

Public Affairs Working Group minutes

Thursday 11 July 2024
14.00 – 16:00
20 Victoria Street, Westminster, London, SW1H 0NB

INTRODUCTION

- The meeting was chaired by Ben Garratt, Deputy Director – Public Affairs, Logistics UK
- Roundtable introductions were made.
- Minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- Members were reminded about competition law compliance rules.

LOGISTICS UK ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- Members were updated on Logistics UK's public affairs activity since the last meeting in February. This included ten policy wins. Highlights included CMA's decision to decide against a UK block exemption from CBER, the implementation of VAT relief on charitable donations, and the government's adoption of Logistics UK's asks for EES.
- The group was briefed on Logistics UK's select correspondence of which there were 70. Highlights included writing Michael Gove, Mark Harper and Matthew Pennycook about planning reform and writing to all party leaders alongside other logistics trade associations CEOs.
- On parliamentary engagement, the group were notified that 15 parliamentary questions had been asked since 8 February. This included Viscount Waverley tabling Written Questions about regulatory barriers to electric vans on 16 May. Ben Garratt gave oral evidence to the Transport Committee on the use of data in logistics on 13 March. Head of Trade and Devolved Policy, Nichola Mallon gave oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament on the Windsor Framework, and Scotland – NI movements, and the wider UK EU TCA review on 2 May.

ESTIMATING FUTURE ENERGY DEMAND FOR LOGISTICS

- Members were informed that this initiative, encapsulated within the Freight Energy Forum Workstream 1: Analyse Future Energy Demand, recognises the criticality of transitioning to electric energy sources to ensure the sector's sustainability and resilience.
- On methodology, Logistics UK is looking at two approaches. A top-down approach, using publicly available data, and a bottom-up approach, using more accurate data from members. Agreed with the Future Energy Forum, the starting point of the project will be to look at road transport, before building in data from other transport modes.
- Logistics UK is meeting with representatives from each freight sector to agree assumptions. Conversations started with the maritime sector (specifically with the ports) and the aviation sector before the 5th Future Energy Forum meeting took place on 15 May.

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- Over the summer, Logistics UK will be gathering data from members to contribute to the final report, which we aim to publish around October/November 2024. All data will be anonymised within the template and Logistics UK ensures no company details are used.
- The lead contact for this project is Deputy Director – Policy, [Michelle Gardner](#).

LOGISTICS UK'S LOGISTICS NETWORK MAP

- The last government's Future of Freight Plan (June 2022) committed to working with the logistics sector to identify a National Freight Network (NFN) and lay the groundwork for more comprehensive and joined up infrastructure planning, focused on linking the UK's key road, rail, water and air connections and logistics hubs, reducing congestion and carbon emissions, boosting trade, and adding resilience to the overall logistics system and economy. This has not yet happened, so Logistics UK is creating a 'UK Logistics Network Map' with a visualisation of the UK's logistics network in order to create a simple overview of significant freight flows in the UK.
- To ensure that the whole of the UK is covered, maps will be produced for English sub-national geographies, as well as each of the devolved nations. These will highlight freight flows that operate exclusively within those regions or nations, as well as those which pass through, highlighting the area's position as part of a much larger UK-wide network.
- The map will be launched at an event in Parliament on 12 November. More details to follow.

GUEST SPEAKER: ALEX DAVIES, DIRECTOR AT HIGGINSON STRATEGY, FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

- Alex introduced himself to the group and gave a brief overview of his political career. He was formerly Chief of Staff to the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir Vince Cable, between 2017 and 2019. He is now Director of Higginson Strategy.
- Alex gave his views on why the Liberal Democrats had done so well at the general election which a much closer proportion to the number of votes to the number of seats gained.
- Alex highlighted Lib Dem policies including education, creating a mixed and modern economy, and their current stance on the EU. He talked about the party's position on political reform, including calls for proportional representation in the House of Commons and support for an elected second chamber.
- Following the general election, the Lib Dems have considerably increased their number of MPs to 72. He advised that the best way to engage with all MPs, but particularly with Lib Dem MPs, is to appeal to a constituency interest, such as jobs in their local area. In due course, the party will have a full Shadow Cabinet and an expanded base of advisers to those MPs.
- The Lib Dems expect to secure three select committee chair positions.
- Alex stressed that there are 80 Lib Dem peers who work hard, largely without office support. Approached in the right way, with the right asks, such as well thought through draft amendments to legislation with robust evidence and briefing behind them, they are very willing to test policy areas in the Lords, and to set up meetings with ministers. Though the 72 MPs will get the attention, much of the legislative and policy work will be at the other end of the building.

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- Alex shared a briefing which was circulated to members following the meeting. His contact details are:
 - alexdavies@higginsonstrategy.com
 - 07971 883996
 - www.linkedin.com/in/alex-davies/

GENERAL ELECTION REVIEW

- Logistics UK gave an assessment of the changes to Parliament following the general election. The new government has a very large majority to deliver “national renewal”. Of the five government missions, three are very relevant for the logistics sector: kickstart growth, clean energy superpower and break down barriers to opportunity. 335 of 650 MPs have not been an MP before, so some significant opportunities for engagement with new MPs.
- The government has set out new policy intentions for critical infrastructure in the coming months, ahead of updating relevant National Policy Statements within the next 12 months and legislate to update at least every five years. As a result, Secretaries of State for Transport and Energy Security and Net Zero have been asked to prioritise decisions on infrastructure projects “that have been sitting unresolved for far too long.”
- On Transport, Lillian Greenwood is now the Future of Roads Minister, with her portfolio covering strategic roads, local roads, haulage and the future of freight, Kent traffic, EES and borders, and road vehicle decarbonisation. Lord Hendy has been appointed as Rail Minister; Simon Lightwood as Local Transport Minister; and Mike Kane is Minister for Aviation and Maritime.
- Logistics UK has written to Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, both directly as Logistics UK, and also as part of a coalition of twelve logistics trade associations. Our letter included our priorities for the first 100 days of the new UK government. We have sent letters to all relevant ministers and have emailed all MPs, new and re-elected, highlighting our priorities. For relevant MPs, we will flag that they represent constituencies with large numbers of logistics roles.
- Members suggested that Logistics UK identifies new MPs with a background in logistics and warehousing.

PLANS FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2024

- Ben and Natalie confirmed to the group that Logistics UK will have fringe panel events at both Conservative and Labour party conferences – sponsored by DHL and SEGRO.
- There will be Logistics and Trade receptions at Conservative and Labour conferences, hosted by Heathrow in their lounges.

MEETING DATES FOR 2024

- The final meeting of the year will be on Thursday 7 November.
- All meetings will be held from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at 20 Victoria Street.

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- Diary placeholders have been emailed to the group.

ATTENDEES

Chair

Ben Garratt

Deputy Director – Public Affairs, Logistics UK

Members

Helen Barker

Evri

Sarah Bell

UPS

Helen Gray

DP World

Rob Gwynn

Asset Alliance Group

Becca Hammond

Royal Mail

Fionnuala Horrocks-Burns

DHL

Anjali Jashani

Heathrow Airport

Carita Ogden

Amazon

Amy Swash

UKMPG

Matthew Wright

Freightliner Group

Guest

Alex Davies

Higginson Strategy

Staff

Kevin Green

Director of Policy and Communications

Michelle Gardner

Deputy Director – Policy

Katia Yakovleva

Deputy Director – Events

Natalie Chapman

Head of Public Affairs

Ellis Shelton

Senior Policy Advisor