

Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy

Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment Final Report



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Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment – Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy

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Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment – Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy

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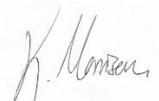
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Executive Summary

This report entitled ‘Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy: Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment Final Report’ has been prepared by Stantec UK Ltd to demonstrate how proposals for the Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy show due regard to the Fairer Scotland Duty. The FSD places a legal responsibility on certain public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions or developing policy.

The purpose of this report is to support Strathclyde Partnership for Transport in exercising its public functions to check and review that equalities implications have been considered within the proposals. The process has benefitted from consultation to inform the impact assessment. This report provides an assessment of potential impacts relating to the Fairer Scotland Duty (including socio-economic disadvantage and inequality of outcome) in respect of the Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy objectives and policies.

Overall, this report identifies minor positive to major positive impacts in relation to guide questions developed to provide a robust assessment of the Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy’s objectives and policies. Alongside this, there are a number of impacts assessed as having a neutral or negligible impact or concluded as having ‘no clear relationship’ where there is not enough evidence to provide an assessment. No negative impacts have been identified in respect of this duty.



Acronyms / Abbreviations

BSIP	Bus Service Improvement Partnership
FSD	Fairer Scotland Duty
ONS	Office for National Statistics
RTP	Regional Transport Partnership
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SPT	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
SRBS	Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy
STAG	Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance



Glossary

Socio-economic disadvantage	Socio-economic disadvantage, which is influenced by low income, low/no wealth, material and area deprivation and socio-economic background
Inequality of outcome	Inequality of outcome, including education, skills, employment, crime, health and wellbeing, life expectancy, living standards, poverty and connectivity.



1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 The Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) places a legal responsibility on certain public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions or developing policy. This differs from the Public Sector Equality Duty which considers only reducing inequalities of opportunity. The Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce the inequalities associated with being disadvantaged. It is closely related to issues of poverty which may affect outcomes across health, housing, transport, education and training and employment prospects.
- 1.1.2 The FSD identifies a need to consider both 'communities of place' and 'communities of interest' in terms of people who share an experience and are particularly impacted by socio-economic disadvantage (Scottish Government, 2021a). Demographic groups who share one or more of the protected characteristics listed in Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 can be considered 'communities of interest', meaning there is a direct link between the FSD and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 1.1.3 This Report sets out the background to the Draft Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy (Draft SRBS) and presents the evidence base and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment of the Strategy.

Table 1.1: Report Structure

Section	Description
Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy project background
Section 3	Assessment framework and guide questions
Section 4	Baseline conditions
Section 5	Fairer Scotland Duty assessment
Section 6	Summary of impact assessment

2 Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy

2.1 Project Background

2.1.1 Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) is developing a Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy (SRBS) for the Strathclyde region.

2.1.2 SPT is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership (RTP) for the West of Scotland region, as designated under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005. Schedule 1 of this Order defines the extent of the West of Scotland region (hereafter 'the SPT region') by reference to local authority and council ward boundaries. The region encompasses 11 entire local authorities from South Ayrshire in the southwest to North Lanarkshire in the northeast, and also includes two wards within the Argyll and Bute Council area (Helensburgh and Lomond).

2.1.3 The development of a SRBS has its foundations embedded in SPT's A Call to Action: The Regional Transport Strategy for the west of Scotland (2023 – 2038) (or 'RTS') and its vision, priorities and objectives, and clear policy statement setting out the aim for a world class passenger focused public transport system. The RTS was published in 2023, and reinforces national policy ambitions, setting out the following Vision for transport in the region:

"The west of Scotland will be an attractive, resilient and well-connected place with active, liveable communities and accessible, vibrant centres facilitated by high quality, sustainable and low carbon transport shaped by the needs of all."

2.1.4 The RTS recognises the need to invest in transformative public transport ensuring a sufficiently attractive 'offer' to move more people by more sustainable transport modes rather than by car. Therefore, a key theme within the strategy encompasses enhancing the quality and integration of public transport with a specific objective to make public transport a desirable and convenient travel choice for everyone.

2.1.5 The RTS is clear that its strategy Vision will not be achieved without improving the quality and integration of the bus network. Given this conclusion, the need for the development of the SRBS was recognised with the new powers and opportunities available through the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 requiring consideration in its development.

2.1.6 The first stage of SRBS development was the development of the Case for Change, which was commenced in June 2023.

2.1.7 The Case for Change set out the key problems to be tackled, the desired transport outcomes, and the objectives, and core policy areas to deliver on these. The Case for Change report has been published by SPT on its website.

2.1.8 Following the Case for Change, the core policy areas were developed further, including the formulation of initial policies, which would be necessary in order to undertake the Options Appraisal workstream to follow.

2.1.9 The Options Appraisal considered options for enhancements to how bus services can be delivered in the west of Scotland using the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.

2.1.10 The aim of the appraisal was to identify a recommended operational model for bus services in the region, with the development and refinement of the SRBS building upon that preferred model into a strategy for delivery, including responding to consultation feedback.

2.1.11 The Options Appraisal was undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process, which provides a framework to assess the performance of transport options to address identified problems and present the results in a consistent manner to inform decision makers. A proportionate approach was taken, appropriate in the context of strategy development.

- 2.1.12 The appraisal was completed on both a quantitative and qualitative basis, and drew upon the quantitative data collected as part of the Case for Change, previous studies where appropriate, relevant strategy and policy documents and design guidance, and knowledge and experience of planning, appraising and delivering transport options similar to those considered here.
- 2.1.13 The options were appraised against the STAG criteria of Environment; Climate Change; Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Economy; and Equality and Accessibility. They were also appraised against Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) developed as part of the Case for Change.
- 2.1.14 Finally, the options were appraised in terms of feasibility, affordability, and public acceptability, as well as an assessment of risk and uncertainty.
- 2.1.15 The Options Appraisal report has been published by SPT on its website.
- 2.1.16 The Options Appraisal process was informed by an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) interim assessment, a Fairer Scotland Duty interim assessment, Island Communities Impact Assessment interim assessment and a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment interim assessment.
- 2.1.17 Following completion of the Options Appraisal, SPT published a consultation document setting out:
- The SRBS process and timescales.
 - A summary of the challenges and goals for the bus network, drawing upon the Case for Change.
 - An overview of the features of a better bus network
 - The options available to deliver a future network.
 - A set of recommendations to guide the development of the SRBS, drawing upon the recommendations of the Options Appraisal.
- 2.1.18 The consultation document requested feedback on the recommendations ahead of further development of the SRBS.
- 2.1.19 Following the consultation period, a consultation report was prepared presenting the results and findings of the process.
- 2.1.20 The consultation feedback was considered by SPT, leading to updating of the recommendations which were approved by the SPT Strategy and Programme Committee in September 2024.
- 2.1.21 SPT has published the consultation document and consultation report on its website. SPT Committee agendas and minutes are also available on SPT's website.
- 2.1.22 Following consultation, for the purpose of the development of the draft SRBS, the outcomes/goals, objectives, policies and measures were refined and consolidated to ensure they were suitable for a strategic document to be consumed by a wide audience and to facilitate further assessment of the measures against the updated objectives.
- 2.1.23 A delivery plan was also developed to demonstrate how the elements of the strategy will be delivered, including the transition to a franchise model for the bus network and an initial action plan.
- 2.1.24 A monitoring plan was also developed to demonstrate how the strategy goals and objectives will be monitored.
- 2.1.25 The draft SRBS is being assessed through Strategic Environmental Assessment, EqIA, a Fairer Scotland Duty assessment, an Island Communities Impact Assessment, and a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.

- 2.1.26 A public consultation will be held on the Draft SRBS in March – May 2025. The consultation will also cover the draft Environmental Report, EqIA, a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment, an Island Communities Impact Assessment and a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.¹
- 2.1.27 The draft SRBS is published on SPT’s website at: <https://www.spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/regional-transport-strategy/bus-strategy/>

3 Assessment Framework

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following guide framing questions and assessment criteria matrix will be applied to testing the performance of the Draft SRBS in relation to implementing the FSD. This provides a transparent framework to assess the extent to which the Draft SRBS objectives, policies and measures reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from low income, low wealth and multiple deprivation.
- 3.1.2 During the options appraisal for the strategy, an interim assessment was undertaken on the five options that were being developed and appraised toward the development of the Draft SRBS. The interim assessment was also undertaken using the Guide questions and assessment criteria matrix as set out below. The assessment supported the options appraisal process and the outcomes of that process.. The assessment within this report is the assessment of the Draft SRBS being taken forward.
- 3.1.3 This assessment of the Draft SRBS has been informed through engagement activities with relevant groups of interest and impact (as discussed below in **Section 4**).

3.2 Guide Questions

- 3.2.1 The framing questions, as set out below, will be applied in relation to the two key parts of the Duty, with relevant criteria identified from the statutory guidance including:
- Socio-economic disadvantage, which is influenced by low income, low/no wealth, material and area deprivation and socio-economic background; and
 - Inequality of outcome, including education, skills, employment, crime, health and wellbeing, life expectancy, living standards, poverty and connectivity.
- 3.2.2 These criteria will be considered with respect to communities of place and communities of interest where evidence and data available has supported this examination.

Guide Framing Questions: Fairer Scotland Duty

Will the Draft SRBS and its associated delivery mechanisms...

- *Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?*
- *Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?*
- *Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?*
- *Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?*
- *Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?*
- *Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?*
- *Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?*
- *Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?*
- *Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?*
- *Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?*
- *Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?*

Guide Framing Questions: Fairer Scotland Duty

- *Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?*
- *Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage*
- *Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?*

3.3 Assessment Criteria Matrix

3.3.1 The following matrix will be used to assess any disproportionate impact of the Draft SRBS on protected characteristics.

Table 3.1: Assessment Criteria Matrix

Impact Score	Description	Symbol
Major Beneficial Effect	The objective or policy contributes significantly to the requirements of the FSD, particularly with respect to advancing equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of people experiencing economic, geographical or social disadvantage.	++
Minor Beneficial Effect	The objective or policy contributes to the requirements of the FSD particularly with respect to advancing equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of people experiencing economic, geographical or social disadvantage, but not significantly.	+
Neutral / Negligible Effect	The objective or policy has a neutral effect on the requirements of the FSD or the relationship is negligible.	0
Minor Adverse Effect	The objective or policy adversely affects the requirements of the FSD particularly with respect to advancing equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of people experiencing economic, geographical or social disadvantage.	-
Major Adverse Effect	The objective or policy significantly adversely affects the requirements of the FSD particularly with respect to advancing equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of people experiencing economic, geographical or social disadvantage.	--
Uncertain Effect	The objective or policy has an uncertain relationship to the FSD requirements or insufficient detail, or information may be available to enable an assessment to be made.	?
No Clear Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the objective or policy and the achievement of the FSD.	~

3.3.2 The assessment criteria provides an objective means of undertaking and reporting the FSD assessment. The colour coding also allows for rapid identification of the impacts most likely to be significant, generally those assessed as having a major positive or negative effect. Commentary will be provided on any identified impacts in relation to the policy options and protected characteristics. Where any major negative impacts are identified mitigations and recommendations are provided.

4 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The information in this section is taken from the SRBS Consultant Report (SYSTRA, 2024).

4.1.2 Engagement to inform the assessment has been conducted at several points:

- Engagement with local authorities and bus operators in the Strathclyde region was carried out during the Case for Change, Options Appraisal and strategy development stages.
- As part of a wider consultation exercise planned at the end of the options appraisal process, where engagement would be undertaken and targeted towards a range of key stakeholders pertinent to the duty as well as more generally through the planned public engagement exercise.
- Engagement with disabled bus passengers was carried out in October 2024 to help inform the draft SRBS policies and measures

4.1.3 SPT carried out a consultation exercise between 2nd April – 13th May 2024 to understand levels of support or opposition to a set of recommendations to guide the development and implementation of the bus strategy. Feedback from the general public and stakeholders was gathered, with 3,072 responses received in total across the following channels:

- Online questionnaire;
- Workshops;
- Interviews; and
- Stakeholder letters / documents.

4.2 Summary of Consultation Findings¹

Rule out Business as Usual

- Both individuals and stakeholders felt that **change was required** and perceive **business as usual to not be working for users** at present.
- **Issues with current bus operations** were reported, such as perceived increases in fares and reliability of services.
- However, a smaller proportion had concerns that ruling out business as usual may lead to the **removal of what they perceive to be successful services**.
- Some stakeholders felt the current provision of services is satisfactory and **does not require change**. Others suggested that other factors need to be addressed first, such as road congestion, and that more evidence on the recommendations is required.

¹ Further details on the consultation process and findings are available in the consultation report available at: <https://www.spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/regional-transport-strategy/bus-strategy/>

Rule out Voluntary Partnerships

- The main reason for supporting ruling out voluntary partnerships was due to concern around **enforcement**, specifically that voluntary partnerships would have little to no impact in delivering improvements to services without **clear accountability mechanisms**.
- The previous impact of voluntary partnerships was also mentioned by questionnaire respondents and stakeholders during the interviews, who noted instances where these have been introduced but have **not succeeded**.
- There were concerns from stakeholders over **potential costs and additional workload** of voluntary partnerships.
- However, some opposed voluntary partnerships being ruled out as they felt they could work well with **appropriate collaboration and commitment**.

Take Forward Local Services Franchising

- The potential improvements that local services franchising could offer in the **quality of service** were mentioned by individuals and stakeholders, particularly relating to improvements in the consistency of service quality and in meeting the needs of local communities.
- Stakeholders referred to **other examples** of local services franchising considered to be successful. Some felt franchising would allow for better **integration** of bus with other modes of transport.
- Reasons for opposition were due to concerns around the **perceived limited impact** franchising may have on current services. Some suggested measures need to be in place to ensure that commitments are binding, and operators are held accountable.
- Some stakeholders raised concerns regarding the **timescales** for this option, and potential delays in the implementation of the franchise model. There were also concerns around the cost of implementing a franchising model.

