* **Introduction**

Council Chair, Ian Jarman, opened the meeting, welcomed members and the Traffic Commissioner, Victoria Davies (VD), and reminded members of the need to adhere to competition law at all times. Simon Griffin proposed the minutes of the previous council meeting, and they were seconded by Peter Murphy.

* **Secretary’s Report**

Josh Fenton (JF) gave an overview of the secretary’s report including Road Council, other Logistics UK councils and working groups.

* **External Presentation – Victoria Davies, Traffic Commissioner, Wales.**

*Staffing*

VD set out staffing changes to her team and the wider Traffic Commissioner Team across GB. There is no TC for Scotland at the moment, but a recruitment campaign is underway. While the TC for Wales, VD can be deployed in other Traffic areas and was recently involved in Bristol and the West Midlands. There are two TC offices in Wales. A recent restructure of the office of TC means there are no Welsh speaking staff in Wales. VD expressed concerns to DFT and the Welsh government and there is a plan for four Welsh speaking staff to be recruited – three have accepted job offers. Licensing is still done from Leeds.

*Statistics for* 2021-2022

Goods regulatory vehicles – during this period there was 43 Regulatory Inquiries of which 10 had their license revoked, 10 had their license suspended, 9 resulted in a curtailment of their license and 12 resulted in a formal warning. PIs can also result in a TM having to undertake refresher training. There was 1 disqualification of a license holder, 4 cases of disqualification of the TM and 2 cases where no action was taken. Last year there was 10 impounding’s on the HGV side by DVSA, 3 of those resulted in an Appeal to the Welsh TC. All three were refused based on cabotage breaches.

There were 15 Regulatory Inquiries on the PSV side. Very poor maintenance remains an issue in Wales.

15 new licenses applications were called in by the TC for a PI. 7 licenses were granted. 1 was granted only in part and 5 were refused with 2 withdrawn.

Drivers – 875 drivers appeared before staff and TM during this period, 138 of which were called into a formal hearing. Action was taken in 118 of those cases. 253 licenses were refused.

*Priorities, concerns and issues going forward.*

TMCPC – With new technology and ways of working the role of the TM has changed and it is important that TMs keep up to date with relevant training. Some TMs have not refreshed their training and there is an issue with TMs being able to read Brake Test Reports for example. The TCs are feeding into DVSA’s review of the TMCPC syllabus which Logistics UK is part of.

Drivers and continuous control – TCs are increasingly finding that operators are not able to control their drivers continually and efficiently.

Maintenance remains a big issue and is a feature in almost all PIs in Wales. The lack of maintenance providers is often cited as a reason especially in rural areas. TCs are aware of the new workshop ratings scheme for vehicle maintenance providers and the positive role this could play.

Brake performance – shortage of brake testing is increasingly featuring in PIs.

Drivers’ hours – driving without tachograph cards, altered tachographs and using another driver’s card continues to feature.

Periods of Grace is a recurring theme this year because of a misunderstanding among some operators about what a period of grace is and what happens when it expires. The senior TC has issued revised guidance, so operators know what is expected and the risks if they do not manage the license properly.

*Q&A with members*

Are there plans for maintenance providers to be registered and licensed like operators? No, as this falls outside the remit of the TCs but there is the workshop ratings scheme. TCs will continue to raise the issue of poor maintenance. Rob Saunders from the MAC highlighted Logistics UK’s role in developing the ratings workshop scheme with a 12-month trial to launch in July. It will be a voluntary scheme but will help guide operators. One member expressed frustration that they are held responsible for maintenance and yet have no control over it, and are completely reliant on, maintenance providers and dealers. A number of members said they would be supportive of an operator’s license for dealerships. VD said the TM should check inspection sheets to ensure they are accurate.

A member raised the ongoing PSV issues with drivers’ hours and maintenance providers and the need for DVSA to take action in Wales. VD said there are staffing shortages in the DVSA in Wales and enforcement is an important role.

A member asked if there has been an increase in non-UK hauliers in GB breaching cabotage rules since Brexit? VD said there have been more impounding’s in Wales than other parts of GB, but the answer to this question is not completely clear as cases have to be dealt with quickly.

* **Regional items**

Since the last Council meeting, a new First Minister, Vaughan Gething, and new Transport Minister are now in post. We are awaiting a date for a roundtable meeting with Transport Minister Ken Skates. Logistics UK has also requested a meeting with Welsh Conservative MS Natasha Asghar to discuss the logistics sector in Wales, the need for a freight and logistics plan, skills and infrastructure. This meeting will take place on 16 July 2024.

The Welsh Government is developing a refreshed Freight and Logistics Plan and Logistics UK is working with government to help shape this plan in line with members priorities. JF shared a draft of Logistics UK’s input to this plan with members and asked for feedback. We have also set up a members working group focused on this plan. This forum is open to all Welsh members. If you are interested in joining, please email Josh Fenton – jfenton@logistics.org.uk

* **Agenda Items**

**Transport Manager CPC syllabus**

 Nichola Mallon (NM) gave an overview of this item, and the Chair posed the set questions to the council.

