

East of England Freight Council Minutes

**Tuesday 22 January 2019
Bedford Lodge Hotel, Bury Road
Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7BX**

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

- The meeting was chaired by Chris Palmer from Transam.
- The minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- Members were reminded by the Secretary about new guidance on competition law compliance. Full details can be found in the Policy Report.

REPORT FROM UK COUNCIL

- Members received a report back from discussions at UK Council on 8 November including changes to DVSA sift policy and HGV enforcement targeting; maximum weights and dimensions of HGVs; and priorities for legislative change after Brexit.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

- Members received a Secretary's report which included the FORS review; independent testing; availability of HGV annual tests; immigration white paper and labour shortage categories; driving licence derogation for alternatively-fuelled vehicles; ongoing EU discussions on Operating Licencing for vans, minimum wage requirements for drivers, drivers' hours/tachograph rules; abnormal loads; and London Direct Vision Standard.
- Members reported that a lack of testing availability is still a major issue and one operator reported having to take vehicles from Suffolk to Wellingborough for tests. Also, the refusal by DVSA to approve new ATFs is an issue.

AGENDA ITEMS

A1 Vehicle Operator Licensing – Priorities for development

- Members were asked to decide what functions of the Vehicle Operator Licensing (VOL) online system should be priorities for future development.
- Members want all sections to be easier to use.
- GV72 schedule 4 (transfer of site) still has to be done via post. Members would like this to be included in the online system. You also have to close a depot before you can apply for a new one if you want to swap a depot with another.
- It was suggested that there should be free flow text boxes so an applicant can explain what they are trying to do or have the ability to upload an explanatory letter. There should be a field which asks if you have any supplementary information or documents you would like to upload. The explanatory letter should be the first thing that the person reviewing the application should see.
- It was also suggested that it would be helpful if you are able to view where you are in the application process, so you can see if the application is progressing or if it has stalled for some reason, such as the case officer being on holiday.

- Members also commented that old applications seem to stay on the system in perpetuity and they would like the ability to remove them if they are no longer needed.

A2 Ultra-Low and Zero Emissions Roads/Zones

- Members were asked to decide FTA's response to the increasing numbers of local authorities considering small scale Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) and zero-emission schemes.
- Members supported FTA stance with regards to these schemes
- Members didn't report any problems about current vehicle supply issues, but there was lively discussion about previous difficulties. Concerns were expressed about too much focus on electric and a desire for infrastructure for hydrogen to be more of an option by policy makers.
- Charging infrastructure and refuelling infrastructure was cited as the biggest barrier to switching to alternatively-fuelled vehicles. But there were also concerns about grid capacity, protecting logistics land use, and ensuring new developments include logistics as a forethought rather than an afterthought.

A3 Coastal shipping – how to grow the market

- Coastal shipping has been in decline around the UK. Council was briefed on a new policy study in this area to influence the Department for Transport's (DfT's) broader Maritime 2050 agenda.

A4 Road haulage and container ports – working to resolve congestion problems

- Members have reported persistent congestion problems at container ports. FTA sought views and information on this ahead of discussions at our Freight by Water Working Group to try to find solutions to this issue.
- Members felt that this is not a problem that going to get better anytime soon, but it will improve gradually over time. However, the situation at Felixstowe has improved since the problems with the new IT system first appeared.
- It was commented that the system is designed the wrong way round for UK logistics. The use of bigger ships is leading to greater peaks and troughs in congestion and the shipping lines and have a cut and run habit, so if there are problems at one port, the ship offloads at a different port. This is not a decision the ports have any control over, it's the vessel operators.
- However, members were frustrated by the lack of information and poor communication about delays and changes of ports by the shipping lines.

A5 Brexit

- Members were updated on the latest understanding of the situation regarding Brexit and its implications for logistics. FTA also sought feedback from members on any preparedness work they have carried out and how the Association could help beyond advice already shared with members.
- Some companies reported that they are stockpiling. Additional warehousing is being explored. Only one member had applied for ECMT permits and they had also taken on additional EU drivers and vehicles.

REGIONAL ITEMS

G4 Lower Thames Crossing consultation

- Members were briefed on FTA's response to the consultation which can be accessed [here](#) (member login required).

PRESENTATION

England's Economic Heartland

- WSP has been commissioned by England's Economic Heartland to undertake a freight and logistics study. Morag White from WSP briefed members on the study and seek views on priority issues in the region.
- Members commented that one of the biggest priorities nationally and particularly in the East of England is the lack of driver facilities which links to the driver shortage issue.