Take Forward Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs)

- This was the least supported of all of the options, but those who were in support felt that this option could be an **interim step** whilst other options are being developed. Some questionnaire respondents commented on the potential benefits this option could have on bus services, and some also mentioned the **perceived success of other bus partnerships** introduced elsewhere.
- The effectiveness of BSIPs was a concern raised consistently by questionnaire respondents and stakeholders, specifically the belief that this option would have **little to no impact** on bus services. Some had concerns that introduction of BSIPs may delay the introduction of other options.
- There were also concerns around **accountability** and the **flexibility** that this option offers to operators. Stakeholders felt that clear mechanisms for enforcing agreements and holding all parties accountable were required. Stakeholders also raised concerns regarding the potential funding sources for implementing this option, with a similar concern around costs raised in the questionnaire by respondents who perceived this option to be expensive.

Further Investigate Small-Scale Municipal Bus Operations

- Support for this option came from all channels with individuals/stakeholders considering this option to provide an opportunity for buses to be run as a **public service** which they consider to potentially bring more benefits than a profit-driven model.
- Some felt that other similar options have been **successful elsewhere**. They noted that they believe this option may improve service coverage, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

- Reasons to oppose this option were due to concerns regarding the **potential high costs**, with some stakeholders questioning the cost-effectiveness of this option and investment required. Comments were also made in relation to the scale and **ambition** of this option. While questionnaire respondents felt that this option should be larger scale and more ambitious, stakeholders who participated in the workshop suggested that different scales of operation should be explored to determine feasibility.

Outcomes of the consultation

4.2.1 The consultation feedback was considered by SPT, leading to updating of the recommendations which were approved by the SPT Strategy and Programme Committee in September 2024. The updated recommendations were as follows:

- Business As Usual and Voluntary Partnerships should be ruled out as means to deliver a better bus network as more radical intervention is required.
- SPT should commence work on franchising, in line with the requirements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.
- SPT will consider developing business case(s) for small-scale municipal bus company(ies) aimed at providing socially necessary services in parts of the region where private operators are currently very limited.
- SPT, and our partners, should progress with the necessary transition arrangements appropriate (e.g. time-limited, voluntary partnerships or other agreements aimed at improving the bus network) to provide a structured basis for private and public sector collaboration in attempting to arrest further passenger decline and stabilise the bus network in the pre-franchising period.

4.3 Accessibility engagement

4.3.1 A series of interviews with disabled bus passengers were conducted in October 2024 to better understand lived experiences of bus travel. These findings were categorised into four categories, including; before the journey, before boarding the bus, during the journey and after the journey. The findings fed into the development of the draft SRBS policies and measures. A summary of findings are outlined below.

Before the journey

- Respondents were mostly satisfied with the provision of information on the journey planning apps they use, but some noted they require additional support from family or friends.
- Some respondents described challenges they faced with app and website accessibility. Respondents with a visual impairment stated that information online was not accessible for some users, and suggested the large print offline materials are made available.
- Several respondents stated that it would be beneficial to know the type of bus and to have information on wheelchair space on board and the availability on the next bus.
- Finally, one of the most frequently raised issues was a perception that real-time information on apps is not accurate.

Before boarding the bus

- The importance of seating at bus stops was raised by several respondents, noting that passengers with a physical disability need to sit down as standing can worsen pain.
- Respondents with a visual impairment noted they do not always know the exact point to wait for the bus and it was suggested tactile paving could be installed to indicate this.

- Several respondents emphasised the importance of audio information at bus stops, stating that they cannot always read information at bus stops and on buses.

During the journey

- Some respondents reported negative experiences with drivers, noting that some drivers do not always lower the bus for them or put out a ramp. Users also noted that drivers pull the bus away before everyone is seated, causing issues for people with limited mobility.
- Wheelchair users noted that a lack of space on board is an issue as this means they have to wait for the next bus, causing anxiety of not knowing if they can board.
- Respondents with a visual impairment noted that they do not always know where to place their concessionary pass for scanning and suggested tactile element to scanners be introduced. These respondents also noted difficulty knowing which stop the bus is at and request stop information as audio announcements.
- Respondents noted that drivers do not stop unless they see passengers move towards the front of the bus. For respondents with a disability this could be problematic as they reported feeling unsteady while the bus is still moving.

After the journey

- All respondents expressed a desire for disabled people to be involved in improving bus accessibility through continued engagement.
- Some respondents called for greater disability training for bus drivers.

5 Baseline Conditions

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 The SPT region is demographically and spatially diverse with a large number of disadvantaged and access-deprived communities. It has many challenges associated with poverty, deprivation and inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage. Overall, 15% of the region's population is income deprived compared to 12% in Scotland overall (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), 2020). The rate of child poverty is also higher in the SPT region than in Scotland as a whole and there are other inequalities in key labour market indicators including rates of unemployment and underemployment (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021).
- 5.1.2 People who live in the most deprived areas are most likely to experience conditions that limit their opportunities in life and poverty is a key driver of poor health and educational and economic attainment outcomes. There is also a strong overlap between people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (communities of place) and groups who have protected characteristics such as women, disabled people, older people and ethnic minorities (communities of interest). Transport has a role to play in facilitating fairer outcomes by reducing inequalities of access to activities essential to a more inclusive economy.
- 5.1.3 There are several dimensions by which accessibility of transport can be measured, such as modes of transport available and their physical accessibility, cost of transport, distance to public transport and length of journey to work, school and necessary services. This section summarises some of the key equalities issues and evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage as it relates to transport issues.
- 5.1.4 Baseline data of economic indicators such as, employment rates and claimant count, from Scotland's Census 2022 are presented in **Appendix A** for each of the council areas in the SPT region.

5.2 Access to Transport

- 5.2.1 Transport has an underpinning role in tackling poverty, socio-economic and health inequalities and supporting inclusive economic growth. It helps people to get to work, education and training opportunities, to access healthcare and other services and to participate more fully in society (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). In particular, many jobseekers rely on public transport (particularly the bus) to reach these opportunities.
- 5.2.2 Analysis undertaken as part of the Case for Change for the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy (Stantec, 2023) highlights that 22% of households across the SPT area do not have access to a bus stop (within a suitable walking catchment defined (for this analysis) as within 400m in large urban and urban areas, within 600m with accessible small towns and rural small towns, and within 800m in accessible rural areas and remote rural areas); 40% of households (defined as having access to a bus stop) have a bus less often than every 30 minutes, with this rising to 65% for stops located outside of Glasgow; 43% of households outside of Glasgow have no direct bus to Glasgow in the afternoon, increasing to 46% in the evening; nearly a quarter of households (23%) have no access to a service after 1900 (rising to 36% outside of Glasgow); and nearly 1 in 3 households (31%) are not served by a Sunday service. This limits the use of the bus network by many including for employment, education, leisure and social activities.
- 5.2.3 Access to transport can reinforce or lessen the impact of poverty. Being unable to access or afford transport can prevent people accessing services, reduce quality of life and lead to social isolation (Titheridge, Christie, Mackett, Hernandez, & Ye, 2014). This can increase inequalities linked to income, such as health inequalities (Lucas, 2019) and generally contribute to and intensify the experience of poverty and social inequalities that persist. Transport can also act as a key barrier to (or enabler of) employment and to better employment. The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel (Stantec UK, 2021).

- 5.2.4 In Scotland, people on lower incomes are more likely to use bus than those on higher incomes, with 51% of those with household incomes up to £10,000 per annum having used the bus in the past week, compared with 27% of those with household incomes over £50,000 per annum (Transport Scotland, 2022a). Those on the lowest incomes often reported longer journey times across most journey purposes.
- 5.2.5 In SPT's RTS public survey in 2019, many people looking for employment felt that transport was a factor in their decision not to take up opportunities. This often related to the timing of services, or the additional cost and time involved in making multi-operator journeys. Challenges were identified when accessing work by public transport using more limited early morning or evening bus services, particularly where changes between bus services were required. These issues underline analysis of relative job accessibility in the region which showed that 25% of the working age population could access c 20,000 jobs within 20 minutes when travelling by public transport compared with 100% of the population could reach the same number of jobs if they had access to a car (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). Similar disparities exist in the relative accessibility of health facilities by car and public transport with key problems cited in the survey around lack of direct public transport services, frequency of services and availability of parking at hospitals.
- 5.2.6 There are also large inequalities in access to private cars in the SPT region, with car ownership strongly linked with employment and household income. For example, people who are employed are much more likely to have access to a private car, and disabled people are less likely to live in a household with a car available for private use (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021).
- 5.2.7 People living in rural areas are likely to have reduced access to employment and essential services. Public transport travel often involves long journeys, sparse timetables and expensive ticketing in comparison with urban areas. Many people who have a National Entitlement Card (bus pass) cannot use their bus pass, as there are poor bus services (or no accessible buses) in their areas as many of these routes are not commercially viable and services have been withdrawn (MACS, 2019). Evidence also indicates limited integration between public transport services and modes, particularly in rural areas (Jacobs and AECOM, 2021a). Whilst owning a car can improve access, car ownership may push low income households into poverty (see below on 'forced car ownership'). Reduced access to opportunities for employment, training and education may inhibit deprived households from improving their situation (Jacobs and AECOM, 2022).

5.3 Affordability of Transport

- 5.3.1 The affordability, availability and integration of transport to people facing socio-economic disadvantage through low incomes and wealth is a key equalities issue. This characteristic influences how people use and experience the transport network. Further, the transport network itself influences inequalities of opportunity and outcome related to income and socio-economic status (for example through the extent to which it facilitates access to employment and through the costs of using it). People living in areas with higher levels of deprivation tend to have poorer public transport links, fewer employment opportunities and in some cases fewer local services (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Those living in the 10% most deprived areas are more likely to walk or catch the bus to travel to work or school (Transport Scotland, 2020). Being able to access education, employment and training is critical for low income households as a means of escaping poverty, as well as for general wellbeing (Transport Scotland, 2021).
- 5.3.2 Cost is an obstacle to using transport and it is an important mechanism by which transport can cause social and health inequality (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Approximately 14% of an average UK household budget is spent on transport – second only to housing costs (17%) (ONS, 2023). Transport is a key concern for people on lower incomes with some reporting that balancing budgets relies on selecting alternative transport modes such as walking long distances, travelling off peak or relying on their wider social network for lifts. In some cases, people will avoid travelling.
- 5.3.3 How a person interacts with the transport network is influenced by their income. National statistics (Transport Scotland, 2019 &, Transport Scotland, 2020) have shown that people in lower income households are significantly more dependent on public transport, and they are more likely to travel by bus, while people in higher income households are more likely to drive. Parents who are unable to afford transport, have to take long walks for shopping, get isolated from support groups and reduce

household spending including food (Transport Scotland, 2021). As household income reduces, the proportion that is spent on children's travel tends to increase, with those on lower income likely to spend more than 51% of household spending on children's travel (Transport Scotland, 2022b). There is also a spatial relationship between transport connectivity and material wealth with deprived areas tending to have poorer public transport links than areas with high material wealth, in terms of both service quality and the range of options available (Lucas, 2011; Titheridge, 2014).

5.3.4 SPT identify that the cost of transport is a significant barrier in people's ability to use the transport network (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021b). Key affordability issues are:

- Inequalities of access to private cars: Levels of access to cars for private use vary considerably by demographic and socio-economic characteristic. Disabled people and unemployed people are less likely to live in a household with a car available for private use. Fewer than half (49%) of single parent households with dependent children have a car available for private use.
- Forced car ownership: lack of suitable transport alternatives and/or barriers to using available services results in household budgets being stretched for some.
- Public transport fares: Cost of public transport fares is one of the top transport-related challenges in the SPT area. Lower income households are also less likely to be able to access the 'best value' tickets given the upfront outlay required. 'Best value' tickets (weekly or monthly 'passes') are often unsuitable for people who are working part-time or who have insecure work that makes it difficult to forecast future travel needs.
- Despite poor service coverage, people in low income households are more likely to travel by bus due to the affordability barriers to the private car. 41% of people living in a household with income less than £10,000 in Scotland use a bus at least once per week, compared to 15% for those with an income greater than £50,000 (Transport Scotland, 2019). Cuts to bus services therefore have a disproportionate impact on people in low-income households facing other forms of socio-economic disadvantage. Difficulty accessing public transport is only one issue with connectivity. There are also links between poverty and access to cycles. Household access to bikes increases with household income. 62% of households with an income of £50,000 or more have access to one or more bikes, compared to 20% of households with an income up to £10,000 (Transport Scotland, 2019). Bicycle access is higher in rural areas than urban areas.

5.3.5 The key issues experienced by low income families in accessing essential services by public transport have been identified (McHardy & Robertson, 2021) as:

- Cost – the cost of journeys is particularly crucial when travelling with young children as high fares can make short journeys expensive²;
- Scheduling – inflexible timings often cause problems for shift workers, those with caring responsibilities or connecting between different forms of transport; and
- Infrastructure and services – significant wait times between services where these are operated by different bus companies with extended travel times.

