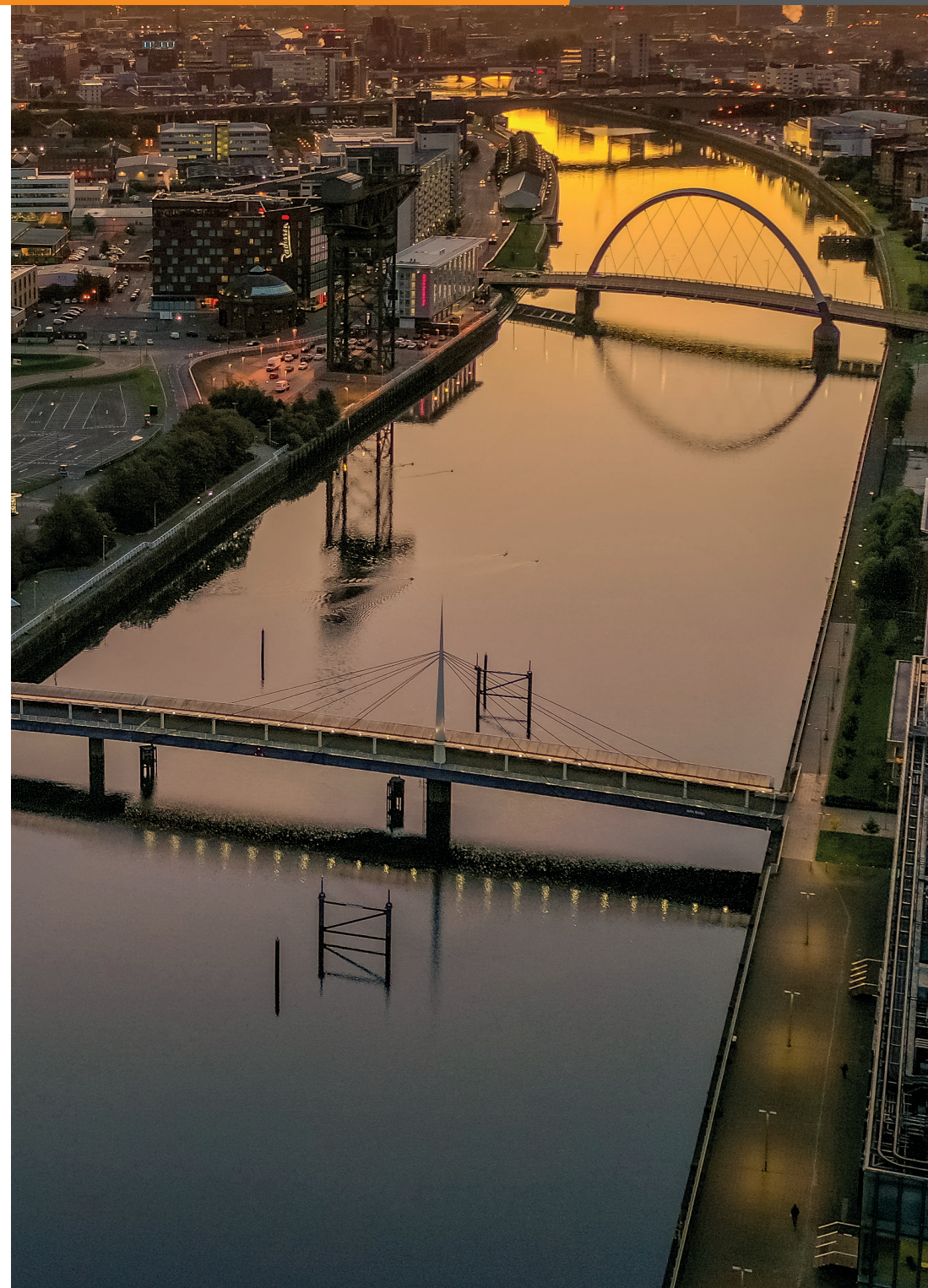
SPT also works with our member councils and other key stakeholders to develop aspects of the regional transport network including bus, rail, road, walking and cycling as well as taking forward initiatives to enhance passenger experience such as smartcard ticketing and information provision.

SPT is committed, through our activities, to advancing equality, tackling discrimination and promoting good relations between people who share protected characteristics with reference to the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The public sector equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

In this document, we have used the term 'equality groups' to mean 'persons who share a relevant protected characteristic'.



1.2 Legislative Context

As a listed public authority, SPT must comply with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (referred to hereafter as “the Specific Duties”). This statutory instrument sets out specific obligations that demonstrate commitment to the “Equality Duty”², which is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which states that public authorities must:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties oblige authorities to:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty
- Publish equality outcomes
- Assess and review policies and practices
- Gather and use employee information
- Publish gender pay gap information
- Publish statements on equal pay
- Consider equality in relation to public procurement
- Publish in a manner that it is accessible

In 2016 an additional duty³ was introduced requiring public authorities to include the number of men and women who have been members of the authority during the period covered by the report; and the steps taken or intended to be taken towards ensuring diversity in relation to the protected characteristics of those members.

1.3 Document Structure

This report sets out how SPT meets the Specific Duties and is divided into 4 parts:

Section 2

Mainstreaming Equality in SPT

Section 3

Equality, our Members and
Our Staff

Section 4

Evidence Gathering and
Engagement

Section 5

SPT's Equality Outcomes



Section 2

Mainstreaming Equality in SPT



2.1 SPT's Role and Functions

SPT's key roles and functions are set out in 1.1 above. SPT considers its role as a listed public authority⁴ in the way we fulfil our functions, deliver our services and in our relationship with our staff. This part of the report describes the progress we have made to date to make the Equality Duty integral to the exercise of our functions, so as to better perform that Duty.

2.2 Steps Taken to Mainstream Equality

Mainstreaming equality is about the systematic integration of equality and diversity principles into the everyday work of the organisation. SPT is committed to mainstreaming and has continued to place equality and diversity at the heart of its culture. In doing this we are able to better understand the needs of our staff and service users and, in turn, to better meet the Equality Duty through the advancement of equality and good relations and tackling discrimination.

SPT's functions can be broadly divided into four distinct areas:

- SPT as a service provider;
- Transport planning and project delivery;
- SPT as an employer; and
- Public sector responsibilities.

SPT has considered how equality and diversity has been integrated with its functions to help eliminate discrimination and other unlawful conduct; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations.

2.2.1 SPT as a Service Provider

SPT acts to promote the needs of all its customers and staff, including people with protected characteristics. SPT's work inevitably has a strong focus on connecting people with daily services. In delivering transport services and supporting infrastructure, SPT strives to improve the journey experience of all our customers considering their individual protected characteristics and overall travel needs. Through all aspects of service planning and delivery SPT recognises the role that public transport has in enabling people to access key services and participate in daily life and we strive to minimise the disadvantage experienced by communities and people with protected characteristics. Recent and ongoing key areas of work include:

- Continuing to consider and where practical address the impacts on groups and communities of changes in the commercial and supported bus networks.
- Delivering the MyBus service and service design improvements based upon a review of the service carried out in 2022–2023 that included engagement with passengers and community groups.
- Engaging with Subway passengers to understand views on journey satisfaction, service quality, safety and security and accessibility of the system, information provision, customer service and ticketing options.
- Delivering the actions identified in detailed access audits of our Subway and bus stations including the information available to passengers to inform planning their journey through an SPT station and the way information is communicated to passengers during their journey.

- In the past two years, key training related to SPT as a service provider included:
 - The SPT contact centre staff participated in a training session offered by Deafblind Scotland. The session encouraged interactivity, by posing questions such as, “What is your understanding of deafblindness?” and “How would you communicate effectively with a deafblind person?”
 - The SPT contact centre staff also participated in customer services training, which included focus on communicating and interacting with disabled people, older people and caregivers, enhancing empathy skills and listening techniques, and fostering a culture of inclusivity by incorporating principles of neurodiversity and equality, diversity and inclusion into daily customer service practices.
- All SPT staff completed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion module.
- Managers and Subway operations have participated in Neurodiversity Awareness training.
- Driving up the standard of information available at bus stops across Strathclyde through the roll-out and maintenance of new Bus Information Standards to ensure the provision of high quality, consistent and easy to understand information on all local bus services at all bus stops across the region.

