

Road Council Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 09 November 2023 at One Birdcage Walk

ROAD/23/22 Chair's Welcome

Apologies were received and noted.

ROAD/23/23 Meeting conduct and competition law compliance

Council was directed to the relevant page in the Policy Report.

ROAD/23/24 Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 08 June were adopted.

A call for members to join a working group on the Traffic Commissioner Function Review received 2 volunteers. It is therefore proposed to pause further work at this time until more substantive progress is made within the DfT.

Guest Speaker Nick Harris – CEO – National Highways

The Council received a presentation from Nick Harris, the CEO of National Highways who gave an overview on their work towards decarbonisation and Net Zero; infrastructure investment (incl. the Lower Thames Crossing); RIS 3; and post HS2 cancellation road projects.

NH has a 2030 goal for net zero on its own emissions, with maintenance and construction having a 2040 goal, and gave some illustrative examples of what is happening.

NH has similar concerns for grid management for roll-out of EVs and is still looking at future technologies, such as catenary systems on road network, and hydrogen.

Currently 60% of funding is directed to maintenance with RIS 3 moving to a 70/30 split. The heavier weight of BEVs is a known factor and must be taken into consideration.

The 3rd anniversary report of Smart Motorways was expected soon after this meeting.

Guest Speaker Sian Gibson – DfT – DVLA Review

The Council received a report from the DfT which is undertaking a review into DVLA's governance, efficiency, efficacy, and accountability.

The Review covers:

1. Digital and data transformation
2. Governance: DVLA Board and DfT sponsorship
3. Workforce
4. Overall efficiency including financial management
5. Drivers' medical
6. Strategy, performance and customer experience
7. Income streams

Members were able to offer their own examples and experiences of interactions with DVLA and these covered:

- Section 88 needs a complete review.
- Operators need to be able to check their drivers' DCPC records directly.
- Card issuing delays post qualification.
- Processing delays with licence applications – some seeing staff move on before licence has been issued.
- No real issues with digital tachograph issuing.
- E-Driving licence is no longer in pipeline for change.
- Code 95 and DQC merger.

Members will questions and comments were invited to direct them to dvla.reviewteam@dft.gov.uk

ROAD/23/25 Secretary's Report and Road Regulation policy

Members received updates on Longer semi-trailers where members asked about new requirements for operation, progress on the Direct Vision Standard, and the volumetric cement mixer consultation.

Members then discussed the road regulation policy options, following discussion at Regional Councils. Subjects included:

- The Road User Charge and investment in the road network
- DCPC needed a decision taking by DfT
- ADI instructors can assess in a Cat B. vehicle and this needed to change
- Earned Recognition needed a review

ROAD/23/26 Member discussion on Bridge Strikes

Following a request from the Chair, members held a discussion on the continuing occurrence of bridge strikes and what more industry could do to reduce the number.

The discussion touched upon possible technological solutions, such as forward-facing AI cameras to detect road signs, but many members were keen to highlight cognitive overload to drivers from an ever-increasing number of different technologies in the vehicle cab.

There was agreement that imperial measurements should be removed from signage and only metric figures used.

Suitable training of drivers was also agreed as being key to any solution to this issue.

ROAD/23/27 Statutory role for Fleet Engineers

- 1) Logistics UK's Engineering Forum to identify a Fleet Engineer to Vehicle / Trailer ratio – that can be used for future discussions.
Completed, with an Excel document outlining all areas and indicative timings. However, the engineering forum members thought the parameters were too varied to give confidence and it should have to be for each business unit to decide.
- 2) To engage with other trade associations on the role/functions of a Fleet Engineer and to seek agreement to pursuing action No 3, 4 & 5 collectively.
Complete, RHA and CPT are engaged.
- 3) To engage with DfT
This was discussed at the DfT Road-safety Compliance Forum on 25 January 2024. DfT formally noted these asks.
 - a) A new future TM/Fleet Engineer role for future autonomous operations.
 - b) New TM CPC module for maintenance evaluations.
- 4) To engage with the Senior Traffic Commissioner:
A letter was drafted by Logistics UK and agreed with both RHA and CPT, this was sent to the Richard Turfitt (STC) on 26 January 2024.
 - a) Raising the profile of operators undertaking "Key Duties" (of a Fleet Engineer) as part of their maintenance regime.

- b) To highlighted those "Key Duties" in any future correspondence (Statutory Documents, etc).
- 5) To engage with DVSA:
 - Discussions started with DVSA on 12 January 2024 and raised at the DfT Road-safety Compliance Forum on 25 January 2024.
 - a) The development of a guidance for maintenance evaluation (aligned to the duties of a Fleet Engineer).
 - b) Revising their MIVR to align with a).

ROAD/23/20 Any Other Business

- Members expressed thanks to Phil Lloyd on his work on obtaining a derogation for all vehicles when retrofitted.

ROAD/23/21 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 08 February 2024 at One Great George Street.

Attendees

James Adcroft (Chair)	Tesco
Norman Harding	London Borough of Hackney
Carl Hughes	Hughes Driver Training
Nick Graham	Stobart
Kevin Barcroft	CMS Supatrak
John Walter	Vanguard Retail
Colin James	DPD
Andrew Woolfall	Backhouse Jones
Allison Kemp	A.I.M. Commercial Services Ltd.
Jerry Ward	John Lewis Partnership
David Owen	Royal Mail
Bob Sands	Prompt Training
David Brown	MRCT
Karl Wilshaw	Travis Perkins
Mark Smith	Aldi Stores Ltd.
Darren Wilson	DPD
Simon Allitt	AB Agri Ltd.
Paul Needle	Smith & Sons Ltd.
Chris Paul	EH Smith
Ian Jarman	Owens Group
Justin Laney	John Lewis Partnership
Steve Heywood	Serco
Nick Day	ADM Milling
Jim Valentine	The British Shop
Ben Hodgson	DHL
John Thomas	Sellafield Ltd.

Logistics UK staff

Chris Yarsley

David Wells

Phil Roe

Michelle Gardner

Phil Lloyd

Secretary

Chief Executive

President

Deputy Director - Policy

Head of Policy – Engineering