**Introduction**

The Chair opened up the meeting and welcomed everyone. The minutes of last meeting were approved by members. Attendees were reminded of the need to comply with competition law at all times.

**Secretary’s report and key national updates.**

Council Secretary, Josh Fenton (JF) gave an update on issues contained in pages 8-10 and pages 16-18 in the Policy Report. Issues covered included: decisions taken by Road Council, an update on Rail Council, ongoing efforts to improve Freight Councils and member engagement, a live DFT consultation on barriers to the uptake of zero emission vehicles, Logistics UK’s public affairs activity (page 4 of the Policy Report), publication of Logistics UK’s infrastructure network map, an update on the work of all of Logistics UK’s modal councils and Engineering Forums scheduled in 2025.

Member comments there would be more of an uptake if they did follow 3.5t. Regarding 4.25 and that they won’t look at EV procurement until regime is same as 3.5t. Question on towing weight, as there might be an operational barrier but already settled in rules to be 2.75t. Road safety questions on young drivers and training. Members think there needs to be continuous training or refresher training. Range will be key for uptake as it could be limited when a van and trailer is fully loaded.

**Action:** Members to share further feedback on improvements on Council meetings to JF.

**Action:** Link to the DFT consultation to be provided in the minutes for members to directly respond to. Please find the link here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/zero-emission-vans-regulatory-flexibility/zero-emission-vans-regulatory-flexibility>

JF gave an overview of the situation at Holyhead Port and Logistics UK’s engagement with governments on the immediate response, contingency planning and a resilience action plan for individual ports and the port network.

**Guest Speaker – Western Gateway and Peninsula Transport (Subnational Transport Bodies)**

Members heard from Nisha Devani and Ewan Wilson from Peninsula Transport STB as well as James White from Western Gateway STB. They jointly work together as STBs on freight and logistics projects. Members heard about what the role of Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) is, including covering what they do, capabilities etc. All information and further reading can be found within the slide deck.

Members were asked about backloading pilot scheme. Members explained whilst it is a good idea in principle, operationally it can be challenging, and this is why there might not be a significant uptake. Backloading pilot – RD15. Comments from members on terminology of ‘backloads’ which have a negative connotation, e.g. low rates, late payments. Pilot has allowed SMEs to access the trial via granting of licences. Question from member on how data on CO2 emissions is calculated.

ALFFI – Alternative Fuels for Freight Infrastructure tool. Developed by Midlands Connect. Ask of members for views on where sites should be, which requirements would be needed. Lack of fast charging in north Devon that prevents use of EVs and requires diesel vehicles. Members discussed the future energy demands, with one member commenting that up to 3.5t will be solid state battery electric, above that is likely to be hydrogen. Members discuss which technology will be used in near to mid future. Solid state battery; hydrogen combustion; small scale nuclear to produce green hydrogen all mentioned.

Other challenges – parking facilities and lack thereof; driver shortages. One intervention is on Bridge Strikes which continues to be a serious problem.

**Regional items** *(pages 22 in the Policy Report).*

**Bath and North East Somerset Council – Speed limit changes**

JF made members aware that Bath and North East Somerset Council have been proposing to make an order under provisions contained in the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, the effect of which will be that it is prohibited to drive a motor vehicle at a speed exceeding 20miles per hour on the length of roads. The roads included are Green Park Road, Midland Bridge Road, Charles Street, St Paul’s Place, Monmouth Place and Mulberry Park. Rather than a blanket or consistent approach, JF shared that roads and schemes appear to be changing on a case-by-case basis, and therefore he urged members to make their drivers vigilant when driving through Bath.

**A1 - Budgets and Comprehensive Spending Review** (*page 11 of Policy Report)*

Following a challenging UK Budget for businesses in October 2024, a Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) is expected in summer 2025 which will outline the UK government’s spending plans for at least three years and set capital budgets for the next five years. JF asked members to provide feedback on how the UK Budget has affected their business and what their priorities are for the CSR to help inform Logistics UK’s response and lobbying work.

*Questions put to members:*

1. *What announcements in the UK did members welcome and what are the biggest concerns?*

Members welcome fuel duty freeze. Logistics UK has estimated the NIC increase will cost the logistics sector £1.7 billion, based on those working in logistics businesses and in logistics roles in non-logistics businesses. Members feel like the £1.7b could be passed on to customers where possible, adding to inflation. Members also feel like there will be wage implications because of the budget. Contractual conditions will dictate if cost increases can be passed on to customers.

1. *Looking ahead to the Comprehensive Spending Review:*
	1. *What priority asks should Logistics UK consider including in its submission to the UK government?*

Inheritance tax obligations for family businesses; fuel duty; road tax; HVO drop in fuel which came close to diesel rates but has spread again recently; driverless vehicles; engineering skills and in general apprenticeships.