- SPT continued to update and maintain bus stop information at over 11,500 bus stops and 14,000 bus information display cases across the region, based upon SPT's Bus Information Standards. QR codes on the information panels include links to bus operators' websites and Traveline Scotland, providing passengers with links to live travel updates
- Supporting Community Transport (CT). CT provides accessible, affordable transport for socially or economically disadvantaged groups, voluntary groups and third sector organisations and provides key transport services in local communities. Many of the services operated by CT organisations provide access to services and activities for people with protected characteristics. SPT supported a range of CT organisations in 2023/2024 and 2024/2025, including: Coalfield Community Transport (CCT); Community Transport Glasgow; Getting Better Together; Larkhall District Volunteer Group; North Area Transport Association; South Ayrshire Community Transport; South West Community Transport; Ardgowan Hospice; Blantyre Volunteer Group; Community Central Halls; Community Transport East Renfrewshire; East Kilbride Community Transport; Glenboig Development Trust; Inverclyde Voluntary Council for Social Services; New Tannahill Centre; Port Glasgow Voluntary Trans-Port Group; Renfrewshire Council SOOPiR Bus; and West Dunbartonshire Community Transport Action Group.



2.2.2 Transport Planning and Projects

Transport Planning is a key function of SPT. We have a statutory responsibility to prepare a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). In 2023, a new RTS was approved by Scottish Ministers and the SPT Partnership covering transport in the region for a 15-year period. The new RTS provides a new strategic framework for the region. Equality is embedded in the strategic framework with the vision and objectives explicitly referencing 'for all' and 'for everyone' and a set of key policies on accessing and using transport covering availability, accessibility, affordability and safety of transport. Key workstreams linked to the RTS delivery, including Clyde Metro, Buchanan Bus Station Masterplan, Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy and Regional Active Travel Strategy all embed equality within their frameworks.

SPT, as part of Transport Scotland's new approach to delivering active travel and behaviour change projects and initiatives, co-ordinated the People and Place Programme across the region in 2024/2025. The People and Place Programme comprises four themes that projects and initiatives must support: Active Schools; Active Workplaces; Accessibility and Inclusion; and Capacity and Capability Building. A sample of projects supported through the People and Place Programme include:

- Access to Bikes and Cycle Parking for Schools and Young People (Cycling Scotland), aiming to enable children and young people to cycle to school, build cycling skills and confidence and reduce inequalities in access to bikes.
- Cycle Access Fund (Cycling UK), providing tailored and affordable solutions to individuals, including non-standard bikes, to reduce inequalities of access to bikes and travelling actively.
- Bike for Good: Promoting Safe Cycling (Glasgow City Council), enabling people to cycle with a focus on reaching ethnic minority people, young people and economically disadvantaged communities.
- Women and Families on Wheels (Women on Wheels) (Glasgow City Council), aiming to empowering and enabling women to overcome barriers to cycling.
- Rock Up & Ride - Adaptive Bikes Library (Scottish Cycling), increasing access to adaptive bikes and cycle training for disabled people.

SPT continues to invest in projects which enhance the accessibility of the transport network including Subway Modernisation, the delivery of the recently refurbished Motherwell Interchange, Access for All at Port Glasgow station and the refurbishment of Kilmarnock Bus Station to provide waiting facilities, enhanced information provision and a Changing Places toilet.

SPT assesses the equality impacts of its plans and proposals through Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) when we intend to introduce substantive change to policy, projects and services. SPT also continues to report key equality consequences to SPT Partnership and Committees on all papers presented to Committee.

2.2.3 SPT as an Employer

We systematically mainstream equality in our relationship with our staff. We recognise the right of all employees to be treated fairly and considerately in an employment framework that demonstrates commitment to equality and fairness for all. Our recruitment processes, terms and conditions of employment and training and development opportunities reflect our commitment to mainstreaming.

Equality and diversity are fundamental principles in all HR policies and procedures, which are effectively promoted throughout the organisation. We assess the fairness and effectiveness of these equality policies through workforce monitoring.

SPT has a wide range of family-friendly policies to support our staff. Our suite of family-friendly policies is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that we meet our legal obligations and best practice.

SPT regularly reviews people policies and processes to ensure that they meet changing legal obligations and best practice. SPT's Flexible Working, Maternity Leave and Pay, Paternity Leave and Pay and Time Off to Care for a Dependant Policy and Guidance documents have been updated to reflect organisational changes and to ensure they are in line with current legislation and best practice. SPT introduced a Carer's Leave Policy and Guidance document following the implementation of the Carer's Leave Act 2023 on 4 April 2024.

We operate fair and objective recruitment and selection, which places emphasis on individual skills, abilities and experience. Selection criteria are reviewed regularly to ensure they are objective, justifiable and essential for effective performance of the role. Staff involved in this process receive training to ensure no bias in recruitment and selection, and how to apply good and fair practice. We operate blind recruitment up to the conclusion of the shortlisting stage. SPT renewed its Disability Confident certification for a further three years in 2024. The eRecruitment system has significantly improved SPT's capability to gather equality data from applicants, both internal and external, and to analyse trends which in turn can inform how and where we recruit to attract a more diverse pool of applicants. Exit interviews are also conducted to gather data on the reasons for leaving SPT.

We include equality and diversity in the induction programme for all new starts in order to set clear expectations from the outset. All of our staff are supported to develop the skills and abilities they require to carry out their current and any future role. Staff have a sound understanding of equality and diversity through training and awareness briefings, and our managers undertake regular training to build their understanding and skills in relation to managing diversity, whether as the employer or service provider.

SPT Managers have undergone a wide range of training including Mental Health Awareness, Neurodiversity Awareness, 4B's for Men and Women's Mental Health Awareness training to support staff. SPT continues to work in partnership with specialist organisations such as PAM Assist, our Employee Assistance Provider, who provide briefing sessions to SPT Managers and Supervisors on the wide range of support and resources available including online resources and the Wellbeing App positively influencing and empowering our staff to take responsibility for their wellbeing. These briefing sessions ensure they can direct our employees to these resources.

2.2.4 Public Sector Responsibilities

Leadership

SPT understands that mainstreaming the equality duty is both a corporate and individual responsibility. Leadership and staff awareness are central to success. SPT's Chief Executive is our Equalities Champion and leads our Equality and Diversity Group (EDG). We have reviewed the scope of responsibility of the EDG to sharpen its focus. The EDG has responsibility for driving forward the three needs of the General Duty within their individual departments and ensuring all departments are progressing agreed action plans and implementing corporate wide initiatives in support of equality and diversity. The EDG also provides a forum for sharing experiences across the organisation and a platform for ensuring consistency of approach.

The work of the group and adherence with our responsibilities is overseen through regular meetings of SPT's senior management team.

While the socio-economic duty – the Fairer Scotland Duty – does not apply to Regional Transport Partnerships, SPT recognise the close interrelationship between socio-economic disadvantage and the experience of people with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to advancing equality of opportunity. To address this, and in recognising that SPT's constituent Local Authorities are subject to the duty, the EDG also has the responsibility to consider the impact of SPT's actions and activities towards reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.

Equality Impact Assessment

It is essential that we assess the impact of our policies, practises and projects to ensure, as far as possible, our decisions not only help address existing disadvantage but do not exacerbate disadvantage. SPT assesses the equality impacts of its plans and proposals through Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) when we intend to introduce substantive change to policy, projects and services.

Workstreams for which scoping and/or full impact assessment have been undertaken are reported to every EDG and six-monthly reports are provided to SPT's senior management team.

Since we reported in 2023, the EIA for the Regional Transport Strategy completed ensuring that equality and inclusion are embedded in the organisation's strategic framework and providing clear direction for subsequent workstreams to embed the general duty within them.

EIAs have also been undertaken iteratively as part of the Regional Active Travel Strategy and the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy, and the final EIA for the modernisation of the ZoneCard Ticketing has completed (undertaken on behalf of the ZoneCard operators)⁵.

EIAs have been undertaken for SPT's Climate Change Strategy, the roll out of wi-fi to all SPT Subway and bus stations, the reopening of the Concessionary Travel booth in Buchanan Bus station, West Street feasibility study and throughout the Contact Centre Improvement Programme.

The requirement to assess the equality impact of proposals has also been built into the development of a concept Masterplan for Buchanan Bus Station and The Clyde Metro Case for Investment Stage 2.

Our HR team has also considered the potential for equality impacts in relation to all SPT HR policy changes and the restructuring of the Bus Development & Contract Management and Ticketing and Data & Survey functions within the organisation.

SPT is committed to further strengthening our commitment to advancing equality and we will continue to monitor and seek improvement to our approach to EIA through our business practices and in line with guidance and best practice.

