



Department for Transport

Freight Council Meeting

Date and Time – 24 June 2025

Location – Ministerial Board Room (GMH) & Microsoft Teams

Chairs:

- Isabel Dedring, Global Transport Leader, Arup
- Lilian Greenwood, Minister for the Future of Roads, DfT

Freight Council Members:

- Amanda Francis, CEO, Association of International Courier and Express Services
- Sarah Bell, Director of Public Affairs UK, UPS
- Maggie Simpson OBE, Director General, Rail Freight Group
- Richard Smith, Managing Director, Road Haulage Association
- Kevin Green, acting CEO, Logistics UK
- Geraint Evans, CEO, UK Major Ports Group
- David Alec Hart, Logistics and Supply Chain Director, Cemex
- Greg Sage, Director of Corporate Affairs and ESG for Royal Mail (joined online)
- Richard Ballantyne, CEO, British Ports Association
- Nick Potter, Transport Director, Tesco
- Chris Welch, Managing Director, Welch Group
- Stephen Carr, Commercial Director, Peel Ports Group
- Edwin Morgan, Policy & Public Affairs Director, UK Warehousing Association

Government representatives:

- Louise Morgan, Director, Freight and Borders, DfT
- Laura Marquis, Deputy Director, Multimodal Freight Division, DfT
- Paul O'Sullivan, Deputy Director, Future Borders Policy, DfT
- Policy officials from the Multimodal Freight Division within DfT.
- Policy official from the Logistics team within DBT.

Minutes

Welcome and introductions

Louise Morgan, newly appointed Director for Freight and Borders, introduced herself and expressed enthusiasm for working with the Council. She highlighted her previous experience in the department and her involvement in strategic decisions, including the Spending Review.

The Minister for the Future of Roads welcomed attendees and emphasised the strategic importance of freight and logistics to the UK's economy, decarbonisation goals, and regional development.

Introductory remarks from the Minister



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The Minister outlined the government's strategic priorities, including the role of freight in delivering the UK's five missions. She referenced the recently published Industrial Strategy and highlighted major investments such as £25.3bn for HS2 and £590m for the Lower Thames Crossing.

The Minister emphasised regional equity, decarbonisation, and the importance of freight in supporting public services and economic growth.

Discussion with the Minister: Freight Council priorities

Isabel commenced the discussion by providing an overview of the workshop conducted with Members the day prior. In this workshop, the Council reaffirmed its purpose: to collaborate across modes and supply chains, identify priority areas, and influence policy and investment.

Key principles identified:

- Focus on impactful, cross-sectoral initiatives.
- Leverage the Council's diversity to amplify collective voice.
- Avoid duplication with existing initiatives.
- Working groups and a forward programme of meetings will be established to drive progress.

Isabel introduced each of the priority areas in turn, inviting the designated Member to elaborate on their respective topic, before resuming the chair to lead the ensuing discussion.

Key Priority Areas Identified

1) Raising Awareness and Advocacy

Objective: Develop a unified narrative to elevate freight's visibility across government. Promote the concept of the 'goods experience' akin to the passenger experience. Highlight freight's role in innovation, safety, and economic growth.

2) Infrastructure and Network Provision

Objective: Create a multimodal infrastructure map identifying bottlenecks and priorities. Align industry and government views on future investment needs. Emphasise both new infrastructure and optimisation of existing network.

3) Decarbonisation Roadmap

Objective: Understand the relevant activity taking place on the transition to net zero, including bridging fuels and power supply. Explore place-based solutions (e.g., logistics hubs, ports). Coordinate with DESNZ and other departments and key players on energy infrastructure to scope potential to influence.



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4) Trade and Borders

Objective: Reframe border issues around growth and resilience. Advocate for digitalisation and AI to reduce friction.

5) Planning and Regulation

Objective: Push for consistent application of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and continue to influence future planning reform to secure enhanced freight provisions. Address local authority engagement and last-mile connectivity.

6) Employment and Skills

Objective: Promote logistics as a driver of social mobility and regional employment. Collaborate on workforce development and training initiatives, joining forces with the Freight Workforce Group where appropriate.

New Freight Plan Update

Laura provided a short update on the internal stakeholder engagement being undertaken by the DfT to inform the new Freight Plan. Online workshops will be held in July to gather industry input.

Laura reiterated that the end product will be a short, action-oriented document and aligned with Council priorities. Publication is expected later in the year.

Council Members (particularly trade associations) were encouraged to champion participation by promoting the workshops to relevant members.

Closing Remarks

The Minister and Louise Morgan thanked attendees for their engagement. Emphasis was placed on maintaining momentum and delivering impact. The meeting concluded with a commitment to continued collaboration and progress.

Key Decisions and Outcomes:

1. Working Group Formation

Members agreed to form working groups around each priority area to develop actionable plans, with some volunteers identified.

2. Commitment to Cross-Government Engagement

There was strong support for engaging other departments (e.g., HMRC, DBT, HMT) to ensure freight is integrated into broader government strategies, especially around borders and energy.

3. New Freight Plan

Council Members were encouraged to champion participation in the stakeholder engagement workshops scheduled over the summer to inform the development of the new Plan. The New Freight Plan team also committed to providing an



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update on key findings from the engagement undertaken and next steps at the next meeting.

4. **Measures of Success Defined**

The Council agreed to define success in terms of:

- Freight considered in cross-government strategies and decisions.
- Improved productivity and reduced regulatory burdens.
- Increased private investment enabled by public sector clarity.
- Tangible progress on decarbonisation and infrastructure delivery.

5. **Next Steps**

- **1.1:** Isabel to circulate next steps via email, and with support from DfT coordinate working group to commence development of work programme for each identified priority area.
- **1.2:** DfT to circulate invites to engagement workshops.



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Actions Table

Notes: Items raised in this current meeting and marked as complete will not feature in the next meeting minute.

Ref.	Date Raised	Action	Who	Updates	Status
1.1	24/06/25	Isabel to circulate next steps via email, and with support from DfT coordinate working group to commence development of work programme for each identified priority area.	Isabel and Council Secretariat	Draft work plan in development. Will be circulated for input from members in due course.	In progress.
1.2	24/06/25	DfT to circulate invites to engagement workshops.	DfT New Freight Plan team	Workshops completed.	Complete.
1.3	07/04/25	Call on Members to provide bullet points to support development of the paper drafted by Maggie (RFG) on relevant strategies and publications of interest to the sector.	All	Members have fed in comments, and the paper has been finalised. Agreement sought to pick up following agreement of core focus areas.	Complete.
1.4	07/04/25	Clare (UKWA) to work with Isabel and the Secretariat to draft agreed definition of freight and logistics (which includes warehousing) for incorporation into the terms of reference	Clare, Isabel and Council Secretariat	Not completed due to A/L. Will pick up ahead of next meeting.	Ongoing.