

## Freight Council – Eighth Meeting

16:00 to 17:30, Thursday 25 January 2024

Venue: In person at Great Minister House, and Virtually via Microsoft Teams

### Attendees:

#### Chairs

Representative	Role	Organisation	Initials
Guy Opperman MP	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport	Department for Transport	GO
Isabel Dedring	Global Transport Leader	Arup	ID

#### Freight Council Membership

Representative	Role	Organisation	Initials
Amanda Zambon	Director of Policy	Association of International Courier & Express Services (AICES)	AZ
Chris Seaton <i>attended remotely</i>	Director	Public Affairs Group (PAG)	CS
Christopher Snelling	Policy Director	Airport Operators Association (AOA)	CSn
Clare Bottle	CEO	UK Warehousing Association (UKWA)	CB
Daniel Parker-Klein <i>attended remotely</i>	Director of Policy	Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)	DPK
David Wells	CEO	Logistics UK (LUK)	DW
Declan Pang	Director of Public Affairs and Policy	Road Haulage Association (RHA)	DP
Geraint Evans	CEO	UK Major Ports Group (UKMPG)	GE
Jonathan Chatfield <i>attended remotely</i>	Head of Rail Strategy & Policy	Rail Delivery Group (RDG)	JC
Katrina Ross	Policy Director	UK Chamber of Shipping (UKCS)	KR
Maggie Simpson	Director General	Rail Freight Group (RFG)	MS

Phil Pluck	CEO	Cold Chain Federation (CCF)	PP
Richard Ballantyne <i>attended remotely</i>	CEO	British Ports Association (BPA)	RB
Richard Smith	MD	Road Haulage Association (RHA)	RS
Robert Windsor	CEO	British International Freight Association (BIFA)	RW

#### Delivery Group Representatives

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Russel Fowler	Senior Project Manager	National Grid (NG)	RF
Usman Ali <i>attended remotely</i>	Campaigns Advisor	Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC)	UA

#### Government Department Officials

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Iain Forbes	Director, Logistics and Borders	Department for Transport	IF
Laura Marquis	Deputy Director, Logistics and Supply Chains Policy	Department for Transport	LM
Martin Gilmour <i>attended remotely</i>	Deputy Director, Planning, Transport and Housing Division	Department for Transport	MG
David Elvy	Head of Future of Freight Plan	Department for Transport	DE
Kay Jaspal <i>attended remotely</i>	Grade 6, Road Freight Strategy	Department for Transport	KJ
Petra Wilkinson <i>attended remotely</i>	Director, Maritime	Department for Transport	PW
Daniel Broadfield <i>attended remotely</i>	Logistics and Supply Chains Analysis	Department for Transport	DB
Caroline Low	Director, Transport Decarbonisation	Department for Transport	CL
David Buttery <i>attended remotely</i>	Director, Road Strategy	Department for Transport	DBt
Anna Dawson <i>attended remotely</i>	Policy Lead, Neighbourhood Crime Unit Crime Reduction Directorate	Home Office	AD

David Rutter <i>attended remotely</i>	Policy and Strategy Lead, Global Supply Chains and Economic Security	Department for Business and Trade	DR
Tony Bray	Deputy Director - Local Engagement and Response Resilience & Recovery Directorate (RED)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC)	TB

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Co-Chair Isabel Dedring (ID) opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. She highlighted the core purpose and agenda for the meeting which was for the Council to meet the new Minister; for industry members to present their prepared position papers on the priority issues discussed at the October Freight Council ('Freight Crime' and 'Planning'); and to review progress against the Council priorities agreed for the next 18 months.

### 2. Reflections from the Minister

2.1 Minister Guy Opperman (GO) expressed his enthusiasm for his new portfolio and that he is looking forward to working with the Council to help improve efficiencies within the freight and logistics sector. He emphasised commitment to ensuring that the sector feels genuinely supported, recognising the significant work already made across the board, from civil servants to ministers and industry. He emphasized that he would like to continue to build upon positive working relations between the state and private sector, welcoming engagement with an open door.

2.2 Minister GO recognised the significant focus that is being placed on 'planning' and the impacts to consider on the freight network. He also informed the Council of his recent engagements with the Planning Minister, Lee Rowley MP, and advised that will look to hold further discussions with him on freight issues captured by the Council. He recognised there is work to do but also highlighted areas of government support the sector has benefitted from, such as welfare support and facilities in northern areas. He opened the floor to any questions or comments.

2.3 Maggie Simpson (MS) thanked the Minister for his commitment and commended the Council on its work in raising the profile of the freight and logistics sector. MS highlighted the adverse economic prospects for her rail freight logistics members, particularly construction and intermodal organisations, stressing that the economic backdrop has decreased efficiencies. Minister GO expressed understanding of the current economic situation which is a result of global factors; adding that there are no easy solutions, but gave assurance that government is committed to implementing appropriate measures to alleviate the economic situation and he is optimistic that these measures will be effective.