Procurement

Procurement is a key enabler in SPT delivering its organisational goals effectively and continuing to demonstrate best value. The procurement team supports SPT in providing professional advice and conducting procurement exercises in order to achieve best value through SPT contracts. SPT has published a Procurement Strategy which helps us to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

SPT requires tenderers to declare that they comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all contracts awarded subject to SPT's standard terms and conditions also include an audit clause, giving SPT the ability to randomly check compliance.

Where relevant and proportionate to do so and in applicable Regulated procurements, SPT has sought Community Benefits (CB's) with great success. Community Benefits clauses, which are specifically designed to provide free of charge services/employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups and individuals as a direct result of any contract awarded. Whilst CB's are only required by legislation to be included in contracts over £4million in value, SPT has incorporated these in contracts valued at £50k and above where there was a genuine prospect of meaningful benefits being achieved. As a direct result of our procurement activities and the contracts awarded, the following benefits have been realised during year 2023/2024 alone:

- SPT contract awards have secured the creation and continuation of 29 full time and 19 part time staff, the majority of which have been employed from the local area.
- Four small businesses within the Glasgow area were awarded work on a sub-contracting/supply chain basis as a result of engineering and maintenance works contracts awarded, with firms in plant hire, civil engineering design and electrical works benefiting.

- Work experience placements were offered for school children on four separate contracts, with placements for university undergraduates also taking place in consultancy firms.
- A STEM event was hosted by an SPT professional services contractor, specifically targeted at minority groups.
- Commitment to donate to local foodbanks and to conduct school visits was secured.

SPT is committed to promoting contracts with supported businesses. A supported business is defined by the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 as an economic operator whose main aim is the social and professional integration of disabled or disadvantaged persons, where at least 30% of the employees are disabled or from disadvantaged groups. When retendering the Corporate Uniform contract in 2023, SPT took advantage of current Procurement Regulations and reserved this contract to bids from Supported Businesses only, which resulted in a five-year contract being awarded to one such business. SPT will continue to actively consider the use of businesses of this nature and to use of the third sector, where these organisations are both available and appropriate.

In 2024, SPT was successful in becoming Living Wage Accredited, and as part of this process we undertook to ensure that all main service providers to SPT paid their employees working on our contracts as a minimum the Real Living Wage as published by the Living Wage Foundation. This provision has now also been embedded in all tenders and we will only award contracts to companies who either currently pay the Real Living Wage or will commit to do so.

Board Succession Planning

Board succession planning is about ensuring SPT's Partnership Board is reflective of the wider community and can draw upon the greatest range of skills, experiences, knowledge and expertise to maximise its effectiveness. SPT has prepared a Board Diversity Succession Plan with support and input from Partnership members.

Scottish Government Guidance acknowledges that a number of public boards, such as SPT's, comprise democratically elected and nonelected members. As such, SPT has no input to the process for nominating elected members to its Partnership Board, but we aim to effectively harness the diverse contributions that all Board members make.

To support the Board Diversity Succession Plan, SPT has worked with a number of SPT appointed members to prepare an Action Plan which has taken forward work on the following:

- SPT has continued to keep the Board up-to-date with developments in equality and diversity relevant to the organisation's strategic outlook and responsibilities as a public body;
- SPT has audited the skills, knowledge and experience needed for Board appointments to ensure that the appointed members' recruitment process is as inclusive as possible;
- SPT has also publicised appointed member vacancies through a wider range of sources to encourage candidates with a range of skills and experience and from diverse backgrounds to apply;
- SPT produced a recruitment handbook which outlines the role of appointed members and following engagement with existing appointed members have developed an induction plan for new members, which will help promote understanding of equality issues; and
- Worked with appointed members throughout the period of their appointment to understand their views on how they are performing their responsibilities and consider appropriate actions to support them in this process.

2.3 Going Forward

We recognise that while due regard to the Equality Duty is the heart of the way we work, we recognise the need to be able demonstrate how we are promoting equality. We know that we can go further to ensure equality is part of our structures, behaviours and culture throughout the organisation and in driving continuous improvement in our service delivery. To drive this over the next two years we are committed to:

- Reviewing the function and responsibilities of the SPT Equalities Working Group to ensure that it is best positioned to support mainstreaming the Equality Duty in SPT and monitoring our equality Outcomes, while providing opportunities for participation from colleagues across the organisation;
- Reviewing our approach to engagement;
- Reviewing our approach to Equality Impact Assessment; and
- Raising the profile of equality in the organisation and its relationship with high quality service delivery.





Section 3

Equality, Our Members and Our Staff

3.1 Board Composition

SPT is a partnership of 12 Local Authorities in the west of Scotland and the Partnership Board is made up of 20 elected members and up to 9 appointed members. The gender balance of Councillor Members of our current Partnership Board is 16 men and 4 women. In line with the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, elected members are appointed to SPT's board by the constituent Local Authorities.

In March 2021 two appointed members retired from the Board and we recruited four additional appointed members through a transparent recruitment process. There has been no subsequent change to the appointed members on SPT's Board.

Currently, therefore, the gender balance for appointed members is four men and three women.

Six current member terms of office are due to conclude as of 31 March 2025. The Cabinet Secretary for Transport has approved the re-appointment of four members who wish to continue for a further term of office. In addition, a replacement health sector representative has been nominated and appointed.

An Appointed Member Recruitment Committee, made up of five SPT Members of a mixed political and gender balance, has also been established to fill remaining vacancies. The committee has responsibility for overseeing all stages of the Appointed Member recruitment. The process will consider skills criteria, shortlisting and ultimately interview and recommendations for selection.

3.2 Gathering and Using Employee Information

SPT employed 486 staff as of 31 December 2024. SPT's headcount has remained relatively steady despite staff turnover and implementation of structural changes. SPT's eRecruitment system embeds the requirement for applicants to complete equality monitoring information. SPT asked all staff to complete an equality monitoring survey in November 2024; 56% chose to do so, a decrease of 6% since our last report. SPT will continue to undertake this exercise on a regular basis in order to refresh the data held and to build a more complete picture of our workforce over time.

3.2.1 Age

Staff turnover has slightly increased at SPT in the last year from 12% to 14% however; the overall workforce profile has not changed significantly since our 2023 report. Over a quarter of our workforce, 26% are aged 55 and above, a slight reduction from our last report. The proportion of staff in the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups has reduced slightly to 53% and the proportion of our workforce aged 19-25 has remained the same at 3%.

In terms of recruitment, 12% of our new starts are aged 19-25. This is reflective of the number of candidates who applied for vacancies from this age group during this period at 9%.

3.2.2 Caring Responsibilities

SPT gathered data on caring responsibilities in 2024 and found that there was no change in the number of staff who had caring responsibilities. SPT did not distinguish between caring for elderly dependents, children/grandchildren or, for example, caring for a spouse or partner at this stage. The percentage of staff with caring responsibilities has remained at 26% in 2024.

3.2.3 Disability

The gap, in our workforce data set, has slightly increased from 4% to 6%. The proportion of staff declaring that they have a disability which includes an impairment, health condition or learning difference has remained at 12% at December 2024.

3.2.4 Gender Reassignment

None of our staff have declared they have or intend to undergo gender reassignment. SPT will continue to request information and will monitor this data regularly.



3.2.5 Marriage & Civil Partnership

48% of staff confirmed that they are married and the proportion of staff confirming that they are in a civil partnership has increased from 2% to 3%. 31% of staff confirmed they are single. 16% of staff confirmed they fall within other categories including divorced, widowed and other. 2% of staff preferred not to say.

3.2.6 Pregnancy & Maternity

Five staff took maternity leave in 2024. Two employees reduced their working hours on their return to work; there are two employees on maternity leave at the time of writing the report.

3.2.7 Race

Since our last report in 2023 the race profile in SPT has changed slightly with the number of staff declaring that they are from a MEB (Minority Ethnic Background) group at 4%. This reflects the latest Scottish Government statistics which show that MEB people make up 3.9% of the population. 6% of our new starts in 2024 were from a MEB group. This has remained static since our 2023 report.

3.2.8 Religion or Belief

A higher proportion of staff shared their personal data in terms of religion/belief when completing the equality monitoring survey in November 2024. The 2023 report confirmed that 7% of the workforce 'prefer not to say' or 'not known'. This has reduced to 5% in 2024. The data continues to show a broad range of beliefs amongst our staff. Christianity remains the most represented religion at 47%; a further 2% are Muslim, Hindu, Sikh or 'other' and 44% of staff state they have no religion, a slight increase from 43% in 2022.