* 1. *Are there any areas where government departments or agencies could find savings through efficiencies or improvements in services?*

Members did not provide feedback to this question.

**A2 - Speed limits and national speed review** (*pages 12-13 in the Policy Report).*

Given the renewed focus, in recent years, by devolved administrations and local authorities across the UK on the issue of speed limits for safety and emission reasons, JF asked members to share their experiences in relation to reduced limits and/or increased enforcement.

*Questions put to members:*

1. *Have members experienced any changes to speed limits in their area recently? What has been the impact of these?*

It is causing operational issues. Need for greater justification when schemes are brought in, and not simply imposed on a geographical region. Member comments that collision avoidance technology will deliver the road safety, rather than slowing down vehicles. Differing speed limits in geographical areas can be an additional distraction to drivers. Member has experienced issues in Wales in the last 6-12 months. Member experienced issues on a route with mostly average speed cameras, however it also has one normal speed camera, which has caught their drivers.

1. *Have members experienced any increased speed limit enforcement activity?*

Members have experienced increased enforcement activity in Wales.

1. *Are members supportive of the proposed national speed limit changes in Scotland?*
	1. What would be the benefits of this change?

Members think it is a good thing as it aligns with rest of GB.

* 1. Would there be any downsides?

Downside could be challenges in adverse weather and increases in HGV speeds.

**Road regulation issues** (*pages 14-15 of the Policy Report).*

**A3 - Graduated driving licence** – Chris Yarsley (CY) asked members for their views ahead of any review/potential call for evidence. CY stressed that this is not being introduced as a change in policy by government. Logistics UK is taking the opportunity of this round of Freight Councils to hear members views as a pre-emptive step in case government does decide to look at this.

*Questions put to members:*

1. What impact would the possible restrictions have on operations if newly qualified drivers faced restrictions on what they could do?

If restrictions are placed on newly qualified drivers, when would they learn? It’s important to manage the risk. Members are not keen on GDL and what the implications could be. For example, this could prove even more difficult for shift work. Members believe that Cat C licences should be exempted from any GDL restrictions.

1. *Do members believe that newly qualified HGV drivers pose a greater risk to road safety?*

Members say newly qualified HGV drivers can be some of the safest drivers on the roads with the right training and support.

**A4 - Domestic drivers hours** – CY again emphasised that this item has been tabled to gather members view in case there may be a future review/call for evidence. There is no change to domestic drivers hours planned at this time.

*Questions put to members:*

1. *Would members support a definition of a fixed calendar day for ‘working day’?*

Members were divided on the issue. Fixed day vs 24hr period – could be problematic for shifts/split shifts/overnights. Would cause confusion with drivers whose day starts at 7am.

1. *Is the current definition of ‘duty’ sufficient? If not, what would members prefer to see?*

Duty and rest – use the working time rest definition, e.g. 13hrs of rest with a minimum of 9hrs. A defined time would help.

1. *Would members prefer to see a more precise definition of ‘adequate rest’? If so, what?*

Members say that drivers must have a minimum of 9 hours rest. A defined time would help. Clear definitions would prevent the stretch of definition. Without this it could be damaging road safety.

1. *What demonstrable benefits would members gain if domestic hours recording was permitted via an app?*

App based recording is much more accurate recording. This is to be used instead of a logbook. App should record in real time. Members think the app would be a good thing for some operations. CY explains that if this were to come in, it would have to go through a call for evidence.

**AOB**

CY – offered members the opportunity to contribute to work on the London lorry control scheme. If this is of interest, members are encouraged to speak with CY cyarsley@logistics.org.uk.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 21 May 2025**

10:00 – 13:00 Freight Council

13:30 – 15:00 MAC Briefing

**Attendees:**

Peter Woodhouse (Chair) – Stone King LLP

Lee Horrocks – Truronian Coaches

Nathan Carr – Hills Waste Solutions Ltd.

Louis Barnes – YTL Group

John Walsh – Smith News

John Phelps – Grundon Waste Management Ltd

Adam Westaway – Core Highways

David Roberts – M Group Services Plant & Fleet Solutions Ltd

Dan Saunders – Travis Perkins PLC

Martin Neal – Barrettine Products Ltd

Mark Davis – Ford Fuels Ltd

Martin Caddick – Bradfords Building Supplies Ltd

Mark Forster – Biffa Waste Services Ltd

Dave Willis – Kier Highway Solutions

Mark Hope – AB AGRI Ltd

Lois Robinson – Dave Robbins Transport Consultants

Dave Robbins – Dave Robbins Transport Consultants

Josh Fenton – (Secretary) Logistics UK

Chris Yarsley – Logistics UK

Guest Speakers

Nisha Devani – Peninsula Transport STB

James White – Western Gateway STB

Ewan Wilson – Peninsula Transport STB