



**North East Freight Partnership**

**Date Held**                    **7<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Venue**                            **Nixon Hire , Newcastle**

**List of Attendees and Organisation**

Mike Page	AECOM
Paul Davison	AECOM
Kate Cairns	See Me Save Me
Martin Murphy	NECTAR
Nigel Base	SMMT
John Bourn	NECA (Chair)
Arlen Pettitt	North East Chamber of Commerce
David Marshall	Sunderland City Council
Tony Walker	NECTAR
David Christie	Nissan
Graham Wood	Nixon Hire
Keith Taylor	Northumberland CC
Malcolm Bingham	FTA
Karen McCartney	Career Ready
Stuart Corker	Gateshead Council
David Young	Network Rail

**Apologies**

Dave Pentland	South Tyneside Council
Tom Zunder	New Rail
James Turnbull	Durham County Council
John Cram	North Tyneside
Jim French	PD Ports
John Coatman	Nissan
Malcom Dodds	RHA

**Item Agenda 1: Introductions and Apologies**

The chair welcomed all the delegates to the meeting, he asked the delegates to introduce themselves to those who were attending for the first time.

The apologies were read out of those not attending the meeting due to other commitments.

**Item Agenda 2: Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes from the June 2017 meeting were reviewed, it was suggested the Government will have produced a paper on air quality by the next meeting and that the agenda item of Air Quality would be discussed at that meeting. The June minutes were agreed.

**Item Agenda 3: Society for Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)**

Nigel Base stated that the SMMT are the motor industry trade body supplying technical support and have a central role in representing members to the Government.

He said currency movement has a significant effect on the industry in export and import of supplies. This led him into discussing the UK economy, saying inflation was stable however credit had risen rapidly in recent times and there was a danger the bubble might burst in credit facilities and people's behaviour. One observation was that inflation was low, however disposable income was less. Manufacturers were introducing scrappage schemes which may have a positive impact on sales and increase employment.

He went on to say the average mileage was decreasing however mileage is known to be increasing in the van sector, which is attracting the attention of the regulators. Overall there is a steady increase in the van sector and drivers are not required to undergo the CPC accreditation, also since 1977 drivers cannot drive vehicles above 3.5 tonne without a vocational licence. Consultations for new car licencing will allow car drivers to drive vehicles up to 4.25tonne.

Vans are transporting greater tonnage which has increased from 2.5m to 4m in a short space of time. Conversely sales of 2 axle trucks are decreasing but 3 axle sales increasing, there are currently 55m trucks on the road but will decrease to 45m due to the Government looking at carbon outputs.

Regarding Air Quality, there are five zones as previously announced, Birmingham, Leeds, Derby, Nottingham, Southampton and London who will be mandated to introduce Clean Air Zones, London to introduce ULEZ in 2019. Government's modelling suggests a further 21 zones may have to be introduced to meet air quality limits.

Why focus on diesel - the HM Treasury has outlined the aim of the review which would be to see how measures and actions within government's air quality plans could be funded and that any changes to diesel taxation would be made in Autumn Budget 2017. In regard to the haulage industry Euro VI engines on trucks are nearly equal to cars NOX outputs.

EU roads package proposals are to increase regulation of vehicles below 3.5t (Access to the Market/Occupation, EU Drivers hours rules) but the DfT clarified that the Government did not support plans to increase the regulatory burdens on this sector.

From August 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 DVSA are to monitor emissions for non-compliant trucks although the SMMT believe the vision is flawed.

**Agenda Item 4: North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC)**

Arlen Pettitt talked about the NECC Transport Policy Work to reflect the needs of the North east. The NECC covers the whole of the North East, from Berwick to Teesside and the border with North Yorkshire, it has more than 3,000 members, from across all sectors ranging from SMEs to multi-nationals. It delivers international trade documentation and DIT business support in the North East.

He talked about Connected North East project, campaigning for major investment in the regional rail network, including a firm commitment to the delivery of High Speed Rail to the North East. It is pushing for new air and sea links to support export and investment aspirations, opposes any policies which harm this connectivity and calling for the development of a much more responsive and cohesive public transport network in the region. The NECC is insisting upon the rapid delivery of infrastructure projects already in the pipeline including further work on both the A1 and A19, and trans-Pennine road improvements.

The Chamber forum is chaired by Graeme Mason, Planning and Corporate Affairs Director, Newcastle International Airport, they meet approximately 3 times a year – next meeting in the Autumn brings together transport operators, civil engineers, planners, freight & logistics, transport hubs, to discuss current issues in the sector. The Chamber is the go-to group for consulting on transport issues and engaging with policy campaigns.

He discussed their freight relevant priorities regarding roads, rail, air and water, which are the north-south A1 dualling and A19 junction upgrades, east-west improvement on capacity and resilience on A66 and A69, the upgrade East Coast Mainline to reduce capacity constraints unlocking additional freight paths on key routes in the region and the greater promotion of coastal shipping links with southern ports and distribution centres in the north. Finally the creation of a freight-suitable multi-modal corridor across the Pennines, linking ports.