3.2.9 Sex

SPT's male to female ratio has remained static at 68:32. There is a good balance of men and women across many corporate job grades although it is evident that females are under-represented at senior levels in grades F and G.

By contrast, SPT's technical grades, which are typically found in Subway Engineering and Maintenance are predominantly male. This is a pattern evidenced in Scotland generally.

3.2.10 Sexual Orientation

Heterosexuals make up the single biggest group in SPT in terms of sexual orientation at 91% of all staff. In terms of the proportion of staff identifying themselves as from the LGBT community; this has slightly increased from 5% to 6% since our report in 2023.



3.3 Gender Pay Information

SPT's most recent gender pay gap calculated as the percentage difference between men's average hourly basic pay on a full-time equivalent basis, and women's showed that the gap was 15.3% at December 2022. SPT will complete a detailed equal pay analysis as defined within the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) using data on 31 December 2024. Data from the UK Office for National Statistics shows that the UK average figure was 14.9%.

3.4 Equal Pay Analysis

This data will be published in March 2025 and any issues arising will be considered and addressed, with a report to SPT's Personnel Committee in due course.

3.5 Statement on Equal Pay

SPT is committed to fair pay systems underpinned by the principle of equal pay for work of equal value regardless of sex, race or disability. SPT recognises that in order to achieve equal pay, a salary, grading and benefit structure that is transparent, flexible, based on objective criteria and free from bias must be in place.



Section 4

Issues Identification



4.1 Profile of the SPT Area

The SPT area is home to over 2.21 million people. In 2022, more than half of the population (52%) were female and about one in five people (21%) were aged 20 years or younger⁶.

In 2022, over one-quarter (26%) of the regional population had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activity, and had lasted, or was expected to last, at least 12 months⁷.

In 2022, just over nine in ten residents (91%) were White-British, White-Scottish or another White ethnic group⁸. About one in ten residents (9%) were Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British, African, African Scottish or African British, Caribbean or Black, Mixed or Multiple Ethnicities, or another ethnic group⁹.

In 2022, over two-fifths (45%) of residents were Christian and about 3% were Muslim¹⁰.

Table 1 provides further details on the SPT area population by sex, age, disability, ethnicity and religion, based upon Scotland Census 2022 data.

In Scotland, in 2022, 19,970 people were trans, or had a trans history. This is 0.44% of people aged 16 and over¹¹. In Scotland, in 2022, there were 183,860 LGB+ people in Scotland, representing 4.0% of people aged 16 and over¹².

In 2019, there were 20,209 live births in the 12 councils included in the SPT (including the whole of Argyll and Bute)¹³.



Table 1: SPT area population by sex, age, disability, ethnicity and religion (2022)

Sex		
Male	1,083,224	48%
Female	1,151,661	52%
Age		
Aged 0 to 4	104,381	5%
Aged 5 to 9	116,385	5%
Aged 10 to 14	123,884	6%
Aged 15	24,044	1%
Aged 16 to 17	47,085	2%
Aged 18 to 19	52,609	2%
Aged 20 to 24	142,836	6%
Aged 25 to 29	146,515	7%
Aged 30 to 34	151,992	7%
Aged 35 to 39	144,608	6%
Aged 40 to 44	137,875	6%
Aged 45 to 49	133,814	6%
Aged 50 to 54	160,982	7%
Aged 55 to 59	168,700	8%
Aged 60 to 64	153,380	7%
Aged 65 to 69	128,058	6%
Aged 70 to 74	109,860	5%
Aged 75 to 79	83,548	4%
Aged 80 to 84	54,771	2%
Aged 85 and over	49,561	2%

Disability		
Yes, limited a lot	278,422	12%
Yes, limited a little	296,939	13%
No - not limited	1,659,522	74%
Ethnic Group		
White: White Scottish	1,819,286	81%
White: Other White British	126,884	6%
White: Other White	98,550	4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	22,649	1%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	110,154	5%
African: African, African Scottish or	30,278	1%
Caribbean or Black	2,672	0%
Other ethnic group	24,414	1%
Religion		
No religion	980,847	44%
Church of Scotland	453,353	20%
Roman Catholic	459,068	21%
Other Christian	89,185	4%
Buddhist	5,402	0.2%
Hindu	12,809	0.6%
Jewish	3,158	0.1%
Muslim	71,380	3.2%
Sikh	7,829	0.4%
Pagan	6,220	0.3%
Other religion	4,638	0.2%
Religion not stated	140,998	6.3%

4.2 SPT's Approach to Evidence Gathering and Engagement

In line with regulation, SPT is required to review our Equality Outcomes at least every four years, taking account of relevant evidence and engagement. Previously, the Equality and Human Rights Commission has highlighted the importance of identifying the most significant inequalities and the areas of action that can have the most significant impact, as well as ensuring that organisations' Equality Outcomes link to a wider policy framework.

The development of the equality outcomes for the 2021 Advancing Equality were based upon the key issues being developed for the new RTS. Since the 2021 report, the new RTS, representing SPT's strategic policy framework for the period 2023–2038, has been fully developed and approved by Scottish Ministers and SPT Partnership. The new RTS confirms those key issues as policies within the "Accessing and Using Transport" theme, specifically:

- Accessibility of transport;
- Affordability of transport;
- Availability of transport; and
- Safety and security while using the public transport network.

The evidence review for the 2025 Advancing Equality report is therefore focused on updating the evidence base against the existing equality outcomes, drawing upon relevant engagement evidence from plans and projects linked to the delivery of the RTS and SPT's corporate plan.

4.3 Evidence Review

4.3.1 Key Issues

The new RTS, SPT's strategic policy framework, confirms the key issues for Advancing Equality. These are:

- Accessibility of transport;
- Affordability of transport;
- Availability of transport; and
- Safety and security while using the public transport network.

The evidence base for each of these has been updated in the rest of this section, drawing upon updated statistics and indicators, relevant engagement and SPT service user research where available.

4.3.2 Accessibility of Transport

Inaccessible transport makes travel less convenient, less safe and less dignified and may stop some people from travelling at all, leading to social isolation and worsening socio-economic inequalities. Recent research demonstrates that disabled people make far fewer journeys than non-disabled people¹⁴. The research also finds that, critically, this is due to inaccessible transport rather than an intrinsic consequence of disabled people's health conditions and impairments. Additionally, further research finds that one in four disabled and elderly people in the UK avoid using the public transport system due to accessibility issues¹⁵.

Age

Poor quality pavements and footpaths can make it difficult for older people to travel to bus stops/hubs.

Older adults (aged 60 years and over) are less likely to use the internet and online security measures than other age groups¹⁶. In 2019, 43% of people aged 75 and over used the internet, compared with 99% of 16–24-year-olds¹⁷. This is relevant to travel information and ticketing/payment formats.

The Subway passenger survey in 2024 identified slightly lower satisfaction, or slightly higher dissatisfaction among older passengers with the following:

- Ease of moving around the stations and inside the trains
- Ease of accessing station platforms
- Availability of escalators
- Audio announcements inside the train

Disability

The Subway passenger survey in 2024 identified that disabled passengers had statistically significant higher levels of dissatisfaction (compared to passengers as a whole) with the following:

- Provision of information about the location of the Subway stations
- Ease of moving around stations
- Ease of accessing station platforms
- Availability of escalators

Additionally, overall satisfaction was slightly lower with the following features:

- Availability of information about the accessibility of stations and trains, before I make my journey
- Audio announcements inside the train
- Provision of grab rails inside the train

Engagement with disabled bus users in 2024 identified that some travel information/ journey planning websites/apps are not fully accessible, highlighting that some websites are incompatible with text to speech. They also noted the importance of seating at bus stops and accurate real time information due to the physical challenges of standing for long periods.

Disabled bus passengers who use wheelchairs noted that real time information on wheelchair space occupancy is helpful but not always accurately displayed in the cases where people with children in prams are already onboard. Additionally, there continues to be inconsistency in the way that wheelchair spaces are allocated to passengers, with some drivers instructing other passengers vacate the space whilst some do not. In these instances, passengers highlight that they are not sure of their rights.

Disabled bus passengers with visual impairment identified problems with using information at bus stops and, at busy stops, understanding which bus has arrived. Other passengers noted that orange fonts used on bus timetables are difficult to read. Additionally, poor quality pavements and footpaths can make it difficult for disabled people to travel to bus stops/hubs.