- It was commented that the quality of the road infrastructure in the region is poor, with some parts more than 50 miles from the nearest motorway standard road.
- Members would like to see more future planning of roads, so we don't just shift bottlenecks, but properly resolve them. Routes need to be looked at more holistically, whilst this is the logical thing to do, it tends to fall on political boundaries. It is not a lack of understanding, but political will.
- A140 between Norwich and Ipswich, two of the biggest cities in the region, was cited as not being big enough and much of it has a 40mph limit. Also, the route between Felixstowe and London Gateway ports was felt to be in the need of upgrading.
- It was felt that public perceptions of freight are very negative and that more bridging with planning with councils is needed and the industry needs to be recognised as an essential service.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Elections

- The following were elected for the 2019/2020 period:

Chairman	Kevin Barcroft	Simply Waste Solutions
Vice Chairman	John Burbridge	Turners (Soham) Ltd
Vice Chairman	James Andrews	Maritime
Road Freight Council Rep 1	Kevin Barcroft	Simply Waste Solutions
Road Freight Council Rep 2	John Burbridge	Turners (Soham) Ltd
Road Freight Council Rep 3	James Andrews	Maritime
Road Freight Council Rep (deputy)	Es Shepherd	Es Shepherd Road Transport Consultant
Road Freight Council Rep (deputy)	Neil Hammond	Wincanton

Chris Palmer

- It was Chris Palmer's last East of England Freight Council meeting as he is retiring. He was thanked for his contribution to the Council and for supporting the chairing of meetings.

FTA representation at local planning meetings

- It was suggested that FTA should take a position on representing industry at planning meeting, such as provision of new lorry parking facilities.
- FTA response: FTA has a policy of not supporting individual applications and we do not want to be seen to be supporting one developer over another. But, we are happy to put forward comment on planning applications outlining the Association's general support for the need for new lorry parking facilities on or close to the Strategic Road Network. Member who are aware of applications which they think that FTA should comment on should contact [Natalie Chapman](#).

East of England Freight Council Meeting in October

- Members were invited to put forward suggestions for an appropriate venue for the October meeting of the East of England Freight Council.

Date of next meeting

- Tuesday 2 April 2019 at the Bedford Lodge Hotel, Newmarket

Other meetings for 2019

- Thursday 13 June at the Bedford Lodge Hotel
- Tuesday 22 October, venue TBC

ATTENDEES

Chairman

Chris Palmer Transam Trucking

Attendees

Joe Addison Glazewing
James Andrews Maritime Transport Ltd
Kevin Barcroft Simply Waste Solutions
Michael Bird LD Asset Management
Peter Brown Hertfordshire County Council
John Burbridge Turners (Soham) Ltd
Chris Clark Wincanton
Neil Davies Milebay Consultancy Ltd
Geof Driscoll TCS Ltd
Lara Drury West Suffolk Council
Steve Drury Volvo Group UK Ltd
Paul Duggan Paul Duggan Consulting Ltd
Emily Dunn XPO Supply Chain UK Limited
Neil Hammond Wincanton
Ewan Hunter Ridgeons Ltd
Paul Hutchings Luton Borough Council
Peter Lambert Milebay Consultancy Ltd
Ian Limeburner One Broker Ltd
Ian MacAulay DHL Supply Chain
Robin Peck Norfolk County Council
Richard Pelly Pellys Transport & Regulatory Law
Tim Ridyard Ashtons Legal
Garry Rudd Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)
Paul Smalley Kier Fleet Services Ltd
Simon Smith Dacorum Borough Council
Russell Taylor Knowles Transport Ltd
Michael Whatling Geodis UK Ltd
Steve Williams Truck (UK) Ltd
Su Winch Novadata TAB Ltd
Neil Woods DS Smith Packaging Ltd

Guests

Morag White WSP
David Brown MRCT

FTA Staff

Natalie Chapman Head of South of England and Urban Policy
Denise Beedell Vans and Urban Policy Manager
Jon Noble Member Relations Manager
Chris Wainwright Member Relations Manager

Apologies

Russell Avery Grace Foods UK Ltd
Phil Clifford Public Sector Fleet Management Consultant
David Cooke Fowler Welch
Warren DiDuca MSC
Paul Duncalf Sysco UK & Ireland
Chris Francis Turners (Soham) Ltd
Andrew Kingdon Kier Group
Brian Middleton Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Maurizio Romano Fowler Welch
Es Shepherd Road Transport Consultant
Tim Smart Frontier Agriculture Ltd