

Project: Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership

Purpose: December Quarterly Meeting

Date Held: 3rd December 2014

Held at: North Tyneside Council Offices, Cobalt Business Park

Made By: Stuart Hill

Present:	John Bourn	Regional Transport Team
	Mike Page	AECOM
	Paul Davison	AECOM
	Cllr Frank Lott	North Tyneside Council
	Graham Grant	Newcastle City Council
	Gordon Carr	CILT
	Steven Hall	Whatbike
	Colin Hall	Whatbike
	Emma Allan	Go Smarter
	Gary Appleby	Port of Tyne
	Nigel Cook	Elddis Transport
	Keith Taylor	Northumberland County Council
	Martin Forster	Sunderland City Council
	John Cram	North Tyneside Council
	Colin Gransbury	A G Barr
	Ali Lamb	Newcastle City Council
	Martin Murphy	Nectar
Apologies:	Malcolm Bingham	FTA
	James Turnbull	Durham County Council
	Ian Radley	Highways Agency
	Stuart Corker	Gateshead Council
	Danni Lapham	Cycle Alert

No.	Item	Action By
1.	<p>Attendance and apologies</p> <p>John Bourn (Chair) welcomed everyone and thanked North Tyneside Council for hosting the meeting.</p> <p>Introductions were made around the room and apologies read out.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of last meeting held September 2014 and matters arising</p> <p>It was noted that the minutes should have stated that Martin Murphy was present which was incorrectly listed as Martin Murray. It was also noted that apologies were received from Nigel Cook. The remainder of the minutes was agreed as a correct record.</p>	

3.

Cycle Logistics

Paul Davison gave a presentation on Cycle Logistics, outlining how goods deliveries by bicycle had developed, the current market and the resurgence in cycle logistics which was now taking place across Europe.

This latter trend was the result of a number of factors including increased road congestion, restrictions on traffic movement such as pedestrianisation schemes, one way systems and congestion charges, and the wish to promote sustainable, low-carbon travel.

Various types of cycle transportation are available including conventional courier and cargo trikes which can carry up to a ¼ tonne of goods. A video was presented to the group which showed the operation of a micro distribution centre in Barcelona. These centres make possible the efficient delivery of goods in city centres, requiring a limited amount of space and so easily accommodated. There are a few good examples of these in the UK in Cambridge, Glasgow, Edinburgh (B-Spoke), Manchester, Bristol and London. A company called Gnewt has introduced electric vehicles and cargo bikes in the capital. Such schemes are rising in popularity although so far European cities like Utrecht and Ghent are ahead of us in this area.

We are aiming to encourage the establishment of a cycling logistics network in Tyne and Wear. To this end, a workshop meeting was held in Ouseburn which was well attended. There are currently two companies who are interested in using CL: Sugar Down Bakeries and Newcastle Bicycle Couriers; the latter would like to set up a distribution centre in the West End of Newcastle. Go Smarter Funds are to be used to match-fund equipment and provide support. Both schemes will start in January 2015 and they will be asked to report back.

Colin Hall suggested that Newcastle is too small to support such a network. Paul Davison replied that this has worked in other cities of equivalent size.

Keith said that bicycles are not really designed for use in hilly parts of town such as the roads which lead up from the Quayside. PD replied that they have been found suitable in Edinburgh which has a similar topography. Electric bikes can be used in some areas. The most likely use in Newcastle for CLs would be for deliveries to the Universities and Hospitals which amounts to a significant market.

MM stated that they could look at launching schemes in specific neighbourhoods. PD agreed that this was a possibility, but previous schemes had involved setting up contracts with large organisations rather than being restricted to certain neighbourhoods. MM said that use of a neighbourhood could be a nucleus to start from rather than a restriction. PD stated that this would certainly be an option and he would advise Newcastle Bicycle Couriers on this in January 2015.

Steven Ball said that the logistics for this in North Tyneside are good. JB said that Cambridge was looking into introducing electric bikes for longer distances. The aim is for the least amount of cycling possible to be used to deliver goods efficiently.

JB thanked PD for his presentation to the group.

4. Cycle Alert

Danni Lapham was not present but had passed on the slideshow presentation on this topic, which was shown to the group.