Disabled bus passengers highlighted issues with the priority seats on buses, with these sometimes being occupied by people who may not be disabled. However, people with non-visible disabilities also highlighted that they are sometimes asked to vacate these seats.

Disabled bus passengers noted that most bus drivers are helpful and patient, but that some drivers move away from the bus stop before passengers are fully seated and do not always lower ramps for people who may need them. Alighting/boarding when the bus is not correctly aligned to the bus stop is problematic for many passengers.

Disabled bus passengers have noted that often assistance with specific aspects of their journey comes down to the willingness of fellow passengers to assist them. This leads to uncertainty about the journey experience and means many passengers feel anxious about travelling by bus.

Disabled bus passengers noted that involving disabled people early in the design process would lead to better outcomes with specific points raised regarding travel websites/ apps, bus stop design and vehicle design.

Pregnancy or Maternity

Travelling by public transport can be challenging when travelling with babies and young children, particularly when using prams and buggies. This includes boarding/alighting vehicles, manoeuvring stations and finding adequate space on buses.

Key Focal Areas for Accessibility:

- Accessibility of travel announcements, travel information, journey planning and ticket information/purchase
- Provision of journey assistance including quality, consistency and promotion of this; specific areas include information on the accessibility of stations and vehicles, staff training in disability awareness and assisting passengers, and provision/communication of journey assist services
- Use of wheelchair spaces (bus) and priority seats (Subway and bus)
- Accessibility of vehicles, waiting facilities and stations including step-free access, and accessibility of routes to stops/hubs
- Inclusive design process with passengers engaged at early stages and throughout



4.3.3 Affordability of Transport

The SPT region has a disproportionate number of communities that experience the highest levels of income deprivation compared to the rest of Scotland¹⁸. In Scotland, the groups more likely to be living in relative poverty include the youngest households (household heads ages 16 – 24 years); single adult households; people from minority ethnic groups, LGBT+ adults, Muslim adults and households in which somebody is disabled¹⁹.

The cost of public transport fares disproportionately impacts those on lower incomes as lower income households are more likely to use bus regularly and less likely to have access to a car compared to higher income households²⁰. Lower income households also spend a higher proportion of income on fares. Lower income households are also more likely to be experiencing insecure work, which is deeply connected with low pay²¹. Insecure work also has additional cost and income implications related to being called into work on short notice as this means workers may have to use more expensive transport services in order to get to work in the first place²².

Age

The youngest households (household heads ages 16 – 24 years) are more likely to be living in relative poverty²³. Younger (16 – 24 years) and older (60+ years) workers experience elevated levels of insecure work, including low paid insecure work²⁴, although younger workers are most adversely impacted across all measures of insecure work²⁵. For example, younger workers are more likely to be on zero-hours contracts whereas older workers are more likely to be self-employed²⁶.

Transport Scotland research identified that around half of children and young people aged 5 – 21 felt that transport and travel was generally unaffordable. This was more common among young people who were from lower income groups, limited in their activities due to health reasons, and/or living in towns or rural areas²⁷.

Disability

In Scotland, over the period 2020-2023, the poverty rate after housing costs for people in households with a disabled person was 24%. This compares with 18% in a household without disabled household members²⁸. Engagement with disabled bus users identified that some passengers are not sure if they are eligible for concessionary travel under the national scheme.

Gender Reassignment

Trans and non-binary people are more likely to be in precarious employment compared to the general population²⁹. The limited availability of healthcare and social spaces for trans and non-binary people may require travelling long distances for some people, leading to challenges with the cost of using public transport³⁰.

Race

In Scotland, over the period 2018-2023, ethnic minority groups (other than white minority groups) were more likely to be in relative poverty after housing costs compared to white ethnic groups³¹.

Most ethnic minority groups have lower than average levels of pay and above average levels of both unemployment and economic inactivity^{32,33}. Ethnic minority groups also have higher incidence of both insecure work and low paid insecure work than white workers³⁴. There are differences between ethnic groups; for example, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British workers are most likely to be in insecure work, but second least likely (after white workers) to be in low paid insecure work whilst Pakistani/Bangladeshi workers have the highest levels of low paid insecure work and third highest rates of insecure work³⁵.

Religion

In Scotland, over the period 2018-2023, Muslim adults were more likely to be in relative poverty (61%, 40,000 each year) than adults overall (19%), after housing costs were taken into account³⁶.

Sex

Men and women experience similar levels of insecure work and low paid insecure work, but the severity of insecure work may be worse for women, with women being more likely to experience multiple forms of insecure work than men. This includes women being more likely to be under-employed (defined as working less than 16 hours and wanting to work more) and women are more likely to be on zero-hours contracts³⁷.

Sexual Orientation

The poverty rate in Scotland has been consistently higher for LGB+ adults compared to straight/heterosexual adults³⁸.

Subway

Generally, Subway passengers in 2024 were satisfied with the value for money offered by Subway. Value for money is not a measure of affordability, though, and it is not known to what extent the cost of Subway fares could be a barrier to travel for people who are not using the Subway. Additionally, many passengers continue to use disposable tickets when better value fares are available on Subway SmartCard.

Key Focal Areas for Affordability:

- Cost of travelling by public transport
- Information about, access to and flexibility of best value tickets
- Uptake of concessionary travel cards

4.3.4 Availability of Transport

The availability of transport includes the provision of services, their proximity to where people want to travel to and from, service hours of operations, reliability and regularity. The availability of transport affects people's ability to travel to access employment, education, health care and other services, as well as their ability to access the best value goods and services. The availability of transport also affects people's ability to make use of concessionary travel schemes, which impact further on inequalities related to the affordability of transport.

Age

In Scotland, about one in three bus passengers (32%) are aged under 30 years³⁹.

People aged 17 – 29 years and 70+ years are less likely to have a driving license than the population as a whole⁴⁰.

People who are aged 70+ years are less likely to walk as a means of transport compared to younger age groups.

Transport Scotland research found that 29% of children and young people missed out on social leisure activities or education and work opportunities because of access or travel restrictions⁴¹.

Disability

Disabled people are less likely to have a driving licence - 43% of disabled people aged 17 years or older not have a driving licence compared to 21% of people who are not disabled.

Research by Transport Scotland found that disabled people were more likely to report that they rarely or never took part in certain leisure activities, including sports, clubs and evening social activities, and were also more likely to indicate that they or their child missed out on activities or opportunities⁴².

Disabled people are also likely to be less physically active compared to people who are not disabled. Disabled people are also less likely to walk as a means of transport compared to people who are not disabled⁴³. Engagement with disabled bus passengers highlighted some challenges with the MyBus booking process and the inability to book return journeys.

Pregnancy or Maternity

Mothers often have complex journey patterns-travel between home, work, nursery, the "school run", groups and clubs.

Race

People from white Polish, white other, and all ethnic minority groups combined are less likely to have a driving licence compared to white Scottish, white British and white Irish ethnic groups. Only 48% of people from Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British ethnic groups have a driving licence compared to 73% of the whole population aged 17 years or older⁴⁴.

Religion

People who belong to Catholic religion and people who belong to non-Christian religions are less likely to have a driving licence than people who do not have a religion, people who belong to Church of Scotland, and people who belong to other Christian religions.

Sex

Women are more likely to use bus than men – on an average day in 2022, 60% of bus users were women compared to 40% of men⁴⁵. Women are less likely to have a driving licence than men – 32% of women do not have a driving licence compared to 21% of men⁴⁶. Women are less likely to meet physical activity guidelines compared to men – 60% of women meet guidelines compared to 70% of men⁴⁷.

Women tend to take on a disproportionate level of care and domestic tasks, compared to men, in addition to full or part-time work, consequently, women are more likely to make multi-stop and multi-purpose trips, combining travel to work with trips for other purposes such as taking children to school, looking after family members or shopping.

Trip purposes and patterns differ for women compared to men e.g. working part-time or shifts, or in relation to caring responsibilities.

Subway

The Subway network is fixed so availability issues are focused on hours of operation and reliability. The Subway Passenger Survey in 2024 identified that, overall, passengers are slightly less satisfied with service disruption information, reliability and opening hours compared to overall levels of satisfaction, but there were no identified differences in satisfaction levels for specific equality groups compared to passengers as a whole.