- 2.4 Richard Ballantyne (RB) welcomed the Minister and echoed MS's comments. He noted that the purpose of the formation of the Council, as recommended by the National Infrastructure Commission, was a high-level freight grouping to raise freight sector challenges and ensure traction with other government departments such as Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) on issues such as planning. Therefore, he was pleased to hear that, conversations between Minister GO and the Planning Minister have already commenced. RB extended an invitation to the Minister to visit the port facilities of BPA members.
- 2.5 Richard Smith (RS) echoed MS's comments on the adverse economic prospects of the sector and stated that there has been the highest exit rate of hauliers in more than 15 years. There needs to be confidence, clarity, and certainty for remaining hauliers to invest going forward. For example, on the road to net zero, from the hauliers' perspective this will be costly as electric trucks are implemented. As such, there is the need to instil confidence and clarity here, and for there to be more investment.
- 2.6 Minister GO responded that government is in a better position to invest in infrastructure following the 4 October decision to divert funding from the second part of its HS2 project. This has freed up more funds which the government is investing across roads and rail services. Regarding the road to net zero, government will help whilst respecting the free market and the extent to which it can subsidise and support British manufacturers. Minister GO assured members that this government will be practical on the journey to achieving net zero.
- 2.7 Usman Ali (UA) queried whether the Minister had any thoughts or ideas about how to improve the Generation Logistics Campaign and make it more impactful. Minister GO recognised the good work that the campaign is delivering already. In terms of opportunities to increase impact, he highlighted key opportunities to be exploited through readily available resources. For example, there are a huge number of job centres across the UK which are offer training and bootcamps to upskill workers who could support in filling freight sector vacancies.
- 2.8 ID highlighted the Council's interest in further enhancing its support for Generation Logistics following its successful outcome of year one. Minister GO encouraged Council members to task their recruitment managers to engage various job centres and take advantage of the free jobs and skills bootcamps that they are offering.
- 2.9 Robert Windsor (RW) stated that in as much as some of the current challenges of the sector are a result of global factors, the country could have done more to ameliorate some of these challenges in terms of international freight. Currently, vessels being diverted in the Red Sea are arriving up to ten days late causing huge losses. Minister GO assured RW that government and the Maritime Council is on top of this issue and that a dedicated team has been put together within DfT to focus on finding solutions to the challenges being experienced.
- 2.10 Phil Pluck (PP) stated that the cold chain industry has been self-sufficient in terms of road to net zero. The cold chain industry has been successful in achieving the government's climate change goals, including fitting solar panels on trucks and warehouses as well as the use of separate hydrogen models. He advised that the sector is now at a stage where government support is needed. He reported there have been several planning issues such as delays and lack of understanding with local authorities, as well as issues with the national grid. To successfully continue the growth towards net zero, inter-departmental discussions with industry need to take place, so that further progress can be made. Minister GO responded that there is indeed a massive demand

on the national grid beyond its current capability, work is currently underway and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) was specifically created to address this challenge. Government is investing heavily in clean energy, electrification, and its infrastructure to secure power security on shore in the long term. Regarding planning, the government can only intervene so far as devolution ensures that local authorities are responsible for local planning decisions.

- 3.11 RF queried how the Minister intends to work with DESNZ to find short term solutions around grid infrastructure. Minister GO advised members to list their top three deliverables and consider which ones would be achievable without the need for primary or secondary legislation, and to present them to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (Claire Coutinho MP) and special advisers. He is willing to follow up with DESNZ special advisers if required.

**ACTION (FC 8.01):** Council members to set out top three priorities on grid infrastructure that may be achievable without the need for legislation and present to DESNZ Secretary of State.

- 3.12 Katrina Ross (KR) stated that some of their vessels, especially ones serving lifeline communities, could really benefit from National Grid investment so that vessels can tap in and begin the transition to net zero. The UK Chamber of Shipping is keen to engage more with the Minister on this matter. Minister GO responded that he is aware of the complexities regarding maritime and net zero and that the Maritime Minister has been engaging stakeholders to ensure that net zero projects gain traction.
- 3.13 ID added that this is an interesting area and there is a huge potential for the UK to play a leading role globally on net-zero. There have been significant innovations, however, no country has fully made headway.

#### **4 Council priorities**

- 4.1 ID provided an overview of the Council's priorities and outcomes following the last Freight Council meeting in October 2023. She advised that a number of new issues had been captured that were outside of the government's Future of Freight plan commitments. The issues include freight crime, planning, gaps and blackspots, and growth. The Council will be addressing next steps on two of these issues at this Freight Council meeting (freight crime and planning which the RHA and AICES have led and produced papers respectively).