The Prime Minister has stated that he would like to see cycling 'soar'. It is a significant part of the economy with £2.9 billion of products and £853 million of cycling accessories being sold per annum. Cycling also has a beneficial impact on work performance with cyclists being on average absent from work 1 fewer day per year than non-cyclists, amounting to a substantial saving for employers.

Cycling is good for health and physical wellbeing. It saves money and is environmentally friendly. Cyclists benefit from greater emotional wellbeing, are more punctual and healthy. Cycling is also social and enhances a sense of community. Fatalities and injuries are not inevitable and can be prevented.

A video was shown which explained what the Cycle Alert scheme is. Cycle Alert is an inexpensive safety technology which is manufactured in the UK. It works wirelessly and is weatherproof and motion activated. Eddie Stobart is one company that has adopted this technology. In surveys 88% of drivers said they thought that it is a good system. Cycle Alert can be fitted to any goods vehicle to indicate the presence of cyclists. It is an electronic sensor system which works in tandem with operative alert and helps to keep people safe. At least four devices have to be fitted to the vehicle and one to the bicycle.

Keith stated that this system is not a standard in the truck operations industry. It is not possible to buy trucks which are vulnerable user equipped direct from the factory. There are also massive variations in cost. Rear facing cameras and side cameras are being added to the fleet which does not incur a substantial cost, amounting to around £360 per vehicle. The government is not addressing the minority of cyclists who need training. There is no legal requirement for this at present. The government is not helping cyclists to help themselves.

Emma Allan agreed that a balance on both sides is needed. Go Smarter are considering using technologies like these as a pilot scheme. More training for all road users is needed.

Keith stated that Transport for London are strong on this in London. A standard needs to be introduced across the country. It would be cheaper if sensors were installed at the manufacturing stage. The government should take a lead on this by introducing appropriate legislation. The cost for trailers is higher. Audible turning left warnings can be added for an additional £100. Minimum training of cyclists is needed as there is none required by law at present. Superior modern bike technology means that cycles can move at much greater speed than they did previously.

Members agreed on the importance of this issue but felt that the requirement of the Cycle Alert system for both the goods vehicle and the cycle to be fitted with sensors was a major drawback.

5. Newcastle Cycle City Ambition Fund

Graham Grant, Transport Development Manager at Newcastle city Council, gave the group an overview of transport strategy in the city.

At present works to improve roads at Cowgate have started with other junction improvements to follow. £20 million funding is available from central government to improve the network from 2015/6. This includes changes to be made around the Central Station. A Red Route scheme is being introduced in Gosforth. A business case is being developed for Scotswood Road and Bridge, Cow Hill, and the junction of Blue House and Haddrick's Mill. Schemes starting now will progress over the next 2 to 3 years. There are gaps in traffic control in some parts of the city which includes some of the areas with planned improvement schemes. We are currently looking into managing the traffic flow on the City Motorway East better. Gateshead Council is also looking into this.

The end date of the first phase of the Cycle City Ambition Fund is May 2015. This coincides with the timetable for receiving public funding. The Cycle City Ambition scheme has the strategic route to the North through Gosforth as a priority, as people in this area are the most likely to change their behaviour. Free cycle training will be provided by the City to anyone who lives, works or studies in the city. The possibility of creating segregated routes for cyclists is being investigated.

Phase 1 is mostly based on capital investment and infrastructure developments but we are also looking into behaviour change. Phase 2 was announced on 27th November 2014. Additional public funding will be available for designated cycle cities including Newcastle. The city's bid for the awards will be focused on the borders of Newcastle and will look in to links with Gateshead and extending into North Tyneside, for example cycle routes.

There are many opportunities for European funding which can be sought. Freight operations in city centres are a significant issue across Europe. A better way of managing freight in the city centre is needed; the situation is not ideal at present, for example deliveries taking place on the pedestrianised Northumberland Street.

We are working with 7 other cities on improvements to cycling. We are also looking into monitoring use of cycles which is very difficult at present as we do not know where the cyclists are. GG stated that he would welcome ideas on how to pitch for phase 2.