Key Focal Areas for Affordability:

- Bus network coverage
- Subway service levels
- Active travel network including routes to stops/stations
- MyBus service design

4.3.5 Safety & Security When Using Public Transport

Women, young people, people from ethnic minority groups, transgender people and people with health conditions feel less safe on public transport, while people from ethnic minority groups, LGBT+ people and disabled people with mental health or neurological conditions also have higher levels of concern about the risk of discrimination on public transport. Generally, people are more concerned about all risks to personal safety after dark, but specially the case for the risk of violence. These experiences and concerns can reinforce wider inequalities as people may opt for more expensive transport to avoid using public transport or people may forego some travel altogether and, therefore, have reduced access to everyday activities and services.

Age

Recent research found that people aged 25-34 years were most likely to be concerned about the risk of harassment, violence, and discrimination on public transport⁴⁸ with the level of concern far lower in older age groups (55 years and older)⁴⁹.

Disability

Recent research found that disabled people are more likely to be concerned about the risk of harassment and violence on public transport compared to all adults. People with mental health or neurological conditions were even more likely to be concerned about the risk of harassment, violence and discrimination on public transport compared to all adults⁵⁰. The number of disability aggravated charges in Scotland increased by 22% to 903 in 2023-2024⁵¹. Hate crime related to disability has been increasing since the relevant legislation was introduced in 2010.

Gender Reassignment

Recent research has identified that 30% of trans and non-binary people avoid public transport⁵². Concerns around safety are reflected by the substantial levels of harassment, abuse, and violence people had experienced when using public services: 50% had experienced verbal harassment, insults or other hurtful comments; 32% had experienced threats of physical or sexual harassment or violence; 19% had experienced sexual harassment or violence; and 19% had experienced physical harassment or violence. These experiences were far more common in some settings than others – with threats of physical or sexual harassment or violence, or experiencing either, most likely to occur in public spaces, in public toilets or on public transport⁵³.

The number of transgender identity aggravated hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland tripled from 53 in 2014/2015 to 185 in 2021/2022. The proportion of trans people who are confident about reporting hate crime to the police has sharply declined⁵⁴.

Race

People from ethnic minority groups are far more likely to be concerned about harassment, violence and discrimination on public transport compared to people from white ethnic groups. Nearly one-half of people from ethnic minority groups were concerned about violence (48%) and discrimination (46%), compared to 29% and 11%, respectively, for people from white ethnic groups⁵⁵.

Racial crime remains the most reported hate crime in Scotland. In total 3,392 charges relating to race crime were reported in 2023-2024, an increase of 4.6% compared to 2022-2023⁵⁶. Engagement carried out for the Regional Transport Strategy identified that the attitudes of some passengers towards people from ethnic minority groups reduce travel choices and lead people to avoid using public transport⁵⁷.

Religion or Belief

There were 523 charges with a religious aggravation reported in Scotland in 2023-2024⁵⁸.

Sex

Recent research in England found that women were more likely to be concerned than men about the risk of harassment and the risk of violence. More than one in every 3 women (37%) are concerned about the risk of harassment on public transport, compared to 23% of men⁵⁹. Similarly, more women (36%) were concerned about risk of violence on public transport compared to men (27%)⁶⁰. Women aged 25-34 were more concerned than older women. Of women aged 25-34, 47% felt concerned about the risk of violence and 51% concerned about the risk of harassment⁶¹ compared to 29% and 26%, respectively, for women aged 55 years and older⁶².

Transport Scotland research has found similar results, with 33% of women expressing concern about their personal safety on public transport, compared with 23% of men and higher proportion of women (14%) than men (9%) had been the victim of harassment⁶³.

Further, UK data shows that:

- Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, 28% had experienced this on public transport;
- 72% of women were worried about experiencing sexual harassment on public transport, compared to 40% of men; and
- 62% of women reported changing their behaviour in relation to public transport to avoid sexual harassment, compared to 35% of men⁶⁴.

Sexual Orientation

In recent research, LGB+ respondents were more likely to be concerned about the risk of discrimination on public transport, with just under a third (28%) of LGB+ respondents concerned, compared to 16% of all other adults⁶⁵. Sexual orientation aggravated crime is the second most commonly reported type of hate crime in Scotland in 2023-2023⁶⁶.

Similarly, research by Transport Scotland found that people aged 16 and over who identified as lesbian, gay and bisexual were more likely (43%) to say that they had been bullied or harassed while travelling on buses at night than young people who identified as heterosexual (18%)⁶⁷.

Research by LGBT Youth Scotland found just 48% of 1,211 LGBT young people who answered a survey question said they felt safe travelling on public transport, a sharp drop from 79% of participants who said they felt safe in a 2012 survey⁶⁸.

Key Focal Areas for Affordability:

- Safety considerations related to the bus stop environment and routes to bus stops
- Harassment, assault and discrimination occurring on public transport services (passengers and transport staff)
- Reporting of harassment, assault and discrimination occurring on public services transport



Section 5 SPT's Equality Outcomes



5.1 Review of Progress Against Outcomes Set In 2021

Progress on SPT's Advancing Equality outcomes, since last reported in 2023, is set out below.

5.1.1 Accessibility

Outcome	Disabled people have improved access to SPT facilities and services
Intermediate changes	Consistent and clearly defined passenger assistance guidance is available to passengers using SPT stations
	SPT has a comprehensive understanding of accessibility issues in our Subway and bus stations, and has developed action plans to deliver improvements

Assistance

SPT promotes the Thistle Assistance Card and App to its passengers and to all public transport users across the west of Scotland. This is designed to help passengers who require a little bit of extra time or assistance when travelling to feel safer and more comfortable when using public transport.

Guidance on the assistance available from SPT Subway and bus station staff has been developed for passengers. This sets out how staff can provide assistance, when required, to allow passengers to undertake journeys that would be otherwise inaccessible to them. This will give passengers confidence in what support is available to them on planning and during their journey and provides further information for Subway wheelchair users. An Accessibility Guide for Subway and bus stations has also been produced which sets out SPT's commitment accessibility including training and emergency procedures, how our approach is monitored and planned improvements.



To accompany these documents individual station access guides have been produced for each Subway station and SPT owned bus station. Station access guides will further support passengers who are unfamiliar with SPT stations and may require additional certainty around what to expect when planning their journey. The access guides provide a text description, maps and plans, setting out the location of each station, how to access and move through it and the location of key facilities such as ticket offices and information points. The guides also set out whether staff are available on the stations and during what times, as well as if there are any other facilities available in the station such as toilets.

The guidance documents and the station access guides will be brought together on SPT's web page to provide one point of information for passengers planning their journeys on Subway and through SPT's bus stations.

The accessibility section of the SPT website and the passenger information social media feeds are regularly updated to communicate temporary changes in the accessibility of our stations, such as lifts or escalators or specific bus stances temporarily out of use.

Access Audits and Action Plans

In 2023, NRAC consultants, on behalf of SPT, completed accessibility audits of SPT bus and Subway stations, establishing a detailed and prioritised list of actions to make the stations more accessible. The audits covered, where relevant to individual sites, the following areas:

- Station Approach, Routes & Street Furniture
- Car Parking
- External Ramps
- External Steps
- Entrances
- Reception Areas & Lobbies
- Corridors & Internal Surfaces
- Internal Doors
- Internal Ramps
- Internal Stairs
- Lifts/Platform Lifts
- WCs: General Provision
- WCs: Wheelchair Users
- Facilities
- Way Finding
- Lighting & Acoustics
- Means of Escape
- Building Management

The audits also established a set of overarching recommendations including the development of access guides, staff training and increasing step-free access. Action plans have been established for each station to address the audit findings, with actions taken including:

- Carrying out feasibility studies on options to improve step-free access to Subway station concourses and platforms;
- Engaged with relevant councils to address issues on routes to Subway stations and bus stations;
- Refreshed signage for hearing loops at Subway stations;
- Initiated programme of replacing failed lighting throughout Subway stations;
- Initiated process to ensure issues with lifts or escalators at Subway stations are communicated to customers via social media;
- Enhanced manifestations in glass panels at the Buchanan Bus Station concourse entrance area, where these were previously missing;
- Painted grey support pillars at Buchanan Bus Station with hi visibility orange bands to enhance visibility;
- Enhanced audit process to manage accessible toilets to ensure pull cords are checked and waste bins are in the correct location at all bus stations;
- Cycle storage rails fitted with reflective strips at Hamilton bus station;
- All bus stances upgraded with new contrasting hi-visibility nonslip edging at Hamilton bus station;
- Wayfinding signage has been improved at Greenock bus station, with further improvements underway;
- Updated safety signage, passenger information and wayfinding signage at East Kilbride bus station; and
- All glass manifestations were upgraded from blue to corporate orange at East Kilbride bus station to enhance visual continuity for users.