##### Freight Crime

- 4.2 RS presented a summary of RHA's freight crime position paper, emphasizing that freight crime is an important issue for the freight and logistics sector in general. National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (NAVVIS) estimated in 2021 that the problem cost the sector circa £250 million and that is an underestimation since incidents are not recorded. The position paper included nine recommendations for government to consider in order to address and mitigate freight crime. Meetings have taken place between the RHA and officials from both DfT and the Home Office to discuss these issues and recommendations, with initial reflections provided. A formal response to all nine recommendations within the position paper will be issued to the Freight Council to provide clarity on the current policies and resources already in place, as well as advice on next steps to progress activity forwards, where required.

**ACTION (FC 8.02):** DfT and HOM Office to submit formal response to the Freight Crime position paper.

- 4.3 Anna Dawson (AD) provided an overview of the response from Home Office, covering policy linked to crime recording codes and sentencing guidelines (noting these fall within the remit of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ)). She advised that there is a National Vehicle Crime Working Group that sits under National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for vehicle crime (Assistant Chief Constable Jenny Sims) which the RHA used to be part of – their next meeting is in March 2024, and she is happy to extend the invite to RHA or anybody else who wants to sit on that group. Superintendent Matthew Moscrop, who reports to Jenny Sims, is happy to pick up a one-to-one conversation with RHA and others – the Home Office is likewise content to facilitate any introductions. Minister GO also offered to engage the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire (Chris Philp MP) to discuss further – noting that the National Police Chiefs whilst supervised by government, is an independent body, although the Minister could advocate on behalf of the freight crime recommendations.

**ACTION (FC 8.03):** Minister GO to engage with the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire - Chris Philp MP - to discuss how best to advocate for the support of National Police Chief's on the freight crime recommendations.

**ACTION (FC 8.04):** Council members to reach out to National Vehicle Crime Working Group via the Home Office/AD and explore joining the group.

- 4.4 Kay Jaspal (KJ) highlighted that Ministers have approved an industry led task and finish group specifically for lorry parking facilities and one aspect of that is looking at freight crime for parked vehicles at lorry parks and how security can be improved at those sites. An announcement is expected to be made shortly on upgrading facilities including CCTV, fencing etc. She encouraged industry members to apply for any future funding that becomes available, and to engage with the DfT. KJ added that the DfT is working with the National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (NAVCIS) on the data and collecting crime data at lorry parking facilities across England to ascertain the high crime areas and what can be done in terms of funding and working with the operators to enhance their facilities to ensure that freight crime is alleviated. The lorry parking facilities funding provides more secure parking for vehicles at truck stops and not while they are in transit.
- 4.5 ID commended the various ongoing activities to address freight crime and noted that DfT leads should keep liaising with the Home Office to ensure progress and to bring some of these curative measures to fruition in the short term.

### Planning

- 4.6 AZ gave a summary of AICES's planning position paper. The policy asks in the paper were grouped into three sectors. The first being the value of freight and ensuring broader knowledge of how that value is calculated – this is in the future of freight plan and the work of the national freight network will also be a crucial factor. The second area is supporting development. Members of AICES did a survey of their customers and 49% said they expect to grow their use of express services in the coming years – the question therefore is how to facilitate such future growth; more awareness needs to be created on the value freight jobs bring at the local authority level. The third point is around protecting existing operations from complaints around noise – where sites potentially would need to shut down. AZ noted there have been proposals to build around four thousand five hundred homes at the end of the runway of the East Midlands Airport, which is a major freight hub in the UK for air cargo. This could potentially hamper night flights, which are an operational necessity to offer next day delivery. In terms of next steps, a tracker has been put together with a table of various policy asks

and there will be a continued engagement with DfT and other officials to track progress. In terms of engagement, it was suggested that it would be good to establish a 'planning' delivery group as there are many detailed discussions that industry could engage on a regular basis. IF opined that a meeting with planning stakeholders may suffice, however the DfT will consider if there is the need for a planning subgroup.

- 4.7 CSn added, there is an issue of housing encroachment under the flight paths, and this has a particular effect on freight because of the need for nighttime flight for freight services. There is the need for DfT and DLUHC to prioritise this problem and for the Council to robustly engage all relevant departments on this issue. ID suggested that a compilation of facts and figures on the level of encroachment and their impact in a form of a position paper would be a useful first step. It was agreed that evidence is key and therefore it is imperative for relevant evidence to be put together.

**ACTION (FC 8.05):** CSn and AZ to compile evidence on the level of housing encroachment on airport land and flight paths along with their impact on night-time flights for freight services, and following this, put forwards a position paper.