Steven Hall noted that there is no straight commuter route from the city to the coast. This would be an ideal route for families. GG replied that the national cycle network seems to be very well used in this area. SB said that the network is too stop/start at present and needs to be extended which could be done from Gosforth and Heaton at first. GG noted that the number of cyclists who would use this route for commuting purposes might not be practical as a business case. For this reason it would not be a suitable first step, but this could be investigated with North Tyneside Council. It would replicate the national cycle network to an extent. SB said that minor changes to existing routes could make a big difference.

PD asked how the proposed cycle route North would work. GG replied that all of the routes are interlinked. A Red Route for Gosforth High Street seems to be the best solution. This can make the area more reliable for bus services and safer for cyclists and commuters. There will be a segregated cycle path at Blue House. In the city centre smaller deliveries during the day and larger deliveries early mornings would be a good solution. At present deliveries on Percy Street can block traffic for up to an hour. Use of low carbon vehicles such as electric freight distribution is a better solution for daytime deliveries. We also need to be able to notify drivers that car parks are full before they enter the city centre as queueing traffic on Percy Streets can disrupt bus movements and make them unreliable.

Gordon Carr asked whether stores using out of town delivery centres rather than holding stock in city centre stores has had a significant impact. GG replied that this has affected logistics to some extent. Smaller deliveries which are not really planned have a greater impact whereas larger stores such as John Lewis and Fenwick plan their deliveries better and consequently their vehicles rarely get stuck in traffic.

Keith said that the biggest issue would be the potential cost for freight delivery centres, as there would be additional handling and delivery costs. GG replied that no reference has been made to charging operators additional costs. Any unseen potential cost for deliveries is passed on to the City at present and there is a need to work together on this issue. Many costs are unseen, for example unreliable buses which result in increased car use. The technology for Intelligent Transport Systems is far superior to what was available 20/30 years ago. The most important thing is the outcome.

PD asked whether the actions Bristol was taking had been looked at. GG replied that he will be meeting with Bristol and some other cities next week to find out what they are doing. London have been investigating how to resolve the issue of people not being present when companies such as Amazon are trying to make deliveries.

Compass 4D technology is being trialled at present. This can create a 'green wave' on traffic lights to facilitate movement. Keith agreed that this would be an attractive solution. GG noted that this approach could be trialled on Scotswood Road. A meeting with the Highways Agency will be arranged so that this can be discussed. The HA is looking into ending the installation of roadside signs and moving towards in-vehicle controls with notifications on traffic conditions such as diversions being sent to drivers in real time.

Gordon Carr said that it can take a long time for European Funding to be arranged. GG agreed that as a public authority there is a need to look ahead, as well as the possibility of adopting things which already exist.

JB thanked GG for his presentation and for offering to come back in the future. This discussion is to be followed up at a later date, including the issue of European funding.

6. Tyne and Wear FORS

Mike Page stated that Safe Urban Driving Courses are available to companies. These are arranged by Go Smarter To Work. Thanks to Colin Gransbury for kindly hosting courses at AG Barr Soft Drinks. Feedback from drivers who had been on the courses was very positive. Emma Allen agreed that this was the case, with many saying that their attitude to cycling had been completely changed by the end of the course. They highly recommended the course to others. MP stated that many companies want courses to be available on Saturdays and this option is now available.

7. Operator and Driver of the Year Awards

PD explained that the North East Freight Awards are given for both Driver and Operator of the Year. These acknowledge achievement and promote good practice. They can also be publicised by the media. The process will start in January 2015. An email will be sent outlining the criteria for the awards, which are not too prescriptive. Entries can not be over 300 words in length. A visit can be made to the driver or depot to present the award. The operator award will be decided on internally and will be presented at the partnership meeting. JB thanked PD for his presentation.

8. Any Other Business / Close of Meeting

JB asked whether there was any other business anyone wished to discuss. GC asked whether there was any news regarding the A1 extension. JB replied that there was no information further to that which had appeared in the press.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 4th March 2015, the venue is likely to Newcastle Civic Centre. JB thanked North Tyneside Council for their hospitality and hosting the meeting. He wished that all enjoyed a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and looked forward to meeting everyone at the next meeting.