5.1.2 Affordability

Outcome	People have improved knowledge of and access to our best value fares
Intermediate changes	People are aware of the range of Subway ticket options that are available to them
	SPT works with partners to investigate options to deliver more affordable public transport fares for those most in need

Subway Tickets Options

SPT continued to raise awareness of the best value tickets for Subway travel, taking on board key messages from previous research with passengers that identified some information barriers on the range of Subway tickets and how to access them.

Ongoing marketing campaigns are now focused on increasing the awareness of PAYG and promoting the range of Smartcards that can be used on Subway, including National Entitlement Cards and ScotRail, Glasgow Tripper, McGill's and Stagecoach Smartcards. This will encourage people, even infrequent travellers, to access best value single and day travel on PAYG.

SPT initiated development of contactless card payment (debit cards, credit cards and mobile wallets) as an alternative to using a smartcard (e.g. Subway SmartCard). This would widen access to best value fares by removing the requirement to have a SmartCard before travelling and allowing passengers to benefit from a daily and weekly price cap.

Working With Partners

The smart ZoneCard was launched in 2024, providing more flexibility of ticket types and zoning structure for multi-modal/multi-operator travel.

SPT further developed the Clyde Metro and initiated development of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy. These processes consider the affordability of public transport fares and ticketing.

SPT continued to liaise with Transport Scotland on the implementation of the actions from the Fair Fares Review.

5.1.3 Availability

Outcome	Our passengers' differing needs are better reflected in how we plan and deliver SPT transport services
Intermediate changes	We promote the use of existing SPT supported bus services through enhanced communication with community groups, equality organisations and the third sector.
	We continue to develop the MyBus service.
	SPT works in partnership to enable improvements in public transport network availability and coverage.

Promotion of Services

SPT has continued to promote its Subway and socially necessary bus services, including MyBus. Engagement with Local Authorities, Health boards, elected members and local communities informs SPT's decision making in relation to the provision of supported bus services, and in line with SPT's Framework for Supporting Local Bus Services⁶⁹.

MyBus

SPT has been delivering the actions from the MyBus Review to address key challenges experienced by service users, including:

- simplifying the MyBus registration process;
- increasing the notice period to confirm journey booking's;
- clarifying eligibility of different types of journey purposes and providing information on alternative transport for any journeys that cannot be booked by MyBus;

- developing and delivering a MyBus Marketing Strategy to increase awareness of the service and how to use it;
- securing additional capacity for the MyBus service in North Lanarkshire, with a new bus operating at peak times Tuesday – Friday 0930hrs to 1330hrs; and
- trialling of new smaller, wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Clyde Metro & Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy

SPT is progressing development of the Clyde Metro business case and the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy, both of which aim for increased investment in public transport networks in the region.

Regional Active Travel Strategy

SPT's new Regional Active Travel Strategy was approved in 2024. The new strategy aims to accelerate the delivery of new active travel infrastructure; maintain and improve existing infrastructure; support the development of schemes to increase equal access to bikes; and encourage behaviour change. Routes to public transport stops/hubs are included in the actions.

5.1.4 Safety & Security

Outcome	Younger people, older people, women, disabled people, LGBT+ people, people from minority ethnic backgrounds feel safe when using SPT services
Intermediate changes	SPT understands safety and security issues for all passenger groups using our transport services and facilities.
	Passengers are aware of the measures we have in place to keep them safe
	Passengers are confident that interaction with SPT staff will be positive
	SPT works in partnership to develop an industry wide approach to tackling harassment and violence against women and girls, other forms of harassment and the sharing of safety and security learning and best practice.

CCTV is installed throughout the Subway and SPT bus stations and monitored 24 hours a day. Help points are provided on Subway platforms and near bus station stances.

The Railway Guardian app covers Subway, allowing passengers to directly report incidents. SPT also widely promotes the app via social media channels.

Lighting is checked regularly at Subway and bus stations, ensuring any defects or maintenance needs are reported and addressed quickly. New lighting technologies have been implemented at bus stations to improve quality of lighting throughout the station.

Reported incidents are discussed with external stakeholders such as the Safer Transport Tactical Group and Police Scotland.

Subway has an internal safety and security group that meets regularly to allow frontline staff an opportunity to highlight, discuss and suggest changes to improve safety and security for staff and passengers.

SPT attended the Women's Safety on Public Transport Workshop where experiences from users and other transport providers along with best practise were shared.

SPT will continue to work with partners within the transport industry to ensure a joined-up approach, messaging and communication in ensuring that the transport network is safe for all and violence and harassment towards staff or other passengers is not acceptable.

5.1.5 SPT Workforce Diversity

Outcome	SPT's workforce demographic reflects the SPT area, helping us to better understand the needs of our communities.
Intermediate changes	SPT is considered a diverse and welcoming employer
	Through our advertising and recruitment process we actively encourage applications from people underrepresented in our workforce
	We work with partners to promote a diverse workforce in the transport sector

SPT recognise that altering the demographic makeup of its workforce to more closely represent the communities it services will take time. Workforce diversity is a challenge across the transport sector. Action has focused on what steps the organisation can take now to access and attract more diverse candidates when recruiting and raising awareness of transport as a career option.

To help promote working within transport and engineering, staff from roles across the organisation continue to engage with local primary and secondary schools as well as universities and colleges, to talk about their jobs, their individual paths into their jobs and the variety of jobs that are available within SPT.

To promote SPT's public commitment to equality and diversity, the supporting text on the HireRoad website and recruitment portal has been expanded to put further emphasis on diversity and explicitly references SPT's willingness to provide additional support to any applicant who may require it. SPT continues to participate in the Disability Confident Scheme which was renewed for a further three years in 2024.

SPT recognises how recruitment campaigns are promoted and that our selection and interview processes could be limiting opportunities to encourage diversity into our workforce. To increase the reach of recruitment campaigns we have placed posters within Subway trains highlighting the skills that we are seeking and directing potential applicants to SPT's careers page.

For engineering roles, the team recognised the language used within adverts could be deterring potential applicants through the use of masculine terminology. To address this, the language used in adverts for engineering roles was reviewed and amended to reduce the masculine gender-coding of language in all recruitment campaigns.

All recruitment campaigns are promoted through the organisation's social media networks and variety of multi-media platforms.

Recognising the potential for unconscious bias to influence hiring managers during the recruitment and selection process, all managers have and will continue to undertake unconscious bias training and all recruitment is blind up to interview stage. At interview, where appropriate, an independent person from a separate function will be invited to support the interview and selection process.

Exit interviews are carried out by our executive team to understand any issues, including equality and diversity related issues that may have led to someone leaving the organisation.

5.2 Review of Outcomes

SPT's strategic policy framework, the RTS, confirms the key issues for Advancing Equality, namely: Accessibility of transport; Affordability of transport; Availability of transport; and Safety and Security while using the public transport network. The evidence set out in Part 4 of this report supports the retention of these key issues. However, the detail of key issues, outcomes and intermediate changes require review and adjustment to better reflect current evidence.

5.3 2025 Outcome Setting

As set out earlier, SPT's strategic policy framework, the RTS, confirms the key issues for Advancing Equality, namely: Accessibility of transport; Affordability of transport; Availability of transport; and Safety and Security while using the public transport network.

These are systemic and cannot be addressed through SPT's Equality Outcomes alone, however these issues affect the way in which people use the services SPT provides and therefore SPT's first four outcomes are focused on these key issues. The relationship between the identified key issues and relevant protected characteristics is shown in Table 2. This has been updated from earlier versions of Advancing Equality to reflect additional available evidence set out earlier in Section 4.3.

While there has been staff turnover in the last two years, and there has been some change in staff composition, our review of our workforce data highlights that our staff profile still doesn't reflect the communities we serve. These issues are not specific to SPT and there are recognised challenges in promoting greater diversity across the transport sector workforce⁷⁰.

Table 2: Issue/protected characteristics relationship

Key issue	Protected Characteristic for which issue is relevant							
	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Pregnancy or maternity	Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation
Accessibility	x	x						
Affordability	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Availability	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Safety and Security	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
SPT workforce diversity	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

5.4 SPT Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029

The Key Issues of Accessibility, Affordability, Availability and Safety and Security have been retained from the 2021 Advancing Equality, as described earlier, but SPT has reviewed and adjusted the outcomes and intermediate changes to better reflect the updated evidence base set out in section 4.3 and incorporate significant new workstreams within SPT. Table 3 sets out a summary of the Key Issues and the updated outcomes and intermediate changes.