5.3.6 Public transport costs can be significant for those on low incomes and particularly for people in rural areas who travel longer distances and face higher costs (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Cost increases of fares disproportionately impact on socio-economically disadvantaged groups which increases inequalities of opportunity and outcomes (Stantec UK, 2021). The affordability of bus services varies across Scotland with costs of travel to essential services generally much higher in remote rural areas (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2016). Evidence indicates that people in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. The single most important factor cited by those on low incomes as the greatest transport-related barrier is cost (Transport Scotland, 2020) and transport fares represents a significant cost for groups including low paid, low-

² The introduction of new concessionary fare schemes on buses for children and young people across Scotland in 2022 will have reduced this effect.

skilled, people working irregular shifts/hours and people experiencing in-work poverty (Scottish Government, 2019). It is also relevant to note that the cost of public transport relative to the cost of motoring has increased in the past decade (Stantec, 2021). Analysis undertaken to inform the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy Case for Change highlighted that, in Scotland, between 2004-05 and 2021-22, whilst bus fares have increased by 88%, this has largely reflected increasing operating costs per bus-kilometre which have increased by 98% (both in current prices) - similarly, and reflecting the reduction in passenger numbers, the operating cost per passenger has increased by 215% over this period (all figures in current prices).³

5.4 Transport and Poverty

- 5.4.1 'Transport poverty' where a lack of affordable travel options prohibits access to employment and essential services has been estimated to impact more than one million people across Scotland (Sustrans Scotland, 2016). Unaffordable and unreliable public transport limits access to job opportunities for residents of low-income neighbourhoods in the Glasgow City Region (Jacobs and AECOM, 2021b). This can lead to higher transport costs for people living in areas of high multiple deprivation, compounding inequalities of income. Research published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation identified that poor service coverage, reliability and or affordability of public transport discourages people with low incomes to commute to employment sites, reinforcing socio-economic disparities (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2018).
- 5.4.2 A 'poverty premium' effect also occurs for people on low incomes who may be forced to pay more for food and other services where lack of access to transport prevents them from making journeys to cheaper shops/supermarkets etc. (Davies, 2016). Young people in lowest income groups tend to report longer journey times across most journey purposes (Transport Scotland, 2022b). Transport cost increases can also disproportionately affect socio-economically disadvantaged groups particularly where real-terms increases exceed the general cost of living measured by the retail prices index. This has been the case between 2010 and 2020 where bus fares in Scotland increased by 34% above inflation. Many low-income families may therefore be less able to maintain social relationships or access health, work or training possibilities that could improve their standard of living (Jacobs and AECOM, 2022).
- 5.4.3 'Forced car ownership' occurs in urban and suburban areas, but it is particularly a concern for low-income households in rural areas (Crisp, Gore, & McCarthy, 2017). Low public transport accessibility can make car ownership a necessity for people to commute to work or access basic services (Curl, Clark, & Kearns, 2017). In the SPT region this is highlighted by figures showing that 61% of rural households located within the most income deprived areas own a car (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). The issue of forced car ownership can also be compounded, and likely influenced by, higher fares for bus travel in rural areas across Scotland (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2016). It may also occur in households with a disabled person if accessibility barriers prevent individuals from being able to make some journeys by public transport or active travel.
- 5.4.4 Some areas of the region experience a lack of affordable transport options to reach essential services. Analysis undertaken for the STPR (Jacobs and AECOM, 2021a) identified that there are many areas, particularly in Ayrshire and Arran, which spend more than the Scottish average on transport expenditure (up to 20% compared to the Scotland average of 14%). This research also identified that 58% of datazones in the Ayrshire and Arran region and up to 51% of datazones in North and South Lanarkshire (Jacobs and AECOM, 2021b) were classified as high risk for transport poverty compared to 38% in Scotland. These areas were typically located in rural parts of the region.
- 5.4.5 In rural and remote areas, commuting, accessing key services and undertaking other everyday activities generally involves longer journeys relative to more urban areas. This means higher fuel costs or public transport fares and less time available for other activities. Remoteness from towns, larger employment centres and key facilities coupled with more limited transport options also reduces access to jobs and services and reduced choice of goods, services and employment opportunities. This is especially true for individuals and households that do not have access to a car. These access-related issues are central to rural experiences of deprivation and social isolation (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). Young people in towns and rural areas were more likely to report that they rarely take part in

³ Scottish Transport Statistics

leisure type activities. Across all activities, those living on islands were the most likely to indicate that they only rarely or never participated (Transport Scotland, 2022b). Access to activities by public transport plays a key role for people in towns, rural and island communities. Public transport services are critical for people in rural areas who cannot drive or do not have access to a car. However, in most cases, access to employment and key services by public transport in rural areas means much longer journey times compared to car users.

5.4.6 For example, from remote, mainland areas in the SPT region, a journey to hospital by public transport is well over an hour and typically closer to two hours in one direction compared to an average of about 45 minutes by car (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). This means less time for other activities and long public transport journeys can be physically difficult for many people who are older, sick or disabled, or travelling with children who are unwell. In the SPT region, about one in ten individuals of working age living in a rural or remote area experiences employment deprivation (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). The challenges of accessing employment by public transport from rural and remote areas can mean a greater dependency on limited local employment opportunities, or, alternatively, relatively high public transport fares for the longer journeys required to get to larger centres of employment. Both of these can pose challenges for household income and expenditure, although in different ways.

5.4.7 Inequalities of health outcomes is an issue affecting people with socio-economic disadvantage. In the west of Scotland, SPT identify a number of drivers for health outcomes including the need to promote active travel as a means to improve health. Factors such as isolation and loneliness have impacts on health and are recognised as challenges along with the risks of poor air quality which are closely related to transport in built up areas. Air pollutants increase the incidence of a large number of diseases in all groups but with disproportionate impacts on children, older people, people with existing health conditions and areas of higher deprivation (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). Impacts of air pollution includes low birth weight, premature birth stillbirth or organ damage in the womb and reduced lung capacity for children (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, 2019). In the SPT region there are large health outcome disparities with a difference of seven years between the lowest and highest male life expectancy (at birth) by local authority area (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, 2021). The region also has nearly three quarters of Scotland's 5% most deprived areas with clear implications for health and wellbeing.

5.4.8 Those on low incomes and people with irregular working patterns may be unable to benefit from existing discounted travel schemes such as monthly passes. Concessionary fare schemes that offer free or discounted travel can make a real difference to those on low incomes but are not available to everyone who might need them (The Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). The concessionary fare scheme in Scotland makes travel by bus free for those over 60 (and under 22) however for rail travel the fare is only discounted by one third, making availability of bus services particularly important for older and younger people with lower available income (AECOM and Stantec, 2020), and there are instances where due to the prevalence of a rail line

5.5 Communities of Interest

5.5.1 Many people living with socio-economic disadvantage also have protected characteristics ('communities of interest') that may exacerbate the difficulties they experience. People facing other forms of structural disadvantage, such as sexism, racism, homophobia, and ableism, constitute a disproportionate number of those facing socio-economic disadvantage. Affordability barriers to the transport system intersects with other forms of disadvantage. Individuals who face structural disadvantages in society in these communities of interest are disproportionately impacted by income poverty and often employment deprivation which compounds disadvantage including by limiting the ability of people to access and use the transport system (Stantec UK, 2021).

5.5.2 Evidence suggests that bus fare rises in particular have a disproportionate impact on women, younger people, disabled people, black and ethnic minority people, people who are unemployed and seeking

work, and lower income households as people in these groups are more likely to use buses to meet their everyday travel needs (Transport Scotland, 2020)⁴.

5.5.3 Evidence on socio-economic disadvantage relevant to specific 'communities of interest' has identified the following issues:

- Women in Scotland are more likely to be in lower paid work than men, with 61% of people paid below the Living Wage being female (Scottish Parliament, 2020). In particular, lone parents, the vast majority of whom are women, are more likely to be living in poverty than other single working-age adults in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2021). Over the period 2014-16, 38.4% of lone households in Scotland were in relative poverty before housing costs. Further, lone parents' ability to work is structured by the availability of childcare.
- While there is a National Concessionary Travel Scheme for those eligible, disabled people are more likely to experience affordability barriers to transport relative to people without disabilities. Individuals who live in households with a disabled person are more likely to experience income poverty than those without (UK Department for Work and Pensions, 2021) and all ethnic groups experience higher poverty and unemployment rates than average (Stantec UK, 2019).
- People from ethnic minority groups also face a disproportionately higher rate of relative poverty. All ethnic minority groups have higher rates of poverty than White British households. Those in the Mixed, Black, and Other ethnicity group face a rate of relative poverty after housing costs more than double that of White British households (UK Government, 2018).
- There is a lack of data which evidences a direct relationship between being transgender and income inequality. However, such persons are likely to have lower income and wealth and are therefore at a higher risk of transport poverty⁵. Transgender people face widespread discrimination and targeted hostility, unequal access to services, and workplace discrimination (Equalities and Human Rights Commission, 2010). Difficulties accessing employment and services which increase disposable income (including healthcare free at the point of use and housing) suggest lower income and associated affordability barriers to transport.

5.5.4 Owing to these relationships, policies in the Draft SRBS should seek to identify any differential impacts on different socio-economic groups (e.g. disaggregated by income, wealth, or social class). Differential impacts between such groups are likely to also be manifest within and between groups with other characteristics and social identities with disproportionate rates of poverty and low income and wealth.

5.6 SPT Region Employment & Demographic Profile

5.6.1 Please see **Appendix A** of the **EqIA** for a demographic profile by geographic areas. For a detailed breakdown of employment statistics by geographic areas, see **Appendix A**. Key statistics include:

- Income deprivation is highest for Glasgow City, where 19% of people are income deprived. East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire have the lowest at 7% of people. The combined SPT region average is 15%.
- The level of qualification is highest in East Renfrewshire where 35.6% of people have a degree level qualification or above. The lowest is West Dunbartonshire where 17.9% of people have a degree level qualification or above. The combined SPT region average is 25.2%.
- Economic activity (employee) is highest for West Dunbartonshire (43.4%) and lowest for South Ayrshire (37.8%). The combined SPT region average is 41.3%.

⁴ Some of the challenges in relation to affordability of bus fares for young people may have been alleviated since the introduction across Scotland in early 2022 of a concessionary bus scheme for people under 22.

⁵ Limited data does exist, for example, a 2007 survey of 71 Transgender people in Scotland found that 30% of respondents had an income of over £20,000, and 48% of respondents had an income under £10,001. Scottish Transgender Alliance (2008). Transgender Experiences in Scotland Research Summary

- Economic inactivity is highest for North Ayrshire (36.9%) and lowest for North Lanarkshire (30.7%). The combined SPT region average is 34.1%.

6 Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment – Draft SRBS Objectives

- 6.1.1 The following section contains the full FSD. The assessment below evaluates the impact of each SRBS objective on the FSD framing questions, using insights from the baseline report above. Following this, the policies and associated measures under each SRBS theme are assessed to determine their effects on each of the framing questions. The overall aim of the assessment is to provide a comprehensive overview of how the SRBS affects each of the questions in relation to fulfilling the requirements of the FSD. To avoid repetition and duplication where questions share similar issues, barriers or potential impacts these have been grouped in the commentary.
- 6.1.2 In **Appendix B**, a breakdown of each of the seven policy themes, policies and measures can be found for reference.

6.2 Draft SRBS Objectives

6.2.1 Three Draft SRBS Objectives were developed, which are outlined below:

- **Objective 1:** Aim for a consistent and improved level of service across the region, ensuring communities are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services.
- **Objective 2:** Aim for bus travel to be affordable, safe and accessible for all.
- **Objective 3:** Aim for an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network.

6.3 Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome

6.3.1 **Table 5.1** outlines the impact assessment of each objective against the FSD guide questions. Further commentary regarding this assessment is provided from paragraph 5.3 to 5.18. The overall impacts range from **Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect** as the three objectives are expected to produce a range of improvements, including: a more consistent and improved level of service across the region; more affordable, safe and accessible bus travel for all; and an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network. Therefore, on balance the SRBS objectives are likely to have a beneficial impact on inequality of outcome as people across the region will have greater equality in terms of access.

Table 6.1: Draft SRBS Objectives FSD

FSD Framework Criteria													
Objectives	Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth	Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?	Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?	Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?	Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?	Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?
Aim for a consistent and improved level of service across the region, ensuring communities are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services.	+	++	0	++	+	~	++	0	++	+	+	~	+
Aim for bus travel to be affordable, safe and accessible for all.	++	++	+	++	+	~	+	0	++	+	+	~	+
Aim for an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network.	+	+	0	+	+	++	++	0	++	++	+	~	+

6.4 Will the SRBS reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?

6.4.1 Cost is an obstacle to using transport and it is an important mechanism by which transport can cause social and health inequality (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Approximately 14% of an average UK household budget is spent on transport – second only to housing costs (17%) (ONS, 2023). Transport is a key concern for people on lower incomes with some reporting that balancing budgets relies on selecting alternative transport modes such as walking long distances, travelling off peak or relying on their wider social network for lifts. In some cases, people will avoid travelling. Combined these factors can limit access to key services such as employment, health-related or education opportunities.

Objective 1: Aim for a consistent and improved level of service across the region, ensuring communities are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services

6.4.2 Through Objective 1, providing a consistent and improved level of service could provide more people with the option of taking public transport to access employment, education and other key services. This benefit could potentially reduce reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this.

6.4.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.

Objective 2: Aim for bus travel to be affordable, safe and accessible for all

6.4.4 Through Objective 2, bus travel within the region will be affordable and accessible for all. Increased availability of season tickets would provide more affordable travel for regular bus users across the region. Accessible and easy to understand fares would ensure passengers are paying the correct fare for their journey, making bus more affordable, and help users less able to negotiate complex fares. Additionally, simplified fare structures could enable passengers to more easily choose or be automatically allocated the cheapest and most appropriate fare for their journey. Concessionary / discounted fares for groups most in need could also improve the affordability and accessibility of bus services for specific groups who otherwise may find it challenging to access and use the network. Automatic fare capping for single and multi-journey could ensure that the best value fare is used for each journey, increasing the affordability and convenience of bus journeys, and the accessibility of the network for all users. All of these measures proposed would achieve objective 2 and assist in removing cost related barriers to accessing bus services.

6.4.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.

Objective 3: Aim for an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network

6.4.6 Through Objective 3, an improvement in the attractiveness of public transport and in integration could encourage more people to make use of public transport, thereby reducing the reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this.

6.4.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.

6.5 Low income: will the SRBS help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?

6.5.1 Low income drives a range of negative outcomes and can bring cost-related challenges for individuals accessing a range of transport options as described above. Measures to increase affordability will have a direct impact on individuals and households with a low income by reducing transport costs. Additionally, improvement to bus and wider-transport network coverage and operational frequency can have a significant impact on individuals ability to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training which can affect relative income status.

- 6.5.2 Evidence indicates that people in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. The single most important factor cited by those on low incomes as the greatest transport-related barrier is cost (Transport Scotland, 2020) and transport fares represents a significant cost for groups including low paid, low-skilled, people working irregular shifts/hours and people experiencing in-work poverty (Scottish Government, 2019).

Objective 1

- 6.5.3 A consistent and improved level of service across the region will ensure that communities are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services. A more consistent and improved level of service will particularly support people in accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training. Improved access to such opportunities may help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty for communities. As people on lower incomes are more dependent on buses, this would also be beneficial for those who rely on buses to access such opportunities.
- 6.5.4 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on helping to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty.

