



Leading UK Logistics

North East Freight Council Minutes – April 2019

For the meeting held in:

**Ramside Hall Hotel
Durham
DH1 1TD**

on 3rd April 2019

Chaired by

1. Introduction

- **Welcome**

Chair Jeff Ritchie opened the meeting and welcomed members followed by introductions.

2. Presentation by Newcastle City Council: Graham Grant and Ali Lamb

Graham Grant from Transport Team at Newcastle City Council briefed members on the Air Quality Public Consultation plans for Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside. Consultation closes on 17th May 2019. Members were encouraged to make individual written submissions from their organisation's perspectives.

The 2 Proposals: Clean Air Zone; and LEZ with Bridge Tolls are detailed within the booklet handed out by Ali and Graham. FTA will be making a formal written submission but again members encouraged to make their own submissions, so that all comments that were made can be captured formally

- **Minutes of last meeting**

These were accepted as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Michael Watson and seconded by Kate Wilson

- **Competition law compliance**

Member attention was drawn to the "Guidance for Conduct of FTA Meetings involving Members" on page 8 of the current Policy Report document.

3. Issues arising from UK Council on 7 February 2019, and attendance at UK Council 9May 2019.

Council was updated on a range of DVSA issues including: Test Availability; pilot on Private testing of PSV's; and further development of the Vehicle Operator Licensing (VOL) online system.

National Council Attendance:

- Jeff Ritchie will not be able to attend as on holiday
- Michael Watson has had to formally resign his position
- Kate Wilson will attend on behalf of North East FC on 9th May

4. Secretary's report

Members were updated on issues including;

- Transport Taxation
- HGV test availability.
- Clean Air Zones.
- Office of the Traffic Commissioner Review

5. Regional Items

Malcolm updated members on 3 items:

- Ann Wilson from Tees Valley Combined Authority had been invited and was in attendance
- Middlesbrough have decided not to introduce a CAZ
- Secretary for State for Transport has agreed to build a second crossing across the Tees River

Ann provided the following links for members to access more information:

Link to Consultation Document on Tees Crossing

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/westdigital.arup.com/newteescrossing/panels/Brochure.pdf>

Tees Valley Virtual Document Room Link

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/westdigital.arup.com/newteescrossing/viewer.html>

6. National Items

A1: Brexit

Due to uncertain nature of fast-moving situation, Malcolm Bingham encouraged any members around the table affected by Brexit to sign up to the Brexit E-News Digest. Members were briefed on:

- Customs Procedures that have been issued
- Tariff Information that has been published by HMRC
- Operation Brock
- FTA's recent visit to Calais
- Also mentioned the proposed Customs Free Zone: The North East LEP and assorted stakeholders including Nissan Sunderland and various other large manufactures from the area have established a legal framework as to how they could create a (customs) free zone for the area around Teesport... FTA will up-date members when we get more information on this

A2: Road Infrastructure Information Provision

Members were asked for feedback on any operational delays and/or additional costs incurred due to poor roadworks information. Members commented that Night Road Works appeared to be set up and/or changed without informing anyone. Comments were also made about the lack of cohesion e.g. shutting both the A1 and M1 on the same night. Concerns were raised around ensuring diversionary routes are suitable for all freight traffic.

Members went on to discuss: lots of information not always required, focus needs to be on accuracy; Incident info vital and again needs to be accurate and time sensitive; Technology available (satellite

generated) that surely can give real time info?; Retrospective info can also be invaluable when dealing with failed deliveries/customers (FTA will continue to push for this to be explored); could roadworks be RAG rated dependent on potential impact to routes/delays?; Flexible restrictions dependent on whether works being "worked" on or not; With CAZ, if re-routed by roadworks via CZ, will there be exemptions?

A3: FORS Reform

Members were up-dated on the on-going FORS review and the proposed models from both TfL and FTA. They were then asked if they agreed with FTA's stance; and if there is anything else they would like FTA to focus on in on-going discussions about FORS

Members discussed their concerns that when initially introduced was free of charge. As soon as audit element required became a financial burden. A question was asked whether price would be changed if more audit providers became available?

One member said that the removal of the monopoly was as important as separating the commercial elements. Another asked that there was more transparency around what costs were for- several members stated that they knew they were not going to the auditors.

Several members also expressed concern around Audit Standards; it was felt there were too many inconsistent approaches and inconsistent levels of auditing. Another area of concern was that there didn't appear to be a National Standard. One member suggested that there should be one standard that "ticks the FORS box" – without having to do anything else. However, there was a concern that the requirements for FORS should not be raised.

A4: Earned Recognition

Members were asked to prioritise the additional benefits as listed in Policy Report:

- MOT testing: members agreed should be given higher priority, due to the operational financial benefits. It was felt that this showed that the operator was "trusted". Perhaps not an exemption, but different levels dependent on age or use for vehicle?
- Prohibition: Members did not feel very easy with interfering with this process
- OTC: Middle level priority
- Insurance: members felt this was a nice to have but were not convinced that Insurance companies would accept
- ER-Specific requirements: If get ER should be able to "tick" FORS box

Members were asked if these benefits would encourage uptake of ER. One member said that ER+ should mean that you don't have to worry about any other standards. Consensus was that any of these benefits could increase uptake of ER.

