



Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership

Rail Freight Partner Group Meeting

Bewick Dobson Room, Newcastle Civic Centre

In Attendance:

John Bourn (Chair)	- Tyne & Wear LTP Team
Ross Jackson	- New Rail, Newcastle University
Councillor Ed Hodson	- North Tyneside Council
Michael Page	- Aecom
Terry Bye	- Wilton Transport
Chris Owen	- Port of Blyth
Rob Fairy	- Network Rail
Dick Phillips	- Northumberland County Council
John Holwell	- Oxford Rail Strategies Council
Andrew Jameson	- Sunderland City Council
Andrew Carmichael	- SENRUG
Trevor Watson	- SENRUG
Gordon Carr	- CILT
Malcolm Bingham	- FTA
Tony Walker	- Railfuture NE
Martin Murphy	- Nectar
Geoff Clarke	- Aecom
Stephen Psallidas	- Nexus
Stuart Corker	- Gateshead Council
Yvonne Forster *	- Newcastle CC

Apologies:

David Worsley	- Network Rail (Rob Fairy now the contact)
Tim Jackson	- Freightliner
Mark Wilson	- North East LEP
Bob Donaldson	- Sunderland City Council

* Author of note

Item	Action
<p>Attendance and apologies.</p> <p>As Mark Wilson could not attend, it was agreed JB would take over as Chair. JB welcomed everyone to the meeting</p>	

<p>Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising.</p> <p>Minutes of meeting held on 8 November 2012 were agreed as a correct record</p> <p>Item 4 Multi Modal Calculator – MP confirmed assumption taken into account</p> <p>Item 5 Discussions did not take place. Leave on agenda for future</p>	
<p>Rail Freight Survey</p> <p>Trying to arrange survey with users proving to be difficult. Aecom have carried out work with Rail Freight Users throughout the country recently. Results are imminent and will be circulated to group when published.</p> <p>GC gave presentation followed by discussion, including rail reliability.</p> <p>Network Rail currently consulting on freight usage to pull together strategy to move forward. Biggest issue is that energy policy is unclear, so difficult to plan ahead for infrastructure in next 10 – 20 years.</p> <p>EH asked if container standardisation, or lack of it, is a limit on future rail freight. GC – More shippers specify cube box, certain routes can't do this.</p> <p>Statistics show only 20% of users concerned about reliability. Have to convince non users that rail is more reliable than road.</p> <p>MM asked about possible return of mail traffic to East Coast Main Line. GC – Not covered in survey and not aware of current discussions.</p> <p>JB thanked GC for interesting and informative presentation.</p>	<p>Action: Results to be circulated to Group (Aecom)</p>
<p>Rail Opportunities</p> <p><u>Port of Blyth</u></p> <p>Press release outlining Northumberland County Council's aspirations to re-open the Ashington to Newcastle line was circulated. As well as opening the line to passenger services, the authority is also looking at improvements for freight traffic on the route. Stations would be at Woodhorn, Ashington, Blyth, Bedlington, Newsham, Seaton Delaval and Newcastle.</p> <p>DP updated. Network Rail doing Grip Definitions. Agreed in last month. NCC in talks with landowners re acquiring land at Woodhorn for Park and Ride scheme at start of line. Discussions with Port of Tyne to manage both freight and passenger transport. Aecom involved in discussions on future</p>	

<p>finance. Optimistic on good financing possibilities.</p> <p>One of the drawbacks previously was station cost. This has come down greatly. Some old stations will be used as well as modular stations. Looking at re-opening in 2016/2017 with franchise agreement in place by 2014.</p> <p>Discussions ongoing with Port of Tyne about providing loop to supplement the single track. This would be used by both passenger and freight trains. MM asked if envisage 24 hour railway, running as much freight as possible overnight. NCC have looked into this but Port reluctant.</p> <p>AC said new station at Woodhorn would require a 250 metre long platform to accommodate charter trains. DP said this was being considered.</p> <p>MM – Biomass aspect could have major effect on Port of Tyne.</p> <p>GC – Rail Freight Group response to ORR includes comment on biomass.</p> <p><u>Port of Sunderland</u></p> <p>JB advised group that Port of Sunderland receiving £4million investment and is now in profit. Still hoping to get someone from the Port to speak at a future meeting. Seems to be positive news about all the regions ports.</p> <p>GC invited members to Maritime event and trip to Port of Tyne on 25 June.</p> <p>CO – Port of Blyth just agreed lock in procedure with Network Rail to allow trains to operate on line, currently 3 a day going up to 4 a day and hoping to increase up to 15 over next few years. Are in support of passenger line as long as not to detriment of freight line.</p>	
<p>Multi Modal Calculator</p> <p>Mp – progressing well but having difficulty adding in correct costs for each journey. Only information available is indicative and not accurate enough. Contacting each facility to make sure information is correct.</p> <p>MP asked for thoughts of group on how to approach this issue.</p> <p>SP suggested providing case studies.</p> <p>MP suggested may get more realistic figures from companies.</p> <p>JH felt this was unachievable. Prices will vary by 40 – 50% from different operators.</p> <p>DP – Need to emphasis difference of road and rail cost.</p>	

Cross Boundary Issues and Challenges

JB advised group of key proposals announced by Lord Adonis to set up a Combined Authority consisting of the 5 Tyne and Wear Authorities plus Northumberland and Durham by 1 April 2014. One proposal relating to transport is a dedicated 70mph rail freight line from Northallerton to Tyneside. Cabinet meetings of these Local Authorities are meeting today to agree proposal.

This group has already recognised transport goes beyond Tyne & Wear boundary. Possible remit of this group may need to expand to include Durham and Northumberland. DP said Northumberland CC looking at this very seriously and would like to get on board with other authorities.

RF advised £240 million for East Coast activity improvements and reducing journey times. Various problem locations identified north of Northallerton. Large amount of passenger trains bunch up. Requires regular interval traffic. Some low cost/ medium cost options. Leamside line is potential option. Network Rail looking at options and in discussions with NE LEP to look at funding.

DP and JH left meeting

Wilton Power Plant

TB circulated press release for info. A Power Plant will be built at Wilton and will receive waste material from Merseyside to process and sell power to National Grid and steam to local businesses. It is expected to be up and running by 2016. The waste will arrive by train, 2 trains a day, 365 days a year for 30 years.

JB thanked TB for update and said this was good news for the region.

Any Other Business

AC queried whether the north end of the Ashington, Blyth & Tyne line could become part of Strategic Freight Network while still in private ownership.

RF said it is unlikely a more localised route will be included. Website shows plans for next 20 years.

SP asked about new franchising proposals. JB said he had looked on website but not sure of impact on rail freight.

RF – ORR keen not to have specific times (level 1), but more general (level 2) Freight companies have less surety.

Next Meeting

JB thanked everyone for attending what was a really positive meeting with what seemed like lots of good news for our region.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting in Newcastle Civic Centre in mid November, the exact date to be confirmed.

The presentations will be available on the Freight Partnership's website.