Objective 2

- 6.5.5 Improved affordability measures under Objective 2 could positively impact members from households experiencing financial challenges associated with increased costs or lower incomes. Affordability measures will also enable more individuals and households on low income to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training which has the potential to benefit relative income status.
- 6.5.6 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on helping to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty.

Objective 3

- 6.5.7 An attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network could also ensure that communities are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services. A more attractive service could encourage people to use public transport to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training. Improved access to such opportunities may help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty for communities. As people on lower incomes are more dependent on buses, this would also be beneficial for those who rely on buses to more efficiently and reliably access a range of socio-economic opportunities.
- 6.5.8 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on helping to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty.

6.6 Low wealth: will the SRBS help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?

- 6.6.1 There is no clear relationship between public transport and reducing low wealth in regard to individual or household assets. Households that tend to have low wealth are likely to be lone parent households, households in social rented housing, or households where a member is unemployed or economically inactive (but not retired) (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Low wealth is driven by unequal income distribution therefore any measures to increase the affordability of transport may positively, yet indirectly, reduce household wealth inequality.

Objective 1

- 6.6.2 A more consistent and improved level of service across the region under Objective 1 could have indirect beneficial effects on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth by increasing accessibility for all to employment and training opportunities. However, this has not been assessed as a significant beneficial effect.

- 6.6.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.

Objective 2

- 6.6.4 Improved affordability measures under Objective 2 could positively, yet indirectly, reduce household wealth inequality, as these individuals or households may also be experiencing financial challenges associated with increased costs or lower incomes. Affordability measures will also enable more individuals and households on low income to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training which has the potential to reduce household wealth inequality.
- 6.6.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.

Objective 3

- 6.6.6 A more attractive and integrated bus network under Objective 3 could have indirect beneficial effects on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth by encouraging people to use public transport, thereby increasing accessibility for all to employment and training opportunities. However, this has not been assessed as a significant beneficial effect.
- 6.6.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.

6.7 Material deprivation: will the SRBS support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?

- 6.7.1 Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Reduced transport costs may allow households to spend more of their budget on other necessities, goods and services. Improvements to network coverage and reliability may also support individuals to access basic goods and services locally.

Objective 1

- 6.7.2 People living in rural areas particularly are likely to have reduced access to essential services. In rural and remote areas, commuting, accessing key services and undertaking other everyday activities generally involves longer journeys relative to more urban areas. Improvements to the level of service across the region will ensure that communities are connected quickly and efficiently to basic goods and services. This will create better connection in rural areas, but it will also benefit those living in more urban areas, for example Glasgow, as more targeted coverage of the network will improve accessibility also. Better coordination ensures communities are connected quicker and more efficiently to key destinations and services, including multi-modal and interchange hubs for onward connections.
- 6.7.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on supporting individuals and households to access basic goods and services.

Objective 2

- 6.7.4 Through Objective 2, bus travel within the region will be affordable and accessible for all. Increased availability of season tickets would provide more affordable travel for regular bus users across the region. Accessible and easy to understand fares would ensure passengers are paying the correct fare for their journey, making bus more affordable, and help users less able to negotiate complex fares. Additionally, simplified fare structures could enable passengers to more easily choose or be automatically allocated the cheapest and most appropriate fare for their journey. Concessionary / discounted fares for groups most in need could also improve the affordability and accessibility of bus services for specific groups who otherwise may find it challenging to access and use the network. Automatic fare capping for single and multi-journey could ensure that the best value fare is used for each journey, increasing the affordability and convenience of bus journeys, and the accessibility of the

network for all users. These measures could support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services, particularly those experiencing poverty or low income.

- 6.7.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on supporting individuals and households to access basic goods and services.

Objective 3

- 6.7.6 Under Objective 3, application of defined principles will increase reliability and attractiveness to bus users, resulting in a more sustainable bus service. Better coordination between services and modes will reduce journey times and enhance multi-modal integration. These improvements will support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services as more people may choose to use the bus network if it is more reliable and attractive.
- 6.7.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting individuals and households to access basic goods and services.

6.8 Area deprivation: will the SRBS help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?

- 6.8.1 Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). As discussed, public transport costs can be significant for people and households with low incomes, particularly for people living in rural areas who face longer travel distances and higher costs (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Cost increases of fares disproportionately impact on socio-economically disadvantaged groups which increases inequalities of opportunity and outcomes (Stantec UK, 2021). The affordability of bus services varies across Scotland with costs of travel to essential services generally much higher in remote rural areas (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2016). Evidence indicates that people and households in low income or living in a deprived area are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options.

Objective 1

- 6.8.2 A more consistent and higher level of service across the region could encourage communities to maintain social connection and provide greater accessibility for employment, health and training opportunities. All of which are key components of reducing levels of deprivation.
- 6.8.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** in helping to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities.

Objective 2

- 6.8.4 Through Objective 2, bus travel within the region will be affordable and accessible for all. A range of measures, such as an increased availability of season tickets and simplified fare structures, could support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services, particularly those experiencing poverty or low income. Additionally, these measures would improve equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.
- 6.8.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** in helping to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities.

Objective 3

- 6.8.6 Under Objective 3, application of defined principles will increase reliability and attractiveness to bus users, resulting in a more sustainable bus service. Better coordination between services and modes will reduce journey times and enhance multi-modal integration. These improvements will support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services as more people may choose to use the bus network if it is more reliable and attractive. Additionally, this will be attractive to people who

rely on the bus network for access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities. Such measures would improve equal access to such opportunities.

- 6.8.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** in helping to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities.

6.9 Will the SRBS reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?

- 6.9.1 In addition to cost related barriers, many population groups may encounter physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women.

Objective 1

- 6.9.2 There is a lack of evidence to suggest that Objective 1 would reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.
- 6.9.3 Overall, it is assessed that there is **No Clear Relationship** between **Objective 1** and reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.

Objective 2

- 6.9.4 There is a lack of evidence to suggest that Objective 2 would reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.
- 6.9.5 Overall, it is assessed that there is **No Clear Relationship** between **Objective 2** and reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.

Objective 3

- 6.9.6 Under Objective 3, measures will be employed to reduce physical and informational barriers for all bus users. Accurate and reliable real time travel information will provide key integration benefits, as well as ensuring a more attractive, convenient and reliable bus service for passengers who can more accurately and efficiently plan their journey. Additionally, a simplified and easy to use ticketing options could help passengers to navigate the network, ticketing and fares, making a more attractive and integrated service.
- 6.9.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.

6.10 Will the SRBS reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?

- 6.10.1 People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. Rural, urban and island communities also face different challenges in the extent to which transport options connect people to the services and opportunities they need, and at the times and with the frequency they need (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Unreliable transport services are also a significant barrier that can limit the geographic areas in which people seek employment, goods and services. Reliability is also a significant issue when multi-modal journeys are impacted causing disruption to people's daily routines who could be at risk of lost business or dismissal due to lack of punctuality (Public Health Scotland, 2024).

Objective 1

- 6.10.2 Through Objective 1, the application of defined principles will ensure a consistent and improved level of service as well as connectivity to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public

services and amenities. This level of service will be improved for key corridors in the region and will be improved according to key principles, social needs and required destinations. A minimum level of service across the region could ensure core accessibility to all key destinations, promoting equal access. Better coordination could ensure that communities are connected quicker and more efficiently to key destinations and services, including multi-modal and interchange hubs for onward connections.

- 6.10.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.

Objective 2

- 6.10.4 Through Objective 2, bus travel within the region will be affordable and accessible for all. A range of measures, such as an increased availability of season tickets and simplified fare structures, could improve equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all, particularly for those experiencing poverty or low income.

- 6.10.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.

Objective 3

- 6.10.6 Under Objective 3, application of defined principles will increase reliability and attractiveness to bus users, resulting in a more sustainable bus service. Better coordination between services and modes will reduce journey times and enhance multi-modal integration. These improvements will support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services as more people may choose to use the bus network if it is more reliable and attractive. Additionally, this will be attractive to people who rely on the bus network for access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities. Such measures would improve equal access to such opportunities.

- 6.10.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.

6.11 Socio-economic background: will the SRBS address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?

- 6.11.1 Structural inequalities resulting from difference from social class are varied and complex. Whilst there is potential for indirect beneficial effects that could contribute to these inequalities, such as reducing unequal access to employment and training opportunities, there is unlikely to be any significant effect between the objectives and this framing questions.

Objective 1

- 6.11.2 Through Objective 1, there is potential for indirect beneficial effects, as a more consistent and improved level of service within the bus network could reduce unequal access to employment and training opportunities. However, this is unlikely to have a direct link.

- 6.11.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** on addressing structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class.

Objective 2

- 6.11.4 Through Objective 2, there is potential for indirect beneficial effects, as a more affordable and accessible bus network could reduce unequal access to employment and training opportunities. However, this is unlikely to have a direct link.

6.11.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** on addressing structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class.

Objective 3

6.11.6 Through Objective 3, there is potential for indirect beneficial effects, as a more attractive and integrated bus network could encourage more people to use public transport thereby potentially reducing unequal access to employment and training opportunities. However, this is unlikely to have a direct link.

6.11.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** on addressing structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class.

6.12 Will the SRBS support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?

6.12.1 Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). As discussed, public transport costs can be significant for people and households with low incomes, particularly for people living in rural areas who face longer travel distances and higher costs (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Improvements in the transport network coverage that reliably connects disadvantaged or deprived areas with key employment or community infrastructure hubs can positively impact regeneration by making areas more attractive for people to live in if they can successfully commute to work, school and access key services such as supermarkets, healthcare, cultural or leisure facilities. Additionally, disadvantaged or deprived areas with local centres may benefit from increased footfall and business if people are better able to access these locations by bus. This could support regeneration in some areas.

Objective 1

6.12.2 Improvements to the level of service across the region will ensure that communities are connected quickly and efficiently to basic goods and services as well as key socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training. Better service coordination ensures communities are connected quicker and more efficiently to key destinations and services, including multi-modal and interchange hubs for onward connections. These improvements may support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived communities, especially those living in rural areas.

6.12.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.

Objective 2

6.12.4 Through Objective 2, bus travel within the region will be affordable and accessible for all. A range of measures, such as an increased availability of season tickets and simplified fare structures, could improve equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all, particularly for those experiencing poverty or low income. More affordable access to employment and training opportunities may support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived communities, especially those living in rural areas.

6.12.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.

Objective 3

6.12.6 An attractive and integrated bus network could encourage more people to use the bus network. Better coordination between services and modes will reduce journey times and enhance multi-modal integration. These improvements could support individuals and households in accessing employment and training opportunities and services as more people may choose to use the bus network if it is more reliable and attractive. Additionally, enhanced integration with the public transport system could help to support regeneration by facilitating access to these key employment and service destinations.

- 6.12.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Major Beneficial Effect** on supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.

6.13 Will the SRBS facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?

- 6.13.1 The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel.
- 6.13.2 Active travel network coverage is unlikely to be significantly affected by the objectives, other than in the case of integrating public transport and active travel networks and potentially widening access to the network. Despite this, the objectives could encourage the use of public transport, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

Objective 1

- 6.13.3 An improvement in the service could encourage the use of the bus network, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage who are more likely to rely on public transport than other economic groups. Active travel network coverage is unlikely to be significantly affected through Objective 1, other than in the case of integrating public transport and active travel networks and potentially widening access to the network.
- 6.13.4 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could have a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.

Objective 2

- 6.13.5 A more affordable and accessible bus network for all could encourage the use of the bus network, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage who are more likely to rely on public transport than other economic groups. The range of affordability measures could improve equal access to employment and educational opportunities.
- 6.13.6 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could have a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.

Objective 3

- 6.13.7 Under Objective 3, high frequency services could enable better integration to other modes and services. It could also improve the attractiveness of the bus network, helping to grow patronage and progress towards the network becoming sustainable in the medium to long term. Additionally, a Customer Charter would improve passengers' trust in the service providers and the network, which would make bus use more attractive and could consequently encourage the increased usage of the bus network.
- 6.13.8 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could have a **Major Beneficial Effect** on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.

6.14 Will the SRBS support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?

- 6.14.1 This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the Draft SRBS, but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors.

Objective 1

- 6.14.2 Under Objective 1, a more consistent and improved level of service across the region could ensure that communities and people are connected quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services. This could ensure that everyone in the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors.
- 6.14.3 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.

Objective 2

- 6.14.4 Under Objective 2, a more affordable, safe and accessible bus network for all. More affordable fares and greater accessibility could ensure that everyone in the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors.
- 6.14.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.

Objective 3

- 6.14.6 Under Objective 3, an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network. This could encourage more people to use the bus network and ensure that everyone in the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors.
- 6.14.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.

6.15 Will the SRBS support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?

Objective 1

- 6.15.1 Overall, it is assessed that there is **No Clear Relationship** between **Objective 1** and supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

Objective 2

- 6.15.2 Overall, it is assessed that there is **No Clear Relationship** between **Objective 2** and supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

Objective 3

- 6.15.3 Overall, it is assessed that there is **No Clear Relationship** between **Objective 3** and supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

6.16 Will the SRBS support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?

Objective 1

- 6.16.1 Improvements to the level of service across the region will ensure that communities are connected quickly and efficiently to basic goods and services as well as key socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training. The objective will ensure that fleet and boarding capacity is maximised which will ensure passengers can access routes and services, and connect to key destinations, easier and more efficiently, particularly on routes that are currently capacity constrained or experience long boarding times. Better service coordination ensures communities are connected quicker and more efficiently to key destinations and services, including multi-modal and interchange hubs for onward connections.
- 6.16.2 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 1** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

Objective 2

- 6.16.3 Under Objective 2, alongside a more affordable service for all, the bus network would be more accessible for all users, regardless of mobility or accessibility needs, with hubs and waiting facilities in optimum locations. Improved place-making would also improve safety perceptions and accessibility.
- 6.16.4 Despite these benefits, rationalisation of waiting facility locations may lead to a reduction in overall stops and interchange points to improve service performance and journey time, reducing accessibility and increasing distances to stops for certain population groups or communities. Some areas may experience improved accessibility if stops are relocated, or new stops introduced. However, overall, the benefits outweigh the negatives.
- 6.16.5 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 2** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

Objective 3

- 6.16.6 Under Objective 3, a high quality and consistent standard of waiting facility improves the attractiveness of services and enhances integration with modes and services. Additionally, better integration of services will enable seamless journeys and make bus a viable alternative to private vehicles. Such measures will support provision and access for all bus users.
- 6.16.7 Overall, it is assessed that **Objective 3** could result in a **Minor Beneficial Effect** on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

6.17 Will the SRBS contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?

- 6.17.1 Overall, **Objective 1**, **Objective 2** and **Objective 3** of the Draft SRBS could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.