**ACTION (FC 8.06)** Following CSn and AZ's position paper, DfT to subsequently engage with DLUHC to discuss findings and formulate a joint response.

**ACTION (FC 8.07):** DfT to engage with relevant Freight Council members on planning to discuss its response to the Call for Evidence, and then to consider with DLUHC whether a regular "planning forum" is necessary.

- 1.1 Minister GO stated that given the industry is highly affected by local authority decisions, it would be prudent to invite representatives from the Local Government Association (LGA) to Freight Council meetings, particularly their experts on Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. There are also high-level organisations of planning experts who could potentially be represented on the planning subgroup if created.

- 4.8 AZ stated that the LGA is keen to work with Council members and therefore this would be a welcomed idea; presenting to them DfT's ongoing work and giving an overview of the great value that freight and logistics sector to their local economies.

**ACTION (FC 8.08):** Freight Council Secretariat to invite representatives from Local Government Association (LGA) to future Freight Council meetings.

**ACTION (FC 8.09):** DfT to consider organisations of planning experts on the membership of a potential planning subgroup.

- 4.9 Minister GO departed the meeting at 17:30.

## 5 **DfT Updates on Future of Freight**

- 5.1 Caroline Low (CL) gave an update on the work the department is progressing on decarbonisation. DfT has received very helpful responses to its call for evidence on zero emission HGV and coach infrastructure, and DfT is grateful to everyone who took time to respond. The team is currently analysing industry input and will formally respond shortly. Regarding the zero-emission demonstrator program, one project is already running in collaboration with Innovate UK. Also, a consultancy has been commissioned to look at the impact of existing maximum HGV weights and dimensions on the take up of zero emission HGVs. Further updates will be reported in April.

5.2 Robert Windsor (RW) stated that given that many modes work internationally, it is important that what is done here is in line with other countries, for example making sure that charging cables are compatible internationally. There should also be clarity on which technology the shipping lines are going to adopt. Petra Wilkinson (PW) highlighted the positive work done in the International Maritime Organization (IMO). There was a refreshed strategy back in the summer 2023, which sets out clear goals, and as mentioned at the Maritime Council on 24 January, a similar DfT maritime plan will be issued shortly. There are also various research developments under UK SHORE, ensuring future maritime updates. IF provided highlights on the work of the Freight Energy Forum (FEF). There are three areas of focus which include: analysing future energy demands; reviewing the barriers to investment and installing energy infrastructures; and how to provide guidance to the sector on connecting to the grid.

## 6 Next steps and AOB

6.1 ID suggested that Minister GO's time could be managed efficiently by organising Freight Council meetings around freight events. IF added for example, that Freight Week could be organised around one of our Freight Council meetings.

6.2 Laura Marquis (LM) urged Council members to update the Secretariat on relevant industry events so that these could be highlighted for stakeholders to make the most of to continue to raise the status of freight.

6.3 RB suggested that the Council should take advantage of existing activities like multimodal and potentially convene the next Freight Council at such events.

**ACTION (FC 8.10):** Secretariat to consider organising Freight Council meetings around freight events such as Freight Week.

**ACTION (FC 8.11):** Council members to share information on relevant industry events with the Secretariat.

## 7 Summary of Actions

#	Action	Owner
8.01	Council members to set out top three priorities on grid infrastructure that may be achievable without the need for legislation and present to DESNZ Secretary of State.	All Members
8.02	DfT and Home Office to submit formal response to the Freight Crime position paper.	DfT & HO
8.03	Minister GO to engage with the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire - Chris Philp MP - to discuss how best to advocate for the support of National Police Chief's on the freight crime recommendations.	Minister GO
8.04	Council members to reach out to National Vehicle Crime Working Group via Home Office/Anna Dawson and explore joining the group.	All Members



8.05	CSn and AZ to compile evidence on the level of housing encroachment on airport land and flight paths along with their impact on night-time flights for freight services, and following this, put forwards a position paper.	CSn & AZ
8.06	Following CSn and AZ's position paper, DfT to subsequently engage with DLUHC to discuss findings and formulate a joint response.	DfT
8.07	DfT to engage with relevant Freight Council members on planning to discuss its response to the Call for Evidence, and then to consider with DLUHC whether a regular "planning forum" is necessary.	DfT
8.08	Freight Council Secretariat to invite representatives from the Local Government Association (LGA) to future Freight Council meetings.	Secretariat
8.09	DfT to consider organisations of planning experts on the membership of a potential planning subgroup.	DfT
8.10	Secretariat to consider organising Freight Council meetings around freight events such as Freight Week.	Secretariat
8.11	Council members to share information on relevant industry events with the Secretariat.	All Members