**Item Agenda 5: Nixon Hire**

Gordon Wood said the business was started in 1967 by John Nixon and is still a family business with his son Graham Nixon as the managing director. Since Graham joined the company 6 years ago they have pulled the business together doubling the turnover with 20 vehicles based at the site. Nationally they operate 14 depots, employing 470 people. Their core business is plant tool hire, site accommodation, toilet hire, welfare vans and equipment sales.

They have invested £85m since 2013 and operate a wide range of equipment and operate a policy of never say no to a client where possible. Their vehicles comply with legislation and they have on-site maintenance operating a programme of maintenance and with state of the art systems.

Fleet size has increased giving a rise in fixed operating costs, however there is a relative decrease in distance travelled, giving a decrease in fuel spend (9%) through awareness and innovation. They have an increase in vehicle uptime of approximately 8% and increased vehicle moves. They have gained FORS Bronze accreditation and have in house CPC training.

This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the company.

**Item Agenda 6: North East Freight Partnership – Programme 2017-18**

Paul Davison quickly outlined the programme of current tasks for the forthcoming year to the group, which includes:

Project Management, four Partnership quarterly meetings to be organised with associated PowerPoints, circulation of Agenda and meeting minutes. In the meeting the group receive reports on task progress, budget & output.

FORS has seen a 60% growth in the graduation of companies from Bronze to Silver standard which is compatible to CLOCS. The North East has seen a recent increase of membership from 150 to 180 which is on all levels.

£20,000 funding has been allocated to the NEFP to maintain the 10 FORS Practitioner Workshops and continue the support to the 'See Me Save Me Charity' campaign which has been focussed on the construction industry but can be developed further to the whole industry.

There are a suite of 31 accurate, detailed destination maps. The benefits to the user are the reduced likelihood of drivers getting lost/wasted mileage, increased journey time reliability, reduction of congestion and CO2 emissions producing cleaner air quality. The interactive maps allow accurate route planning and now allows a smartphone app to append maintenance.

Freight on Rail continues the excellent work carried on from previous years by hosting Bi-Annual meetings at locations of interest, maintaining the high level of interest for the meetings. The next meeting will be held at the Newcastle College Rail Academy in Gateshead on the 15th November 2017

The Partnership will continue the beneficial Safe Urban Driving Courses (SUD) to the industry for HGV and Van drivers thanks to the FORS Community Partnership. There is funding to provide 6 SUD courses and 4 van smart courses with provision of facilities for the courses supplied by the Sunderland Training Centre. The course provides practical and theory on the vulnerable road user (VRU). Updates of online best practice materials can be accessed on the FORS website

Promotion and Information Exchange for the Partnership is communicated to interested parties, through presentations, talking about the work undertaken by the Partnership, a twice yearly newsletter, an annual leaflet and maintaining the social media accounts Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.

The website provides a wealth of information and of the work undertaken by the Partnership to the industry and will continue to update it with current information.

The Partnership provides a smartphone compatible app to update the industry with information on the go, there has been an increase of website use (June 16 – Jan 17, 1,362 sessions and 3,383 pages visited) and the smartphone compatible app. We would welcome any interesting stories you feel would benefit the industry to add to the website.

The two TIP's on the DFDS Ferry and Durham Services will be maintained and the Partnership will consider how appropriate it is for their continued maintenance.

The Driver/Operator Awards award is putting out good news stories and to promote best practice to the Industry which is designed to create prestige among peers. They increase competition in the freight sector.

The awards will be publicised in the website and trade press to recognise the award winner of the HGV Driver of the year and the Operator of the year. This year the awards were presented to driver Chris Airey of Greggs and for the operator of the year to Hargreaves.

The awards are designed to raise awareness of the commitment to professionalism by hauliers.

As in the previous year we will work with the Newcastle University to assist three students with their Thesis, however, this year we plan to develop links with other universities in the region by assisting Northumbria University with their workplace experience.

In the present climate the average age of the driver is now 55. We will endeavour to tackle regional issues in the sector and create better connections between key stakeholders with enhanced understanding of associated issues and opportunities. There is to be development of regional workshops with skills and education to operators

The North East's natural waterways, port infrastructure and long coastline mean that water freight is a key employer in the region and vital to its economic prosperity. Despite its strengths it is important that ports and rivers in the North East are as viable as possible and take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the Northern Powerhouse initiative.

A North East and Tees Valley Water Freight Group has been organised at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Hartlepool at 10.00 to 13.30 on Wednesday 4th October 2017. It will recognise the vital role that our ports and rivers play by asking high profile key stakeholders to discuss water freight in the North East and Tees Valley welcoming and hearing from port operators in the region and their customers, exploring trends and relevant strategy and policy. Lunch will be provided.

Transport for the North is projecting significant growth and it is important that those responsible for water freight in the region work together.

**Item Agenda 7: Transport for the North.**

There was insufficient time available to present on this item, therefore it is to be included in the December agenda.

**Any other Business**

The group were asked to consider attending the North East and Tees Valley Water and Freight event on the 4<sup>th</sup> October at Hartlepool. The agenda is to be circulated.

Thanks go to Nixon Hire for the use of their facilities for the meeting and Graham Wood who gave the group a tour of the site which was very interesting and informative.

**Date and Time of next meeting**

The next meeting will occur in December 7<sup>th</sup> 2017 at Northumberland County Council County Hall. Reception 10:00 for a 10:30 start.