6.18 Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage

- 6.18.1 **Overall Impact: Minor to Major Beneficial Effect** as the three objectives are expected to produce a range of improvements, including: a more consistent and improved level of service across the region;

more affordable, safe and accessible bus travel for all; and an attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are more likely to be reliant on buses.

7 Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment - Draft SRBS Policy Themes

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The below section outlines the impact assessment for each theme, policies and associated measures

7.1.2 Seven Draft SRBS Policy Themes were developed, alongside 19 policies and associated measures and features. The seven policy themes and corresponding measures are outlined in **Appendix B**, but the themes are outlined below:

- Buses where they are needed, when they are needed.
- Affordable and attractive fares and ticketing.
- Accessible and safer bus journeys
- Reliable and quicker bus journeys
- A trusted and recognisable bus network
- A seamless and integrated network.
- A more environmentally sustainable, resilient and adaptable bus network and fleet.

7.2 Policy Theme 1: Buses Where They Are Needed, When They Are Needed

7.2.1 To maximise the opportunity of buses, there needs to be more high frequency services on busier routes, aiming for a service at least every 10 minutes. The network also needs to be more comprehensive to ensure access for all. This means aiming for more consistent levels of service across the region, and at different times and days with better coverage during early morning hours, evenings, and Sundays. The network also needs to be co-ordinately efficient across the region to avoid over- or under-provision and inequalities of access by place.

7.2.2 The bus network provides mass transit on busier corridors and acts as a cross-regional and inter-town connector supporting the regional labour market and access to major destinations such as general hospitals and colleges and universities. These are also roles provided by the rail network and future Clyde Metro proposals, so the bus network needs to be better integrated with these to ensure the overall public transport offer on a corridor is providing an efficient and appropriate level of service and collectively aiming for passenger growth and modal shift from car.

7.2.3 The key policies under this theme include:

- **Policy 1:** Improve periods of operation and geographic coverage of the bus network, where required.
- **Policy 2:** Improve the frequency of the bus services, where required.
- **Policy 3:** Improve the efficiency of the regional bus network.

Table 7.1: Theme 1 – Buses Where They are Needed, When They Are Needed

FSD Criteria	Policies			Commentary
	P1	P2	P3	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	+	+	+	<p>Cost is an obstacle to using transport and it is an important mechanism by which transport can cause social and health inequality (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Approximately 14% of an average UK household budget is spent on transport – second only to housing costs (17%) (ONS, 2023). Transport is a key concern for people on lower incomes with some reporting that balancing budgets relies on selecting alternative transport modes such as walking long distances, travelling off peak or relying on their wider social network for lifts. In some cases, people will avoid travelling. Combined these factors can limit access to key services such as employment, health-related or education opportunities.</p> <p>Through Policy 1, improved periods of operation and geographic coverage of the bus network could provide more people with the option of using public transport to access employment, education and other key services. This benefit could potentially reduce reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this.</p> <p>Through Policy 2, improved frequency of bus services could provide more people with the option of using public transport to access employment, education and other key services. This benefit could potentially reduce reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this.</p> <p>Through Policy 3, improved efficiency of the bus network could provide more people with the option of using public transport to access employment, education and other key services. This benefit could potentially reduce reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.</p>
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	+	+	+	<p>Access to transport can reinforce or lessen the impact of poverty. Being able to access education, employment and training is critical for low income households as a means of escaping poverty, as well as for general wellbeing (Transport Scotland, 2021). Additionally, in Scotland, people on lower incomes are more dependent on buses than those on higher incomes (Transport Scotland, 2022a).</p> <p>Through Policy 1 improvements to operation and geographic coverage of the bus network, where required, would support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training. Improved access to such opportunities may help to reduce levels of absolutely and relative income poverty for communities.</p>

				<p>Policy 2 improvements to frequency, capacity, periods of operation, coverage and connectivity of buses would support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training. As people on lower incomes are more dependent on buses, this would be especially beneficial for those who rely on buses to access such opportunities.</p> <p>Through Policy 3, improved efficiency of the regional network, particularly for rural to regional networks, will also improve accessibility to socio-economic opportunities for those living in more rural areas which may help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty in these areas. This is especially beneficial as people living in rural areas are more likely to have reduced access to employment and essential services.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing levels of absolutely poverty and relative income poverty.</p>
<p>Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>There is no clear relationship between public transport and reducing low wealth in regards to individual or household assets. Households that tend to have low wealth are likely to be lone parent households, households in social renting housing, or households where a member is unemployed or economically inactive (but not retired) (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Low wealth is driven by unequal income distribution therefore any measures to increase equal access to employment and training opportunities may positively, yet indirectly, reduce household wealth inequality.</p> <p>Improvements to operation, geographic coverage, frequency, capacity and efficiency under Policy 1, Policy 2 or Policy 3 could have indirect beneficial effects on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth, but not significantly.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Neutral / Negligible Effect on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.</p>
<p>Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018).</p> <p>People living in rural areas particularly are likely to have reduced access to essential services. In rural and remote areas, commuting, accessing key services and undertaking other everyday activities generally involves longer journeys relative to more urban areas. Improvements to periods of operation and geographic coverage of the bus network under Policy 1, improvements to the frequency of bus services under Policy 2 and efficiency improvements under Policy 3 will also benefit those living in rural and remote areas in accessing goods and services. Additionally, these improvements will also benefit those living in more urban SPT areas, for example Glasgow, as the Policies, especially Policy 2 through improve targeted coverage of the network which will enable these communities to have greater access to basic goods and services.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on material deprivation.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 2 under Theme 1 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on material deprivation.</p>

<p>Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?</p>	+	+	+	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Evidence indicates that people and households in low income or living in a deprived area are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities oftentimes due to availability of transport options.</p> <p>The improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency of the bus network related to Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 could help reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities, especially those living in rural areas. These improvements will allow communities to maintain social connections and will provide greater accessibility for employment, health and training opportunities.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on area deprivation.</p>
<p>Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?</p>	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 1, Policy 2, or Policy 3 and associated measures would reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?</p>	+	+	+	<p>People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the availability of transport options. Rural, urban and island communities also face different challenges in the extent to which transport options connect people to the services and opportunities they need, and at the times and with the frequency they need (Public Health Scotland, 2024).</p> <p>The improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency of the bus network related to Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 could help reduce unequal access to opportunities for all. Improved service levels could provide more targeted coverage and enhanced frequency to support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training that are linked with wider public sector policy goals.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p>
<p>Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?</p>	0	0	0	<p>Structural inequalities resulting from difference from social class are varied and complex. Whilst there are many interrelated factors which are discussed in this assessment that contribute to these inequalities (such as wealth inequality, access to opportunities and material deprivation) the impact of the Draft SRBS on addressing structural inequality as a whole is unclear, especially under Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 and is unlikely to be able to be robustly examined. Therefore, there is insufficient detail or information available to enable an assessment to be made.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 would result in a Neutral / Negligible Effect on socio-economic background.</p>

<p>Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Improvements in the transport network coverage that reliably connects disadvantaged or deprived areas with key employment or community infrastructure hubs can positively impact regeneration by making areas more attractive for people to live in if they can successfully commute to work, school and access key services such as supermarkets, healthcare, cultural or leisure facilities. Additionally, disadvantaged or deprived areas with local centres may benefit from increased footfall and business if people are better able to access these locations by bus. This could support regeneration in some areas.</p> <p>The improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency of the bus network related to Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 could support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas. This could be achieved through improved service levels which provide more targeted coverage and enhanced frequency to support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training that are linked with wider public sector policy goals.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p>
<p>Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel.</p> <p>Buses are a core component of the region's wider transport network. Buses can link well with active travel networks and support the development of 'connect communities' and healthier places.</p> <p>The improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency of the bus network related to Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 could encourage use of public transport, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage, who are statistically more likely to rely on public transport. Active travel network coverage is unlikely to be significantly affected through Policy 1, Policy 2 or Policy 3, other than in the case of integrating public transport and active travel networks and potentially widening access to the network.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Under Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 improvements to period of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency, could ensure that everyone within the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors. This is particularly evident under Policy 2 which aims to ensure minimum levels of services for all towns, key destinations (e.g. hospitals) and off-peak time period to ensure basic accessibility which works towards more convenient service levels for all. This could ensure that people</p>

				<p>have equal access to employment opportunities and key services which could facilitate that growth of key economic sectors within Scotland.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1 and Policy 3 could result in a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 2 under Theme 1 could result in a Major Beneficial Effect on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.</p>
Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	++	++	++	<p>The improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency and efficiency of the bus network related to Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 could support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage. These Policies would allow standards to be set specifying levels of service and network coverage. Level of service would not only be dependent on passenger demand (as is currently the case) but it could also take other factors and public sector policy goals into account, which could provide more targeted coverage and enhanced frequency to support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?				<p>Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 1, Policy 2 and Policy 3 under Theme 1 could have a Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage				<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency of bus services and efficiency of the regional bus network. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome				<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improved periods of operation, geographic coverage, frequency of bus services and efficiency of the regional bus network. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.</p>

7.3 Policy Theme 2: Reliable and Quicker Journeys

- 7.3.1 The bus network needs to deliver reliable services that people know they can depend upon to encourage passenger growth and get people out of cars. This means buses turn up on when scheduled and arrive at destinations on time. Buses also need to be quicker, with journey times that are attractive compared to using a car.
- 7.3.2 Bus priority is needed in places where there is too much traffic or too little capacity for traffic to flow freely. This places the emphasis on maximising the movement of people, rather than the number of vehicles, due to bus’s greater efficiency in the use of road space. Bus priority also helps ensure buses run to time and makes bus journeys quicker and more consistent. Bus priority is key, but other measures can support more reliable and quicker bus journeys including faster boarding times enabled through technology, information and capacity enhancement. More express services, where appropriate, and improved co-ordination of rural or ‘feeder’ bus services with higher frequency services can improve the overall journey time experienced by passengers.
- 7.3.3 The key policies under this theme include:
 - **Policy 4:** Improve the reliability and punctuality of bus services
 - **Policy 5:** Improve the attractiveness of bus journey times compared to car journey times

Table 7.2: Theme 2 – Reliable and Quicker Journeys

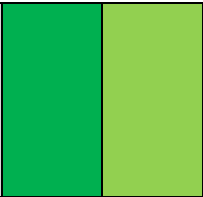
FSD Criteria	Policies		Commentary
	P4	P5	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	+	++	<p>Cost is an obstacle to using transport and it is an important mechanism by which transport can cause social and health inequality (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Approximately 14% of an average UK household budget is spent on transport – second only to housing costs (17%) (ONS, 2023). Transport is a key concern for people on lower incomes with some reporting that balancing budgets relies on selecting alternative transport modes such as walking long distances, travelling off peak or relying on their wider social network for lifts. In some cases, people will avoid travelling. Combined these factors can limit access to key services such as employment, health-related or education opportunities.</p> <p>Through Policy 4, there could be improvements in the reliability and punctuality of bus services through measures such as bus priority infrastructure on high frequency routes. Under Policy 5, bus journey times could be more attractive than car journey times through measures such as faster bus journey times and faster boardings. Both policies could provide more people with the option of using public transport to access employment, education and other key services. This benefit could potentially reduce reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this. Policy 5 could produce greater beneficial impacts as it relates directly aims to reduce the attractiveness of private vehicle use.</p>

			<p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.</p>
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	++	+	<p>Improvement to bus and wider-transport network coverage and operational frequency can have a significant impact on individuals ability to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training which can affect relative income status. Evidence indicates that people in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options (Transport Scotland, 2020).</p> <p>Under Policy 4, there will be improvements to reliability and punctuality of bus services through a range of measures including but not limited to: better coordination of rural services, more efficient network planning and traffic management measures (e.g. bus lane cameras). Additionally, under Policy 5, there will be improvements to the attractiveness of bus journey times compared to car journey times through faster bus journey times and express services.</p> <p>Increasing reliability and punctuality of the bus service could support low income individuals who need to access employment, training and education opportunities in addition to support people in meeting daily needs who may not have access to a car or other travel options.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on low income. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on low income.</p>
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	0	0	<p>There is no clear relationship between public transport and reducing low wealth in regard to individual or household assets. Households that tend to have low wealth are likely to be lone parent households, households in social renting housing, or households where a member is unemployed or economically inactive (but not retired) (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Low wealth is driven by unequal income distribution therefore any measures to increase equal access to employment and training opportunities may positively, yet indirectly, reduce household wealth inequality.</p> <p>Under Policy 4 and Policy 5, there could be improvements to the reliability, punctuality and attractiveness of the bus network. This could have indirect beneficial effects on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth by encouraging more people to use the network to access employment, education and training opportunities, but not significantly.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could result in a Neutral / Negligible Effect on helping to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.</p>
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	++	~	<p>Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Improvements to network coverage and reliability may also support individuals to access basic goods and services locally.</p> <p>Increasing reliability and punctuality of the bus service under Policy 4 could support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services. This could occur in both urban and rural areas as</p>

