

East of England Freight Council minutes

Thursday 18 May 2023

09:30 – 13:00

Bedford Lodge Hotel, Bury Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7BX

INTRODUCTION

- The meeting was chaired by John Burbridge from Turners (Soham) Ltd.
- The minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- Members were reminded by the Secretary about the competition law compliance guidance and referred members to the full details on page 5 of the Policy Report.

Report back from the Modal Councils

- Members received a report back from Road, Rail, Air, Water and Shippers Councils.

Report back from the Working Groups

- Members received a report back from the Warehouse, Van Policy, Environment Working Groups and Engineering Forum.
- Members commented that there was no mention of the Skills Working Group. They also agreed that Logistics UK must call for technicians to remain on the Shortage Occupation List.

Secretary's Report

- Members were updated on other issues not on the main agenda including: Driver CPC Review; Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness; Direct Vision Standard; MOT Extension.

AGENDA ITEMS

A1 'Last Mile' Urban Logistics

- Ellis Shelton introduced and gave an overview of the 'Last Mile' paper. Ellis stated that Logistics UK are in the early stages of developing their position on issues relating to the decarbonisation of urban logistics.
- Members shared examples of innovative solutions implemented already. Examples included: solar panels for refrigeration vehicles; using electric turbo shunters and forklifts; the use of HVO fuel.
- Members agreed that there is a strong appetite for new technologies and fuels. However, there was an aligned uncertainty over the correct one to use and the unsustainable costs. This has resulted in a hesitancy to be an early adopter.
- There is criticism that there is not a joined-up strategy to cities and that Logistics UK should prioritise establishing such a model so that operators are held to the same standards and goals. As well, energy infrastructure should be rolled-out by and provided by government, rather than being industry led.

EXTERNAL PRESENTATION

- Lynne Miles, Director of City Access for the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), introduced the role of the GCP and provided an update on the city's proposals that were consulted on, and that Logistics UK responded to.

- The plans presuppose that Cambridge anticipates major economic and population expansion, which will be difficult given the city's congested streets and surrounding open space. Therefore, the city is considering how to promote growth in a sustainable manner.
- Members stressed that, because logistics supplied a necessary function, it should be regarded differently from motorists and wondered if the effects on other businesses and customers had been taken into account. Members questioned if any modelling had been done on the consequences of decreasing HGVs on the city and the likelihood that logistics providers wouldn't continue to service the city, since it would be too difficult for them to transfer the cost on to the client.
- The GCP agreed that they would attend the next Freight Council to take further feedback.

A2 MOT Testing for Earned Recognition (ER) Operators

- Ellis summarised the agenda item, presenting an overview of potential proposals to introduce new MOT testing options for ER operators.
- Members had differing opinions. The existence of two distinct testing regimens was criticised as being unfair or inappropriate by the majority of the Council. In opposition to this, a minority of the Council remarked that receiving Earned Recognition is an incentive, but that at present, this motivation is not strong enough.
- Members agreed that the priority for DVSA should be improving its service provisions. Examples included: improved MOTs; improved enforcement on the road. However, members agreed that the DVSA is hampered by a shortage of technicians.
- When asked about what would increase ER membership, members agreed there is insufficient proof to prove that ER is functioning and instead, they would like to see an improvement in DVSA's operational capacity, rather than an increase in ER.

A3 Compliance Standard for Lighter Trailers

- In response to interest on the topic from an All-Party Parliamentary Group, Ellis provided an outline of the document, which intended to develop Logistics UK's position on requirements for lighter trailer maintenance.
- Members fed back that lots of operators that run trailers don't maintain them, and the sector would therefore benefit from them being checked. Or, DVSA improving enforcement. As well, there isn't the capacity to deliver MOTs on existing vehicles, so questioned how testing could be expanded to trailers.
- Members would want to examine the findings of an impact assessment on the capacity of the testing network and which workshops were able to MOT trailers before approving the implementation of MOT testing for trailers. Additionally, they would want to know the test's content, such as if a braking test would be included.

A4 Smart Motorways

- Ellis offered an outline of the document, which intended to update Logistics UK's position on smart highways in light of recent pronouncements.
- Members concurred that the public needs greater information through the media other than TV commercials – social media platforms used by those of all ages were suggested as another outlet. As well, it was agreed that more care should be taken to ensure that the matrix signals are accurate because most individuals don't believe them and disregard the information.

A5 Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

- Ellis provided members with an update on the status of the Bill, which is designed to address EU-derived laws that have remained on UK statute books after Brexit. Anything now in effect that is not expressly kept or updated will expire on December 31, 2023. Though there is a supposition that this will be changed, a significantly lower number of legislation will be promptly repealed.
- Members were questioned on any laws they would want to see eliminated as well as potential areas for improvement. The Road Transport (Working Time) Directive has received criticism for being unduly bureaucratic, confusing, and interfering with drivers' ability to make a living. But there was no general

agreement among the members. In order to ease trade frictions after Brexit, there was a general focus on the need for legislation and regulations to be simplified and approached with flexibility.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Attendance was confirmed for UK Road Council on 8 June.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Thursday 5 October, 09:30 – 13:00 at the Bedford Lodge Hotel, Bury Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7BX

ATTENDEES

Chairman

John Burbridge Turners (Soham) Ltd

Members

Richard Pelly	Pellys Transportation and Regulatory Services Limited
Karen Fox	EMR Ltd
Ian McCann	Norfolk Count Council
Tim Ridyard	Ashtons Legal LLP
Steve Williams	Truck (UK) Limited
Kelly White	Truck (UK) Limited
Paul Hutchings	Luton Council
Phil Clifford	Phil Clifford Consultancy
Wayne Searby	MRCT Ltd
David Brown	MRCT Ltd
Chris Francis	Turners (Soham) Ltd
Neil Woods	DS Smith Packaging Ltd
Alan Collier	Macintyre Transport
Jerry Ward	JLP
Paul Tomkinson	Kingscote Plant
Warren Diduca	MSC Mediterranean Shipping Co
Kevin Barcroft	CMS Supatrak
Tom West	Macintyre Transport Ltd
Joe Addison	Glazewing Ltd
Derek Daly	Goldstar Mansport Ltd
Gary Austin	Maritime Transport Ltd

Guests

Lynne Miles	Greater Cambridge Partnership
John Parrott	Greater Cambridge Partnership

Staff

Ben Garratt	Deputy Director – Public Affairs
Ellis Shelton	Policy Advisor