

South East Freight Council minutes

26 January 2023

09:30 – 13:00

Salomons Estate, Broomhill Rd, Tunbridge Wells TN3 0TG

INTRODUCTION

- The meeting was chaired by Paul Goss from Thames Water.
- 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.
- Members were advised that Josh Fenton will be taking over as secretary of South East Freight Council from the May meeting.

Report back from modal councils

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

Secretary's report

- Members were updated on other issues not on the main agenda including: Logistics UK's submission to the Treasury ahead of the Budget in March; the Senior Traffic Commissioner's clarification around the specifying of vehicles on VOL; the review of the Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness; Direct Vision Standard (DVS) phase 2; the Clandestine Entrant Civil Penalty Scheme; and the Chief Medical Officer's report on air pollution.
- On the Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness, it was commented that there are still issues. Whilst DVSA has accepted some things, they have added in new issues. The Midlands Engineering Forum was meeting on the same day as South East Freight Council and they would be reviewing the latest version. DVSA is seeking to tighten some of the language and aiming more towards 'musts' rather than 'mays'.

REGIONAL ITEMS

- Members were updated on Transport for the South East's Battery Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

AGENDA ITEMS

A1 Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations

- Logistics UK sought members' views on the Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations 2005, which implement European Directive 2002/15/EC, and limit the total amount of work (driving and other work) that can be carried out by drivers in-scope of the retained EU drivers' hours rules. This piece of legislation is specific to mobile workers who were excluded from the main horizontal Working Time Directive.
- Members commented that the rest breaks under Working Time are poorly enforced, particularly by the Police. However, DVSA are stricter on Working Time regulations. Those where driving is not the main element of their job often forget the Working Time regulations, along with those undertaking multi-drop deliveries.
- It was commented that the aim of Working Time regulations was to reduce the working week, but it doesn't seem to have been achieved.

- Members said that they continue to support Logistics UK's existing policy of incorporating Working Time rules into the drivers' hours rules to aid simplification. But it is important that a definition of night working is retained. However, this could pose a challenge for international drivers.

EXTERNAL PRESENTATION

- Andrew Kidd, Outcomes Director, Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) updated members on progress with the scheme and the next stage in the DCO (Development Consent Order) process.
- The costs of the scheme have increased, but so has the design and ambition - it is now a three-lane scheme rather than just two lanes as originally proposed.
- Members asked if the proposed road will be wide enough. It was originally planned to be two lanes but has been increased to three. The challenge is how far into the future you can look. LTC's modelling shows it will keep this part of the network working for 30+ years.
- The removal of driver facilities from the project was raised.
- Charges are currently proposed to match those at the Dartford Crossing.
- There will be hydrogen fuelling for construction. But LTC is working with the Thames Estuary Growth.
- A copy of Andrew's presentation was circulated to members after the meeting.

A2 Trailer registration

- There is no mandatory requirement for trailers used solely within the UK to be registered. However, the subject of trailer registration has been mooted a number of times recently and Logistics UK sought members' views on the matter.
- There was not a big appetite for trailer registration and member questioned if there is a significant issue that needs to be solved. Trailers are recognised on MOT data, even if they are not registered. They questioned if this may lead to a levy for trailers.
- Members said that the biggest challenges with trailers arise from those which are used infrequently. One member reported that they have locked down all their spare trailers with wheel locks to avoid the aggravation from accidental use. They MOT them all and just do the necessary checks when they need to use them.

A3 Decarbonisation – Transitional Technologies

- As the third topic for the net zero standing agenda item at Freight Councils, Logistics UK sought feedback on transitional fuels and technologies that can support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) on the journey to net zero by 2050.
- Gas - higher upfront cost and some operational issues as they run hotter. The government has put subsidies forward for infrastructure which has helped. One of the biggest costs is the gas plant. Range is not an issue and fuel economy is a fraction better than diesel. However, torque is a bit less than diesel. Drivers like them as they are quieter. Better on long runs.
- HVO - The CPA is doing survey work with their mobile crane members on HVO since the red diesel rebate was removed. The HVO rebate was also removed at the same time, and the price has gone up. Members said that there are some questions about whether HVO is sustainably resourced. No major warranty concerns have been reported with construction equipment.

A4 Transport Committee Inquiry into Strategic Road Investment in England

- The House of Commons Transport Committee is seeking evidence as to how well Government/National Highways has managed strategic road investment under RIS2 and what the priorities should be for future investment. Members' views were sought to shape Logistics UK's response to the call for evidence.
- Members commented that they want to see lorry parking provide in all new major road projects.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Attendance was confirmed for UK Road Council on 9 February.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Thursday 25 May 2023 09:30 – 13:00 (finishing with lunch) at Salomons Estate, Broomhill Rd, Tunbridge Wells
- October 2023 (date TBC) at Salomons Estate, Broomhill Rd, Tunbridge Wells

ATTENDEES

Chairman

Paul Goss Thames Water

Members

Chris Cassley	Construction Plant Hire Association
Daren Chandler	Brakes
Ronnie Helen	Gravesend Council
Ian Humphrey	Gravesend Council
Ian Laughlin	Calor Gas Ltd
Jevon Moulton	Solstor UK Ltd
Luke Parsons	KCS
Peter Pearce	ADM Milling Ltd
Danny Rollins	BOC Ltd
Martin Taylor	Clancy
Jerry Ward	John Lewis Partnership
Barrie Wilson	Fleet Check

Guests

Andrew Kidd National Highways

Staff

Natalie Chapman	Head of Public Affairs
Denise Beedell	Senior Policy Manager
Dom Fawls	Key Account Manager
Alex Clifton	Membership Relations Manager
Hannah Tarin	HR Business Partner