			<p>associated measures target both high frequency routes within urban areas and better coordination of rural services.</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 5 and associated measures would support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>~</p>	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Evidence indicates that people and households in low income or living in a deprived area are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities oftentimes due to availability of transport options.</p> <p>The improvements in relation to reliability and punctuality of the bus network under Policy 4 could help to reduce the level of multiple deprivation affecting communities, especially those living in rural areas. These improvements would allow communities to maintain social connections and could provide greater accessibility to employment, health, education and training opportunities.</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 5 and associated measures would help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on area deprivation.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Many population groups may encourage physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women.</p> <p>Enhanced reliability and punctuality measures could be delivered under Policy 4. Additionally, under Policy 5, measures that could reduce these barriers could include faster boardings through smart ticketing. These measures would positively influence the needs of public transport users who have more reliance on bus travel compared with other population groups. Some individuals, particularly those with a protected characteristics can be deterred from using public transport if they encounter challenges to journey planning and inconsistent or unreliable services.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p>
<p>Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. Rural, urban and island communities also face different challenges in the extent to which transport options connect people to the services and opportunities they need, and at the times and with the frequency they</p>

			<p>need (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Unreliable transport services are also a significant barrier that can limit the geographic areas in which people seek employment, goods and services. Reliability is also a significant issue when multi-modal journeys are impacted causing disruption to people’s daily routines who could be at risk of lost business or dismissal due to lack of punctuality (Public Health Scotland, 2024).</p> <p>Under Policy 4 improvements to the reliability and punctuality of bus services, including bus priority infrastructure, better coordination of rural services and more efficient network planning could support low income individuals who need to access employment, training and education opportunities in addition to supporting people in meeting their daily needs who may not have access to a car or other travel options. Additionally, at a potentially smaller scale, Policy 5 could also have a beneficial effect through faster bus journey times on busier routes.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on low income. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on low income.</p>
<p>Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Structural inequalities resulting from difference from social class are varied and complex. Whilst there are many interrelated factors which are discussed in this assessment that contribute to these inequalities (such as wealth inequality, access to opportunities and material deprivation) the impact of the Draft SRBS on addressing structural inequality as a whole is unclear, especially under Policy 8 and Policy 9 and is unlikely to be able to be robustly examined. Therefore, there is insufficient detail or information available to enable an assessment to be made.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 would result in a Neutral / Negligible Effect on socio-economic background.</p>
<p>Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Improvements in the transport network coverage that reliably connects disadvantaged or deprived areas with key employment or community infrastructure hubs can positively impact regeneration by making areas more attractive for people to live in if they can successfully commute to work, school and access key services such as supermarkets, healthcare, cultural or leisure facilities. Additionally, disadvantaged or deprived areas with local centres may benefit from increased footfall and business if people are better able to access these locations by bus. This could support regeneration in some areas.</p> <p>The improved reliability, punctuality and attractiveness of the bus network under Policy 4 and Policy 5 could support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas. This could be achieved through improved coordination of rural services and more efficient and reliable journeys under Policy 4 which provide more punctual and faster journeys to support people with accessing socio-economic opportunities linked with employment, education and training that are linked with wider public sector policy goals. Additionally, under Policy 5 faster journey times, faster boarding and express services could also provide similar benefits.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could result in a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.</p>

<p>Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	+	+	<p>The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel. Buses are a core component of the region’s wider transport network. Buses can link well with active travel networks and support the development of ‘connect communities’ and healthier places.</p> <p>The improvements to the reliability and punctuality of bus services under Policy 4 and the improvements in the attractiveness of bus journey times under Policy 5 could encourage use of public transport, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage, who are statistically more likely to rely on public transport. Active travel network coverage is unlikely to be significantly affected through Policy 4 and Policy 5, other than in the case of integrating public transport and active travel networks and potentially widening access to the network.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland’s key economic sectors?</p>	+	+	<p>This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland’s key economic sectors.</p> <p>Under Policy 4 and Policy 5 improvements to the reliability, punctuality and attractiveness of the bus network could ensure that everyone within the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 could result in a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland’s key economic sectors.</p>
<p>Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 8 and Policy 9 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	++	+	<p>Improvements to the transport network coverage that reliably connects individuals and household to locations for employment, education, healthcare, community infrastructure and services that enable them to meet their daily needs positively impact a wide proportion of the population, particularly those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Under Policy 4, measures such as bus priority infrastructure for routes that are prone to congestion could improve the reliability and punctuality of bus services. This will help meet the population and economic needs by ensuring greater access to employment, training, healthcare and educational services.</p> <p>Under Policy 5, faster bus journey times will be supported by bus priority infrastructure which could also ensure greater access to essential services and opportunities for the population, especially those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>

		<p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 4 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?</p>	<p>Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 4 and Policy 5 under Theme 2 could have a Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect.</p>	
<p>Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the reliability and punctuality of bus services alongside improvements to the attractiveness of bus journey times compared to car journey times. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>	
<p>Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome</p>	<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the reliability and punctuality of bus services alongside improvements to the attractiveness of bus journey times compared to car journey times. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.</p>	

7.4 Policy Theme 3: Affordable and Attractive Fares and Ticketing

- 7.4.1 Fares and ticketing need to be simple and easy to understand to attract people to bus and improve passenger perceptions of value for money by ensuring passengers are confident that they've selected the best available fare for their journey.
- 7.4.2 Simple fares structures and daily price capping should be available, aiming for 'tap on, tap off' to be available across the bus network to make bus travel as easy and convenient as possible for the greatest number of people.
- 7.4.3 Bus journeys also need to be affordable, particularly for those who face cost-related travel barriers to accessing their everyday needs. Ways to achieve this include best value season products with flexible payment options to be available across the bus network. Additional targeted support on fares should also be considered for people most in need of this to ensure the bus network is available to all.
- 7.4.4 Any fare increases need to be consistently and effectively communicated and, as far as practicable, aligned to established time periods to help passengers plan for any changes that may affect them.
- 7.4.5 The key policies under this theme include:
 - **Policy 6:** Improve the affordability of bus fares, especially for people living in poverty, disadvantaged communities and rural or remote communities.
 - **Policy 7:** Improve the attractiveness of bus fares compared to the cost of motoring.
 - **Policy 8:** Ensure that bus fares are easy to understand and flexible.

Table 7.3: Theme 3 – Affordable and Attractive Fares and Ticketing

FSD Criteria	Policies			Commentary
	P6	P7	P8	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	++	++	++	Cost is an obstacle to using transport and it is an important mechanism by which transport can cause social and health inequality (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Approximately 14% of an average UK household budget is spent on transport – second only to housing costs (17%) (ONS, 2023). Transport is a key concern for people on lower incomes with some reporting that balancing budgets relies on selecting alternative transport modes such as walking long distances, travelling off peak or relying on their wider social network for lifts. In some cases, people will avoid travelling. Combined these factors can limit access to key services such as employment, health-related or education opportunities.

				<p>Under Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 a range of measures are proposed to improve the affordability and attractiveness of fares and ticketing, such as, concessionary / discounted fares for groups most in need, automatic fee capping, accessible and easy to understand fares.</p> <p>Improved affordability measures could positively impact other members from households experiencing financial challenges associated with increased costs or lower incomes.</p> <p>The SRBS transport appraisal modelled a universal 20% reduction in average fares applied across the Strathclyde region with targeted measures allow 29% of bus users in the SPT area being offered free fares. As there are challenges associated with restricting low fares to low income groups (unless these groups can be easily defined) it is deemed more appropriate to apply lower fare ticketing products according to geographic region based on average household incomes in those areas (e.g., residents of Inverclyde is almost £2/hour below that of Glasgow residents, and employees working in Inverclyde earn almost £4/hour less than employees working in Glasgow).</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 68 under Theme 3 could have a Major Beneficial Effect in reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.</p>
<p>Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Low income drives a range of negative outcomes and can bring cost-related challenges for individuals accessing a range of transport options as described above. Measures to increase affordability will have a direct impact on individuals and households with a low income by reducing transport costs. Additionally, improvement to bus and wider-transport network coverage and operational frequency can have a significant impact on individuals ability to access opportunities linked with employment, education and training which can affect relative income status.</p> <p>Evidence indicates that people in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. The single most important factor cited by those on low incomes as the greatest transport-related barrier is cost (Transport Scotland, 2020) and transport fares represents a significant cost for groups including low paid, low-skilled, people working irregular shifts/hours and people experiencing in-work poverty (Scottish Government, 2019).</p> <p>Improved affordability measures could positively impact other members from households experiencing financial challenges associated with increased costs or lower incomes.</p> <p>As detailed in the framing question above, the transport appraisal modelled a universal 20% reduction in average fares applied across the Strathclyde region with targeted measures allowing 29% of bus users in the SPT area being offered free fares.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could positively impact groups experiencing poverty or low income.</p>

				Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on reducing levels of absolute and relative income poverty.
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	+	+	+	<p>There is no clear relationship between public transport and reducing low wealth in regard to individual or household assets. Households that tend to have low wealth are likely to be lone parent households, households in social rented housing, or households where a member is unemployed or economically inactive (but not retired) (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Low wealth is driven by unequal income distribution therefore any measures to increase the affordability of transport may positively, yet indirectly, reduce household wealth inequality.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could positively impact groups experiencing poverty or low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on low wealth.</p>
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	++	++	++	<p>Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). Reduced transport costs may allow households to spend more of their budget on other necessities, goods and services.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could support individuals and households in accessing basic goods and services, particularly those experiencing poverty or low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on material deprivation.</p>
Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	+	+	+	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). As discussed, public transport costs can be significant for people and households with low incomes, particularly for people living in rural areas who face longer travel distances and higher costs (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Cost increases of fares disproportionately impact on socio-economically disadvantaged groups which increases inequalities of opportunity and outcomes (Stantec UK, 2021). The affordability of bus services varies across Scotland with costs of travel to essential services generally much higher in remote rural areas (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2016). Evidence indicates that people and households in low income or living in a deprived area are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could</p>

				<p>encourage the use of public transport, especially for groups experiencing poverty or low income. Additionally, the Policies and measure would improve equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on helping to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities.</p>
Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	~	~	+	<p>In addition to cost related barriers, many population groups may encounter physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women.</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 6 and Policy 7 and associated measures would reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p> <p>However, Policy 8 proposes measures such as simplified fare structures and accessible and easy to understand fares information which may help to reduce informational barriers.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6 and Policy 7 under Theme 3 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p>
Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?	+	+	+	<p>People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. Rural, urban and island communities also face different challenges in the extent to which transport options connect people to the services and opportunities they need, and at the times and with the frequency they need (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Unreliable transport services are also a significant barrier that can limit the geographic areas in which people seek employment, goods and services. Reliability is also a significant issue when multi-modal journeys are impacted causing disruption to people’s daily routines who could be at risk of lost business or dismissal due to lack of punctuality (Public Health Scotland, 2024).</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could encourage the use of public transport, especially for groups experiencing poverty or low income. Additionally, the Policies and measure would improve equal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p>
Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?	0	0	0	<p>Structural inequalities resulting from difference from social class are varied and complex. Whilst there are many interrelated factors which are discussed in this assessment that contribute to these inequalities (such as wealth inequality, access to opportunities and material deprivation) the impact</p>

				<p>of the Draft SRBS on addressing structural inequality as a whole is unclear, especially under Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 and is unlikely to be able to be robustly examined. Therefore, there is insufficient detail or information available to enable an assessment to be made.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could result in a Neutral / Negligible Effect on socio-economic background.</p>
Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?	+	+	+	<p>Living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low income (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). As discussed, public transport costs can be significant for people and households with low incomes, particularly for people living in rural areas who face longer travel distances and higher costs (Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2019). Improvements in the transport network coverage that reliably connects disadvantaged or deprived areas with key employment or community infrastructure hubs can positively impact regeneration by making areas more attractive for people to live in if they can successfully commute to work, school and access key services such as supermarkets, healthcare, cultural or leisure facilities. Additionally, disadvantaged or deprived areas with local centres may benefit from increased footfall and business if people are better able to access these locations by bus. This could support regeneration in some areas.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could encourage the use of public transport, especially for groups experiencing poverty or low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.</p>
Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	+	+	+	<p>The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could encourage the use of public transport, especially for groups experiencing poverty or low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.</p>
Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?	+	+	+	<p>This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors.</p>

				<p>Under Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 improvements to the affordability of bus fares could ensure that everyone within the SPT region has equal access to key employment, education and training opportunities, thereby supporting economic development within key economic sectors.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 could result in a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors.</p>
Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	++	++	++	<p>Improvements to the transport network coverage that reliably connects individuals and household to locations for employment, education, healthcare, community infrastructure and services that enable them to meet their daily needs positively impact a wide proportion of the population, particularly those facing socio-economic disadvantage. Increasing the affordability of bus travel can remove a major barrier for a individuals and households experiencing challenges linked with low income.</p> <p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 primarily address cost related barriers to accessing and using transport. Measures included under these policies could include concessionary / discounted fares, automatic fee capping and simplified and easy to understand fares. These measures could positively impact groups experiencing poverty or low income.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Major Beneficial Effect in supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?				<p>Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8 under Theme 3 could have a Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage				<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the affordability of bus fares, especially for people living in poverty, disadvantaged communities and rural or remote communities. Additionally, there will be improvements in the attractiveness of bus fares compared to the cost of motoring and bus fares that are easy to understand and flexible. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome				<p>Overall Impact: Neutral / Negligible Effect to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the affordability of bus fares, especially for people living in poverty, disadvantaged communities and rural or remote communities. Additionally, there will be improvements in the attractiveness of bus fares compared to the cost of motoring and bus fares that are easy to understand and flexible. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.</p>

7.5 Policy Theme 4: Accessible and Safer Bus Journeys

- 7.5.1 Bus travel should be convenient and accessible to all passengers, as a core component of achieving a fully accessible door-to-door journey experience in the region. This means well-maintained and accessible routes to bus stops, and more accessible vehicles, stops and stations. Travel information needs to be easily available in accessible formats, covering pre-journey planning, waiting at bus stops and on-board the bus. Customer service also needs to provide a consistent, high-quality experience for all passengers, informed by training in disability and equality matters.
- 7.5.2 People should also feel safe when travelling by bus. This starts at the bus stop. Well-lit, maintained spaces with 'live' departure information can help people feel safer, especially in the evening. Increasing awareness of CCTV provision and ensuring passengers know what to do if they are having a problem on the bus are important, whilst drivers need to be supported with appropriate training to handle passenger issues.
- 7.5.3 The key policy under this theme includes:
- **Policy 9:** Improve the accessibility and safety of bus travel for all passengers.