Q1 – Members felt the syllabus and relevant content depends on the size and operation of the business. There was consensus on the need for core modules with relevant add on modules as appropriate.

Q2 – A member said this all comes back to the fundamental question of what is the role of a TM? 96% of operators in the UK have less than 4 vehicles. The core elements are maintenance and compliance and an understanding of finance. The TM syllabus needs to be suitable for the vast majority of operators.

Q3 – Members supported the pre-2009 split between National and International CPC given the importance of UK internal market trade and favoured two separate exams.

Q4 – Members supported the extension of the TM requirement to restricted operators given the similar risk to road safety from a vehicle. One member felt that a number of existing similar exemptions need removed.

**Safe System and Vision Zero**

JF gave an overview of this approach and system and how it is now part of road safety. The Chair posed the set questions to the council.

Q1 – One member expressed concern about overloading the driver with information. Another highlighted the low level of HGV related deaths and the need for a greater focus on other road users. Members want a more holistic approach with road safety education and awareness in schools.

Q2 – Members travelling into London are complying with Direct Vision Standard. There was frustration at the lack of a consistent standard and even playing field across the country and the lack of individual responsibility and ownership.

Q3 – There is a role for the state and society in educating children in schools and making people take personal responsibility for their actions.

**Removal of requirement for Plating Certificates**

NM gave an overview of this item, and the Chair posed the set questions to the council.

Q1 – Members support the move to digitalisation of plating certificates.

Q2 – Potential downside - how will the driver know if a permitted weight for a vehicle has been downgraded and they do not have a smart phone or have a poor signal to check online which results in the vehicle being overloaded? One way is by putting the permitted weight on the pre-vehicle check list or by printing a downloaded copy out.

Q3 – DVSA should ensure that this information can be accessed and downloaded into a hard copy free of charge.

**Skills priorities**

JF gave an overview of this item, and the Chair posed the set questions to the council.

Q1 – The hardest part is training good people that will stay with your business. Recruiting and retaining is not bad compared to what it was, however, there is still a problem with getting vehicle technicians. Attracting and retaining involves competitive pay, training, facilities and ensuing you make them feel valued.

Q2 – The impact of these shortages means that there is a requirement for technicians to have a mixture of skills within workshops and dealerships to deal with the demand. Members offer more work experience rather than going down the 3rd party agencies route. If members directly recruit it becomes easier to retain the right people. Offering work experience to young people has been helpful as it is used as a try before they buy mentality. This has helped members ensure that their attention is focused on recruiting the right people.

Q3 – Members highlighted that technicians are still hard to recruit, especially in the more rural areas.

Q4 – Members would like there to be greater support from the Welsh government, as they believe they need to buy into the Welsh logistics sector and show long term commitment.

Q5 – Members agreed that the removal of requiring a provisional bus, coach or HGV licence to undertake the theory and off-road modules of the DCPC test should be removed.

* **AOB**

Julie Richards (Logistics UK, MRM) gave an update on upcoming events for members in Wales such as the Welsh Transport Manager and Welsh Lunch being held in November 2024.

Member asked if a gift could be sent to Andrew Rustage, after suffering from an illness. **ACTION** for JF to follow up.

Members attending National Council on 6 June 2024, Ian Jarman and Vincent Brickley.

**The date of the next Welsh Freight Council is Tuesday 1 October 2024.**

Attendees

Ian Jarman (Industry Chair) – Owens Group

Victoria Davies (guest speaker) - Traffic Commissioner for Wales

Josh Fenton (Secretary) – Logistics UK

Rachel Abbott – Powys County Council

Shaun Matthews – Powys County Council

Laurie Price – Castell Howell Foods

Luke Harris – Castell Howell Foods

Lewis Evans – Owens Group

Daniel Jones – WG Davies

David Watkins WG Davies

Luca Nevitt – Celvac

Owain Powell – Celvac

Trever Evans – GAP Group Ltd

Justin Hodges – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Dave Stevens – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Huw Salway – Euro Commercials (SW) Ltd

Dominic Marshman – Press Glass

Gareth James – Swansea Council

Ioan Vantu – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Victoria Griffiths – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Vincent Brickley – Tandem Transport Ltd

Peter Murphy – University of South Wales

Simon Griffin – Watts Truck and Van Ltd

Kelly Leech – Evri

Enfys Griffiths – The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Debbie Jackson – Monmouthshire County Council

Jill Parrish – Torfaen County Borough Council

Peter Dixey – Newport City Council

Nichola Mallon – Logistics UK

Ray Marshall – Logistics UK

Rob Saunders – Logistics UK

Julie Richards – Logistics UK