Table 3: SPT Equality Outcomes and Intermediate Changes 2025

Accessibility	
Issue	Inaccessible features of the transport system make it difficult for disabled and older people to access and use public transport. understand the needs of our communities.
Outcome	SPT facilities and services are more accessible for older and disabled people.
Intermediate changes	We better understand and respond to needs of disabled people who use our service.
	Information on the accessibility of SPT bus stations and Subway stations is up to date and communicated effectively to all passengers. applications from people underrepresented in our workforce.
	SPT will continue to carry out accessibility audits of Subway stations and bus stations and deliver the outcomes of the audits.
	SPT will have reviewed and updated bus stop design guidance to incorporate accessibility and inclusive design and will be working to implement improvements as necessary.
	SPT will have continued to progress with the delivery of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy, incorporating aims for more accessible bus journeys.
Affordability	
Issue	The cost of public transport can limit access to travel and opportunities particularly for people on lower incomes. Groups that are more likely to be on lower incomes include younger people and younger households, households with a disabled person, LGBT+ people, ethnic minorities and Muslim adults.
Outcome	People have improved knowledge of and access to best value public transport tickets.
Intermediate changes	SPT will have increased promotion and information on the best value Subway tickets to ensure people understand the best tickets to choose for their journey.
	SPT will have delivered a study on the affordability of Subway fares and developed an action plan.
	SPT will have continued to progress with the development of Clyde Metro and the delivery of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy, incorporating aims for more affordable fares.
	SPT will have increased promotion of concessionary travel schemes to ensure people who are eligible for the schemes are making use of them.

Availability	
Issue	The availability of public transport and active travel infrastructure can limit access to jobs, services and other opportunities particularly for people who are less likely to have access to private transport and may be more dependent upon public transport.
Outcome	Our passengers' differing needs are better reflected in how we plan and deliver transport services.
Intermediate changes	SPT will have continued to progress with the development of Clyde Metro and the delivery of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy, incorporating aims for better public transport networks.
	We promote the use of existing SPT supported bus services through enhanced communication with community groups, equality organisations and the third sector.
	SPT will have delivered the findings of the MyBus Review.
	Subway service levels will be reviewed, following completion of Subway Modernisation, and improvements are delivered if feasible.
	SPT will have continued to support and deliver behaviour change activities and promote investment in active travel infrastructure, including routes to stops/hubs.

Safety and Security	
Issue	Experiences and fear of harassment, violence and discrimination make people apprehensive of using public transport and may force some people to use alternative transport or forego travel altogether. Groups that are more likely to feel less safe on public transport include younger people, disabled people, LGBT+ people, ethnic minorities and women.
Outcome	People feel safer when using public transport and feel confident reporting harassment, violence or discrimination when this does occur.
Intermediate changes	SPT better understands prevalence of harassment, violence and discrimination occurring on SPT transport services.
	Passengers will be more aware of the safety measures SPT has in place.
	Passengers are more confident that interaction with SPT staff will be positive.
	SPT will work in partnership to tackle harassment, violence and discrimination occurring on public transport.
	SPT will have carried out safety audits of SPT bus stations and Subway stations and will be working to implement the outcomes of these.
	SPT will have reviewed and updated bus stop design guidance to incorporate personal safety and will be working to implement improvements as necessary.

SPT workforce diversity ⁷¹	
Issue	SPT's workforce does not reflect the communities we serve.
Outcome	SPT's workforce demographic reflects the SPT area, helping us to better understand the needs of our communities.
Intermediate changes	SPT is considered a diverse and welcoming employer.
	Through our approach to recruitment and staff retention we actively encourage applications from and retain people underrepresented in our workforce.
	We work with partners to promote a diverse workforce in the transport sector.

5.5 Next Steps and Monitoring

Work is now underway to identify the tasks and actions required to deliver the intermediate changes identified in Table 2 and to ensure that processes and procedures are in place to monitor the impact of our actions towards achieving these outcomes. Progress will be monitored through SPT's internal Equalities Working Group.

5.6 Continued Partnership Working

As set out above, the issues identified in this report are more far reaching than can be address by one organisation, or indeed one sector. SPT is committed to continued partnership working with equality groups, our local authority partners, Transport Scotland and the wider public transport industry to drive meaningful change.



Notes & References

¹ See <http://www.spt.co.uk/corporate/about/> for further information

² In Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

³ SSI 2016 No159 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2016/159/pdfs/ssi_20160159_en.pdf

⁴ Prescribed under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012

⁵ ZoneCard is a multi-modal ticket which SPT administers on behalf of the participating operators.

⁶ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

⁷ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

⁸ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

⁹ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

¹⁰ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

¹¹ Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

¹² Scotland Census 2022. National Records of Scotland.

¹³ NRS Table BT.4 Births by sex, year and council area, 2023.

¹⁴ <https://www.transportforall.org.uk/news/are-we-there-yet-barriers-to-transport-for-disabled-people-in-2023/>

¹⁵ <https://www.learningdisabilitytoday.co.uk/news/one-quarter-of-disabled-people-avoid-public-transport-due-to-inaccessibility>

¹⁶ [Equality and Human Rights Monitor: Is Scotland Fairer?](#)

¹⁷ [Equality and Human Rights Monitor: Is Scotland Fairer?](#)

¹⁸ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

¹⁹ Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2020-23

²⁰ Scottish Transport Statistics 2024

²¹ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

²² <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

²³ Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2020-23

²⁴ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

²⁵ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

²⁶ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

²⁷ [Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme – Baseline Data Report](#)

²⁸ <https://data.gov.scot/poverty/#Disability>

²⁹ [Scottish-Trans-and-Nonbinary-Experiences-Summary-Report.pdf](#)

³⁰ [Scottish-Trans-and-Nonbinary-Experiences-Summary-Report.pdf](#)

³¹ <https://data.gov.scot/poverty/#Ethnicity>

³² ONS (2023) A09: Labour market status by ethnic group.

³³ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

³⁴ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

³⁵ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

³⁶ <https://data.gov.scot/poverty/#Religion>

³⁷ <https://scottishlivingwage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Precarious-Pay-and-Uncertain-Hours-DRAFT-27-07-23.pdf>

³⁸ https://data.gov.scot/poverty/#Sexual_orientation

³⁹ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 2.10

⁴⁰ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 11.10

⁴¹ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/public-attitudes-survey-data-wave-23/>

⁴² <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/51719/baseline-data-report-june-2022-young-persons-free-bus-travel-scheme.pdf>

⁴³ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 11.11

⁴⁴ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 11.10

⁴⁵ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 2.11

⁴⁶ Transport Scotland. Scottish Transport Statistics Table 11.10

⁴⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2022-volume-1-main-report/pages/13/>

⁴⁸ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁴⁹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁵⁰ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/publications/hate-crime-in-scotland-2023-24/html/#transgender-identity-table-5a-b-and-c-table-1>

⁵² [Scottish-Trans-and-Nonbinary-Experiences-Summary-Report.pdf](#)

⁵³ [Scottish-Trans-and-Nonbinary-Experiences-Summary-Report.pdf](#)

⁵⁴ [Equality and Human Rights Monitor: Is Scotland Fairer?](#)

⁵⁵ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁵⁶ <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/publications/hate-crime-in-scotland-2023-24/html/>

⁵⁷ RTS public survey

⁵⁸ <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/publications/hate-crime-in-scotland-2023-24/html/>

⁵⁹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁶⁰ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁶¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁶² <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁶³ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/51719/baseline-data-report-june-2022-young-persons-free-bus-travel-scheme.pdf>

⁶⁴ UK Government Equalities Office 2020 Sexual Harassment Survey

⁶⁵ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e04df64dd910b7e335cdf9/perceptions-personal-safety-transport.pdf>

⁶⁶ <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/publications/hate-crime-in-scotland-2023-24/html/#transgender-identity-table-5a-b-and-c-table-1>

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⁶⁸ <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/2712/life-in-scotland-for-lgbt-young-people-2022-e-use.pdf>

⁶⁹ <https://www.spt.co.uk/media/wjplw5eb/spt-framework-for-supporting-local-bus-services.pdf>

⁷⁰ Urban Transport Next 02: All on board? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2R-VLP49oI>

⁷¹ Mainstreaming activity is also required in relation to raising the profile of the public sector, transport and engineering as career paths.



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