Table 7.4: Theme 4 – Accessible and Safer Bus Journeys

FSD Criteria	Policies	Commentary
	P9	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	+	Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). People living in rural areas particularly are likely to have reduced access to essential services. Additionally, people who have mobility issues or other disabilities have greater issues in accessing basic goods and services. Under Policy 9 , more accessible measures such as audio-visual information on buses and passenger assistance services, could support individuals and households to access basic goods and services by bus.

		Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on material deprivation.
Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would help to reduce levels of multiple deprivation affecting communities. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	++	In addition to cost related barriers, many population groups may encounter physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women. Under Policy 9 , a range of measures are proposed to help reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility and equality training for bus drivers, bus station staff and bus planning teams - Inclusive and accessible travel information, including audio-visual information on buses - Passenger assistance services on buses, aiming for a single, network-wide approach - Accessible vehicles, bus stops and bus stations, and routes to bus stops and stations - CCTV on buses and at bus stations - High quality, well-lit and maintained bus stops All of these measures will ensure that physical and informational barriers to accessing and using bus services are reduced for all groups, particularly those from protected characteristic groups. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 could have a Major Beneficial Effect in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.
Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 9 and associated measures would support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	+	The health of residents in the SPT region is relatively poor compared with the Scottish population and transport is a critical enabler of good health and wellbeing as it influences access to healthcare facilities and services whilst also providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental health through active travel. Under Policy 9 , a range of measures are proposed to help reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility and equality training for bus drivers, bus station staff and bus planning teams - Inclusive and accessible travel information, including audio-visual information on buses

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passenger assistance services on buses, aiming for a single, network-wide approach - Accessible vehicles, bus stops and bus stations, and routes to bus stops and stations - CCTV on buses and at bus stations - High quality, well-lit and maintained bus stops <p>All of these measures will ensure that physical and informational barriers to accessing and using bus services are reduced for all groups, particularly those from protected characteristic groups and those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.</p>
Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?	~	<p>There is no clear relationship between Policy 9 and supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors. This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged elsewhere in this assessment that there is a relationship between employment and the Draft SRBS it is considered there is No Clear Relationship for this specific consideration.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 7 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 7 and associated measures would support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?		<p>Policy 9 under Theme 4 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 9 under Theme 4 could have a Minor to Major Beneficial Effect.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage		<p>Overall Impact: Minor to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the accessibility and safety of bus travel for all passengers. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>
Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome		<p>Overall Impact: Minor to Major Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be improvements to the accessibility and safety of bus travel for all passengers. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.</p>

7.6 Policy Theme 5: A Trusted and Recognisable Bus Network

- 7.6.1 The bus network should be a valued regional asset that people trust to deliver a consistent, high-quality service no matter where one lives in the region or how often one travels by bus. The bus network should provide a recognisable ‘offer’ for both regular and infrequent users.
- 7.6.2 This means branding that is more focused on building passenger awareness and understanding of the network and less focused on who is operating the bus. This means aiming for a network that is not regularly changing and, when changes are made, ensuring that this is done in a consistent and well-communicated manner.
- 7.6.3 Passengers should also expect a consistently, high quality customer experience, backed by a customer charter setting out what passengers can expect from the bus network and who is accountable for the service provided. The bus driver has a critical role in the overall passenger experience, with friendly and helpful drivers being particularly key to delivering ‘great’ bus journeys. This will require providing consistent mechanisms for passenger feedback and monitoring passenger satisfaction across the network.
- 7.6.4 The key policies under this theme include:
- **Policy 10:** Develop a consistent network identity across the region.
 - **Policy 11:** Ensure passengers receive a consistent, high quality standard of customer service across the region.
 - **Policy 12:** Develop and ensure a consistent approach to bus service changes across the region that minimises disruption to passengers.
 - **Policy 13:** Develop and ensure high quality and consistent driver standards across the region.

Table 7.5: Theme 5 – A Trusted and Recognisable Bus Network

FSD Criteria	Policies				Commentary
	P10	P11	P12	P13	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	~	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	~	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty.

					Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	~	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	~	~	+	~	Material deprivation refers to households being unable to access basic goods and services, including supermarkets, banks and pharmacies for example (Fairer Scotland Duty, 2018). There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 and associated measures would support individuals and households to access basic goods and services. However, through Policy 12 there could be a restriction to significant service changes to well-defined dates each year with a clearly reported rationale for change. A more consistent approach to bus service changes may enable greater accessibility for those who rely on buses for accessing basic goods and services. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship . Overall, it is assessed that Policy 12 under Theme 5 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect on supporting individuals and households to access basic goods and services.
Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	~	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	+	+	+	~	In addition to cost related barriers, many population groups may encounter physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women. Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 12 include a range of measures that could reduce physical and information barriers to accessing and using bus services. Under Policy 10 , a consistent network identity across the region, demonstrating inclusivity and safety could help to build trust among users who have concerns or less confidence with transport use. Under Policy 11 , a network-wide Customer Charter and engagement and monitoring of passenger satisfaction could help to ensure that passengers receive a consistent, high quality

					<p>standard of customer service across the region which could be beneficial to those who struggle with using the service.</p> <p>Under Policy 12, could be a restriction to significant service changes to well-defined dates each year with a clearly reported rationale for change. People who are most reliant on buses (including older people, younger people, and people on low income) are most vulnerable to service changes, particularly those without access to private vehicles or those with limited physical mobility. A more consistent approach to bus service changes may enable greater accessibility for those who rely on buses.</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 13 and associated measures would reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 12 under Theme 5 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?</p>	~	~	+	~	<p>People in low income households are often excluded from maintaining social connections or accessing employment, health and training opportunities due to the affordability and availability of transport options. Rural, urban and island communities also face different challenges in the extent to which transport options connect people to the services and opportunities they need, and at the times and with the frequency they need (Public Health Scotland, 2024). Unreliable transport services are also a significant barrier that can limit the geographic areas in which people seek employment, goods and services. Reliability is also a significant issue when multi-modal journeys are impacted causing disruption to people’s daily routines who could be at risk of lost business or dismissal due to lack of punctuality (Public Health Scotland, 2024).</p> <p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 and associated measures would reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p> <p>However, through Policy 12 there could be a restriction to significant service changes to well-defined dates each year with a clearly reported rationale for change. A more consistent approach to bus service changes may enable greater accessibility to employment, social and cultural activities for those who rely on buses.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 12 under Theme 5 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in reducing unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p>

<p>Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?</p>	~	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?</p>	~	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	+	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 and associated measures would facilitate and encourage the use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>However, through Policy 12 there could be a restriction to significant service changes to well-defined dates each year with a clearly reported rationale for change. A more consistent approach to bus service changes may encourage greater use of public transport, particularly for those who face socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 12 under Theme 5 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in facilitating and encouraging use of public transport in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to have an impact on active travel, and physical recreation.</p>
<p>Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?</p>	~	~	~	~	<p>There is no clear relationship between Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors. This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged elsewhere in this assessment that there is a relationship between employment and the Draft SRBS it is considered there is No Clear Relationship for this specific consideration.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	~	+	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 12 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>However, under Policy 13 there would be high quality and consistent driver standards across the region. By doing committing to this, a consistent, high quality customer service will be</p>

		<p>provided by drivers and other customer-facing staff which will in turn create higher skilled and higher valued employment.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11 and Policy 12 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 13 under Theme 5 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>		<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 and associated measures would support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 10, Policy 11, Policy 12 and Policy 13 under Theme 5 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?</p>	<p>Policy 7 under Theme 4 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 7 under Theme 5 could have a Minor to Major Beneficial Effect.</p>	
<p>Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<p>Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be a consistent network identity, a high quality of customer service alongside high quality and consistent driver standards across the region. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>	
<p>Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome</p>	<p>Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be a consistent network identity, a high quality of customer service alongside high quality and consistent driver standards across the region. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.</p>	

7.8 Policy Theme 6: A Seamless and Integrated Network

- 7.8.1 The bus network should provide a ‘seamless’ journey with integration across key features – services/timetables, interchange locations/facilities, ticketing, and information - making it easy and convenient for people to use the bus network. The bus network also needs to be more integrated with active travel, rail and other public transport to make it easy to make whole journeys by public transport and active travel.
- 7.8.2 The bus network should be perceived as a single system that is easy, attractive and efficient for people to transfer between buses and to other modes. The location and access arrangements at bus stops should allow for convenient and attractive interchanging between services or modes, particularly in town centres and at rail stations. This can be facilitated by the development of a ‘mobility hub’ network, which are spaces for integrating public, active and shared transport. Integrating bus with placemaking schemes can also help mitigate the ‘interchange penalty’ by ensuring the waiting environment is pleasant.
- 7.8.3 The region benefits from multi-modal integrated ticketing, but future developments should aim to provide even more convenience and flexibility such as tap-and-go multi-modal ticketing with daily and weekly price capping based upon actual number of journeys made. Travel information that is integrated, accessible, high quality and ‘real time’ for all passengers is also important to the seamless experience.
- 7.8.4 The key policies under this theme include:
 - **Policy 14:** Develop a smart and integrated ticketing system for the bus network that makes it easy to use bus across the region and supports wider multi-modal integration and MaaS.
 - **Policy 15:** Ensure bus stops and interchanges are high quality and located conveniently and efficiently across the region.
 - **Policy 16:** Ensure bus travel information is provided consistently as high quality, accurate and integrated for all bus users across the region.

Table 7.6: Theme 6 – A Seamless and Integrated Network

FSD Criteria	Policies			Commentary
	P14	P15	P16	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	+	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.</p> <p>However, Policy 14 consists of the development of a smart and integrated ticketing system which would include smart and cashless ticketing options. This may benefit those who do not carry cash on their person and instead rely on debit or credit cards to pay for goods and services.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>

				Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14 under Theme 6 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in reducing cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes.
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would help to support individuals and households to access basic goods and services. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	++	++	++	In addition to cost related barriers, many population groups may encounter physical or informational challenges in terms of accessing public transport. This is particularly true for protected characteristics groups such as disabled people, ethnic minority groups, and women. Under Policy 14 , a smart and integrated ticketing system for the bus network will be developed that makes it easy to use the bus across the region. Whilst the increase in contactless payment and app-based ticketing has improved boarding times and flexibility for most users, it is intended that maintaining cash payment on board for tickets will also help promote the inclusivity of bus services to a range of users, including older people, who are not confident using electronic payment. Simplified ticketing options would help promote the inclusivity of bus services by benefitting disabled, ethnic minority groups, young adults and infrequent or non-users in particular. Policy 15 would ensure bus stops and interchanges are high quality and located conveniently and efficiently across the region. This would deliver improvements to interchanges which currently present accessibility issues for disabled transport users or parents/carers travelling with you children requiring a buggy. It would also provide greater oversight of bus stop provision and facilities which could better accommodate the access needs of disabled transport users and those with limited mobility.

				<p>Policy 16 would ensure bus travel information is provided consistently as high quality, accurate and integrated for all bus users. This would ensure that accurate and reliable real time travel information was available for everyone, thereby removing informational barriers.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 could have a Major Beneficial Effect in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.</p>
Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?	~	~	~	<p>There is no clear relationship between Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors. This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged elsewhere in this assessment that there is a relationship between employment and the Draft SRBS it is considered there is No Clear Relationship for this specific consideration.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 14, Policy 15 Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>

				Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?	~	++	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 14 and Policy 16 and associated measures would support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>However, Policy 15 could ensure that bus stops and interchanges are high quality and located conveniently and efficiently across the region. This would deliver improvements to transport infrastructure which could provide a more seamless, welcoming and efficient network. This could encourage more people to make use of the bus network, which could improve accessibility to employment, education and training opportunities for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 14 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 15 under Theme 6 could have a Major Beneficial Effect on supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?	Policy 14, Policy 15 and Policy 16 under Theme 6 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.			
Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage	Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be a development in a smart and integrated ticketing system, high quality bus stops and interchanges located conveniently and efficiently, and accurate and high quality bus travel information for all users across the region. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.			
Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome	Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be a development in a smart and integrated ticketing system, high quality bus stops and interchanges located conveniently and efficiently, and accurate and high quality bus travel information for all users across the region. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.			

7.9 Policy Theme 7: A More Environmentally Sustainable, Efficient and Adaptable Bus Network and Fleet

- 7.9.1 The bus network should be operated in an environmentally sustainable and resilient way and support goals for net zero carbon and better air quality. Transitioning the fleet to zero emission vehicles, and delivering the supporting infrastructure and upskilled workforce, is a huge challenge for government and industry, but one which is already well underway in Scotland.
- 7.9.2 The challenge will be even greater if service frequencies and network coverage are to increase to deliver passenger growth and better access for communities, as this will increase the number of vehicles required to deliver the bus network. Scenarios developed for this strategy suggest that most of the bus fleet will need to be zero emission vehicles by around 2035 to align well with national climate change targets.
- 7.9.3 Alongside this, the bus network needs to be supported by a road network that is managed and adapted, where necessary, to mitigate effects of climate change. Mitigating surface flooding problems is important to avoiding disruption to bus services and passengers.
- 7.9.4 The key policies under this theme include:
- **Policy 17:** Transition the regional bus fleet to zero emission vehicles.
 - **Policy 18:** Ensure high-quality and well-maintained vehicles across the region.
 - **Policy 19:** Ensure the regional bus fleet supports a resilient and operationally efficient bus network.

Table 7.7: Theme 7 – A More Environmentally Sustainable, Efficient and Adaptable Bus Network and Fleet

FSD Criteria	Policies			Commentary
	P17	P18	P19	
Reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would reduce cost related barriers to accessing and use of all transport modes. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low income: help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would help to reduce levels of absolute and relative income poverty. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Low wealth: help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would help to reduce inequality in the distribution of household wealth.

				Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Material deprivation: support individuals and households to access basic goods and services?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would support individuals and households to access basic goods and services. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Area deprivation: help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would help to reduce level of multiple deprivation affecting communities. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes?	~	~	+	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17 and Policy 18 and associated measures would help to reduce physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes. Policy 19 would ensure the regional bus fleet supports a resilient and operationally efficient bus network. Given this would be more likely to be applied region-wide, the benefits after a suitable transition period could be far reaching and would in particular raise the standards in areas that are served by smaller operators or do not benefit from modern or more accessible bus fleets suited to the needs of people with physical accessibility needs such as disabled people, parents/carers travelling with children and others with limited mobility. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17 and Policy 18 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship . Overall, it is assessed that Policy 19 under Theme 7 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in reducing physical and informational barriers to accessing and using all transport modes.
Reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would reduce unequal access to employment opportunities, social and cultural activities, and public services and amenities for all. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Socio-economic background: address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would address structural inequalities resulting from differences in social class. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .
Support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas?	~	~	~	There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would support the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas. Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship .

<p>Facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would facilitate and encourage use of public transport, active travel, and physical recreation, in particular for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Support economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors?</p>	~	~	~	<p>There is no clear relationship between Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and supporting economic development through facilitating the growth of Scotland's key economic sectors. This report does consider impacts on income and employment associated with the other Draft SRBS Themes and Policies but does not do this in specific reference to Scotland's key economic sectors. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged elsewhere in this assessment that there is a relationship between employment and the Draft SRBS it is considered there is No Clear Relationship for this specific consideration.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that these Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	+	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17 and Policy 18 and associated measures would support increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Policy 19 would provide a resilient and skilled-up workforce that would ensure that the regional bus fleet provides a resilient and operationally efficient bus network. Although the policies and measures do not provide detail on potential recruitment processes, this policy shows that the Draft SRBS will support an increase provision of higher skilled and higher value employment.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17 and Policy 18 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 19 under Theme 7 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect in supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment, particularly for those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage?</p>	~	~	~	<p>There is a lack of evidence to understand if Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 and associated measures would support the provision of adequate transport infrastructure, services, and facilities to meet identified population and economic needs, in particular those facing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that Policy 17, Policy 18 and Policy 19 under Theme 7 would result in No Clear Relationship.</p>
<p>Contribute to the achievement of the Duty's aims and desired outcomes?</p>	<p>Policy 19 under Theme 7 could deliver a range of positive benefits that contribute to the Duty's aims and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Overall Impact: It is assessed that Policy 19 under Theme 7 could have a Minor Beneficial Effect. Policy 17 and Policy 18 have No Clear Relationship with the FSD Criteria.</p>			
<p>Overall consideration with respect to socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<p>Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be high-quality and well-maintained vehicles across the region and the regional bus fleet will support a resilient and operationally efficient network. This is expected to benefit those who are facing socio-economic disadvantage, as they are statistically more reliant on buses.</p>			

Overall consideration with respect to inequality of outcome	Overall Impact: Minor Beneficial Effect as there is expected to be high-quality and well-maintained vehicles across the region and the regional bus fleet will support a resilient and operationally efficient network. This is likely to have an impact on inequality of outcome.
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8 Summary

- 8.1.1 On balance the SRBS objectives, policies and measures are assessed to provide a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** to **Major Beneficial Effect** impact regarding the FSD. Alongside this a number of objectives and policies have been assessed as 'having no clear relationship' to the guiding questions within this assessment. This is because further detail regarding the implementation of the objectives and policies would be needed to make a robust impact assessment.
- 8.1.2 Overall, the following impacts have been found for the Draft SRBS Objectives and Policies against the FSD guide questions:

Draft SRBS Objectives

- 8.1.3 Generally, all three objectives will have a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** to **Major Beneficial Effect** in relation to the guiding questions within this assessment.
- 8.1.4 A more consistent and improved level of service across the region under Objective 1, could provide more people with the option of taking public transport to access employment, education and key services. This could have wider benefits such as potentially reducing reliance on car ownership and the cost implications of this. Overall, under this policy people could be connected more quickly and efficiently to key destinations and services which could have benefits in relation to reducing cost related barriers, low income, material deprivation, area deprivation, reducing unequal access to opportunities, supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas, facilitating and encouraging the use of public transport and supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure. A neutral / negligible effect was assigned for low wealth, socio-economic background and supporting economic development of key Scottish economic sectors. No clear relationship was assigned to reducing physical and informational barriers and supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment.
- 8.1.5 A more affordable, safe and accessible service for all under Objective 2 would ensure that communities are better connected the key destinations and services. Improved affordability measures could positively impact members from households experiencing financial challenges. This could have benefits in relation to reducing cost related barriers, low income, low wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation, reducing unequal access to opportunities, supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas, facilitating and encouraging the use of public transport and supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure. A neutral / negligible effect was assigned for socio-economic background and supporting economic development of key Scottish economic sectors. No clear relationship was assigned to reducing physical and informational barriers and supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment.
- 8.1.6 A more attractive, integrated and sustainable bus network under Objective 3 would encourage the use of the bus network. This could have benefits in relation to reducing cost related barriers, low income, material deprivation, area deprivation, reducing physical and informational barriers, reducing unequal access to opportunities, supporting the regeneration of disadvantaged or deprived areas, facilitating and encouraging the use of public transport and supporting the provision of adequate transport infrastructure. A neutral / negligible effect was assigned for low wealth, socio-economic background and supporting economic development of key Scottish economic sectors. No clear relationship was assigned to supporting increased provision of higher skilled and higher value employment.

Draft SRBS Policies

- 8.1.7 Generally, the 19 policies under the seven policy themes will have a **Neutral / Negligible Effect** to **Major Beneficial Effect** in relation to the guiding questions within this assessment. The policies that will have the greatest beneficial effect will be Policy 2, Policy 4, Policy 6, Policy 7 and Policy 8. Overall, these policies would improve the frequency, affordability, attractiveness, reliability and punctuality of the bus service. These policies would encourage people to use the bus network and could provide greater accessibility to employment, education and training opportunities.

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Appendix A Baseline Data

Table A.1: Income deprivation by local authority

Local authority (%)														
Income Deprivation	Argyll & Bute	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Renfrewshire	Glasgow City	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	West Dunbartonshire	Combined SPT Region Average	National
Percentage of people who are income deprived	10	15	7	7	19	18	17	15	13	12	13	18	15	12.0

Source: SIMD 2020 [SIMD \(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation\)](#)

Table A.2: Highest level of qualification by local authority

Local authority (%)														
Highest Level of Qualification	Argyll & Bute	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Renfrewshire	Glasgow City	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	West Dunbartonshire	Combined SPT Region Average	National
Not applicable (ages less than 16)	14.6	16.9	17.6	20	15.4	15.3	15.9	17.6	16.1	15.2	16.9	16.9	16.6	16.4
No qualifications	13.2	18.4	10.3	9.3	17	17.6	17.1	17.3	13.9	15.0	15.2	17.5	15.2	13.9
Lower school qualifications	15.9	17	11.8	10.9	13.9	16.5	17	17.7	15.5	15.8	16.1	17.1	15.5	15.8
Upper school qualifications	9.7	8.5	9.2	9.8	9.2	8.6	8.4	8.8	9	9.2	9.2	8.9	9.1	9.3
Apprenticeship qualifications	6.9	7.2	5.6	4.7	4.4	7.4	7.4	6.8	7	6.8	6.9	8	6.6	6.4
Further Education and sub-degree Higher Education	10.5	12.4	9.9	9.4	10.5	13.5	13.6	12.4	12.6	11.9	12	13.3	11.9	11.1



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9 References

qualifications incl. HNC/HNDs														
Degree level qualifications or above Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)	29	19.4	35.3	35.6	29.3	20.8	20.2	19	25.6	25.8	23.5	17.9	25.2	27.1

Source: Scotland's Census 2022: [Scotland's Census](#)

Table A.3: Economic activity profile by local authority

Local authority (%)														
Economic activity	Argyll & Bute	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Renfrewshire	Glasgow City	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	West Dunbartonshire	Combined SPT Region Average	National
Not applicable (aged less than 16)	14.6	16.9	17.6	20	15.4	15.3	15.9	17.7	16.1	15.2	16.9	17	16.6	16.3
Economically active - Employee	38.2	40.5	40.4	40	41.8	41.3	38.9	44.2	45.2	37.8	43.6	43.4	41.3	42.3
Economically active - Self-employed	9.5	5.9	6.4	6.7	5.6	4.3	5.3	5	5.1	6.3	5.9	4.4	5.9	6.3
Economically active – Unemployed	1.6	2.4	1.5	1.5	3.3	2.2	2.6	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.2
Economically inactive	36.1	34.3	34.1	31.8	33.9	36.9	37.2	30.8	31.5	38.6	31.7	32.8	34.1	32.7

Source: Scotland's Census 2022: [Scotland's Census](#)



Appendix B Draft SRBS Themes, Policies and Measures

Policy Ref	Draft SRBS Policy	Measure Ref	Draft SRBS Measure
Theme 1: Buses where they are needed, when they are needed			
P1	Improve periods of operation and geographic coverage of the bus network, where required.	M1	A regional bus network based upon defined principles for frequency, capacity, periods of operation, coverage and connectivity.
		M2	Minimum levels of service for all towns, key destinations (e.g., hospitals) and off-peak time periods to ensure basic accessibility, working towards more convenient service levels.
P2	Improve the frequency of bus services, where required.	M3	High frequency services (every 10 minutes minimum) on core routes, working towards a turn-up-and-go service level for some services at appropriate times.
P3	Improve the efficiency of the regional bus network.	M4	An integrated bus network with better coordination between services and modes, particularly for journeys where interchange is more common (e.g., rural to regional express or bus to rail).
Theme 2: Reliable and quicker journeys			
P4	Improve the reliability and punctuality of bus services.	M5	Bus priority infrastructure on high frequency routes (every 10 minutes minimum) and routes that are prone to congestion, including motorways.
		M6	Bus services that better meet performance (e.g. punctuality and patronage) standards and objectives, supported by more performance monitoring and the open sharing of performance data.
		M7	Better coordination of rural services with region/express services and rail services.
		M8	Better co-ordination of appropriate fleets for appropriate routes and services, maximising fleet and boarding capacity.
		M9	Support wider car demand management and centralised network disruption management policies, measures and operations.
		M10	Traffic management and enforcement measures (e.g., bus lane cameras, parking enforcement).
		M11	More efficient network planning via a whole of region approach to provide faster and more reliable journeys.
		M12	Network-wide communication and monitoring teams to manage and respond to disruption, including the development with partners of a regional control centre.



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P5	Improve the attractiveness of bus journey times compared to car journey times.	M13	Faster bus journey times on busier routes, supported by bus priority, faster boardings (through smart ticketing, bus stop rationalisation and faster vehicle access/egress) and express services.
Theme 3: Affordable and attractive fares and ticketing			
P6	Improve the affordability of bus fares, especially for people living in poverty, disadvantaged communities and rural or remote communities.	M14	Concessionary / discounted fares prioritised for groups most in need, progressing towards overall fare reductions for all.
P7	Improve the attractiveness of bus fares compared to the cost of motoring.	M15	Automatic fare capping for single and multi-journey (ensuring best fare is applied for the actual journey made).
P8	Ensure that bus fares are easy to understand and flexible.	M16	Simplified fare structures providing customers with the best value for money ticket for all journeys.
		M17	Accessible and easy to understand fares information.
		M18	Consistent and well-communicated approaches to any fare increases.
Theme 4: Accessible and safer bus journeys			
P9	Improve the accessibility and safety of bus travel for all passengers.	M19	Accessibility and equality training for bus drivers, bus station staff and bus planning teams.
		M20	Inclusive and accessible travel information, including audio-visual information on buses.
		M21	Passenger assistance services on buses, aiming for a single, network-wide approach.
		M22	Accessible vehicles, bus stops and bus stations, and routes to bus stops and stations.
		M23	CCTV on buses and at bus stations.
		M24	High quality, well-lit and maintained bus stops.
Theme 5: A Trusted and Recognisable Bus Network			
P10	Develop a consistent network identity across the region.	M25	A strong network-wide identity across key assets, services and information (e.g. vehicles, stops and stations, online and app services).
P11	Ensure passengers receive a consistent, high quality standard of customer service across the region.	M26	A network-wide Customer Charter.
		M27	Network-wide passenger engagement and monitoring of passenger satisfaction.



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P12	Develop and ensure a consistent approach to bus service changes across the region that minimises disruption to passengers.	M28	Restrict significant service changes to well-defined dates each year (like trains) with a clearly reported rationale for change.
P13	Develop and ensure high quality and consistent driver standards across the region.	M29	Consistent, high quality customer service provided by drivers and other customer-facing staff (e.g., travel centres, contact centres, customer services).
Theme 6: A seamless and integrated network			
P14	Develop a smart and integrated ticketing system for the bus network that makes it easy to use bus across the region and supports wider multi-modal integration and MaaS.	M30	Smart and cashless ticketing options and simplified product offer.
		M31	Bus integrated more closely with ferry, rail, Subway, cross-regional routes and the emerging Clyde Metro - networks/services/hub, ticketing and information.
P15	Ensure bus stops and interchanges are high quality and located conveniently and efficiently across the region.	M32	High quality passenger waiting facilities (stops/hubs/stations) across the region.
		M33	Integrate waiting facilities with active, accessibility and micro-mobility modes, and with wider mobility hub and place-making proposals in appropriate locations.
		M34	Review, improve and rationalise waiting facility infrastructure and locations to provide a more seamless, welcoming and efficient network.
P16	Ensure bus travel information is provided consistently as high quality, accurate and integrated for all bus users across the region.	M35	Accurate and reliable real time travel information across the region.
		M36	Open and transparent performance monitoring of services to assess performance and target improvements.
Theme 7: A more environmentally sustainable, efficient and adaptable bus network and fleet			
P17	Transition the regional bus fleet to zero emission vehicles.	M37	High quality bus fleet that is transitioning fully to 100% zero emission vehicles in line with Scottish Government targets.
P18	Ensure high-quality and well-maintained vehicles across the region.	M38	Efficient, resilient and well-maintained depot network.
P19	Ensure the regional bus fleet supports a resilient and operationally efficient bus network.	M39	A road and bus infrastructure network that is resilient and adaptable to the effects of climate change.
		M40	Resilient and skilled-up workforce.
		M41	EV enabled bus depot facilities and supporting infrastructure that are future proofed to facilitate the conversion of the bus fleet to zero emissions.





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