There was some unease around the suggestion that an ATF with ER could get a DVSA examiner ahead of an ATF without ER

A5: Brake Testing Vehicles in a Laden State

Members were briefed by James Firth and asked how operators and maintenance providers could be encouraged to conduct all brake tests at safety inspection, in laden state. It was made clear that it is NOT the intention of DVSA to make this mandatory. Feed-back from members was that there needed

to be consistency in approach. Some felt that it was confusing how some maintenance providers tested un-laden whilst others did laden test.

One member talked about the difficulties with walking floor trailers and Waste vehicles. A couple of members reluctantly agreed that the only way to encourage laden brake tests was to make them mandatory. It was made clear that this was not a request, but it was pointed out that you can only audit against technical DVSA guidance. It was also made clear that this was add a huge cost into any operation to complete all brake tests in a laden state.

Members then discussed brake test reports there was consensus that most people simply look for "pass or fail"

James Firth then briefed members on Brake testing of Tri-axle trailers. The difference was pointed out that the proposal from DVSA is to make the addition of a load mandatory within this area.

Members pointed out that in some cases there would be a lot of work to get some vehicles fully loaded with blocks. Another member pointed out that his retail loads on their way to customer's homes, was not an ideal set up for a test scenario. It was also pointed out that suitable facilities would need to be available. Finally, there was some discussion around technologies available to re-create the conditions of the vehicle being fully laden. It was suggested that this should be explored.

A6: Implementation of DCPC Amending Directive

Members were briefed of the FTA's proposals for amendments, including the 3 additional proposals of: 2-year (or more) course approval; including technical assistant, as well as mechanic; and Driver Qualification Card position (DQC). They were then updated on DVSA's clarifications on Work-Based learning and E-Learning

Members were then asked if they would welcome the opportunity to conduct DCPC in work-based learning environment and if so what safeguards they would like to see in place. A member mentioned that if running In-house course, this was not an economic way to complete training. Another member had tried this approach but found they could not process enough drivers, quickly enough to keep up with deadlines. New starter inductions if JAUPT approved was agreed that this was the only element relevant to this type of training. Most members agreed that the best safeguard was to use an external trainer who was accredited to deliver this type of training.

Members were then asked if they would like to see e-learning included as an acceptable delivery method for DCPC; and whether distance-based learning would be helpful. Members agreed that this was not always a suitable vehicle for training due to the demographic of a "typical" driver. Concerns were also raised about ensuring the "message" for the training got through. Regards distance based learning the biggest obstacle was agreed to be reliability of connectivity

Finally regards reliable user identification: It was suggested that perhaps web-cams could be used. Members agreed that only safeguards would be a knowledge-based test at the end of training

A7: Ban on Tyres Aged 10 Years or Older

Members were briefed on expected Government proposal and asked would they support a ban on fitting tyres 10 years or older. Most members agreed this would be specialist vehicles in most instances. Concern raised over any vehicle that was "standing" for any length of time, as would suffer from soft spots.

When asked on any specific scenarios where this could present an issue, the following were mentioned: Modular trailers for abnormal loads, that are used infrequently. Tend to carry phenomenal weight but so many tyres used.

A8: Recording Drivers Hours in Multi-Manning Operations

Members were briefed on the operational challenges discovered by the waste sector and asked if they could see any other sector being affected. One member explained their set up with a "driver's mate", not employed as a driver but qualified as a driver. Brewery industry was also mentioned with draymen. Consensus was that it wasn't helpful that default of slot 2 was POA.

AOB

Members were made aware by James Firth of Tri-Annual review of Traffic Commissioners and the potential scenario where Guidance and Directions would be removed; and potential of costs being imposed by TC's. Members will be briefed when James has more detail

Members were informed of the closure of FTA's Leeds office

Mags Simpson asked if any members would be willing to talk to the media, as per PR teams request. Any interested members should email Mags: msimpson@fta.co.uk

The chairman thanked Mike Watson for his support of Freight Council and wished him well for the future.

Dates of next meetings

The next meeting of the North East Freight Council will be held at the Ramside Hall Hotel commencing with lunch at 1200 on **Tuesday 18th June 2019** (Chairman Jeff Ritchie will be on holiday)

Present:

Jeff Ritchie – A Share
Tom Reay – Royal Mail
Simon Allitt – AB Agri
Janice Dawson – Asda
Alex Turner – Aldi
Jon-Paul Younger – Port of Tyne
Paul Russell – VLS
Kate Wilson – Northumbrian Water Group
Corinne Murphy – CLM Fleet Ltd
Mick Watson – Asda
Chris McKenzie – JR Holland
Ann Wilson – Tees Valley Combined Authority
Chris Pickles – Nestle
Nikki Borthwick – Northumbrian Water Group
Alison Grimes – Northern Powergrid
John Thirling – Stockton Council
Chris Prince – Durham County Council

In Attendance from FTA:

Mags Simpson; Malcolm Bingham; James Firth; Andy Jones; Jim Mower

Apologies: