
Project:	Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership	Job No:	
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1. Purpose

This document summarises the events at the European Freight Conference on Tuesday 22nd February 2011. The conference was well attended with representatives from local authorities, operators, academics, students, and other organisations. The event took the form of presentations to delegates and a question and answer session in the morning; this was then followed by three parallel workshop discussion sessions in the afternoon, whereby delegates had the choice of attending one of three workshops. The conference closed with delegates being invited on one of two site visits. Included in the following text is a summary of both the presentations given to delegates and the question and answer session, together with the outcomes of the workshop discussions and information about the site visits.

2. Introduction and Welcome

Councillor Wendy Taylor (Environment and Sustainability Portfolio Holder, Newcastle City Council)

Councillor Taylor welcomed delegates and praised the role of the Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership. Councillor Taylor gave context to the movement of goods in the north east, highlighting the need to balance the requirements of the freight industry with those requirements from other users of urban areas. The presentation touched upon spatial restrictions including the design and layout of urban areas, together with challenges brought about by lorries, cars, buses and those wishing to walk and cycle all using the same space.

She went on to say that the Freight Partnership have been able to help address these various challenges, thanks in part to bringing together local stakeholders, planning routes and helping with freight signage amongst other activities. CIVITAS funding enabled studies at the Port of Tyne and Teesport to identify the most commonly spoken and understood languages amongst drivers using the ports and as a result of this, the Partnership has translated materials into German and Polish to aid the movement of goods in the region for those vehicles coming from outside the UK.

Newcastle Council is showing its commitment to managing freight and reducing the number of movements in the city centre by helping develop the region's first Freight Consolidation Centre. This will enable both hauliers and retailers to benefit from the services offered and contribute to the sustainable and low carbon agendas.

3. Key Note Speech

Brian Simpson (MEP and Chair of the European Parliament Transport Committee)

Brian Simpson was able to provide a European perspective on freight movement. He highlighted that there are many freight related issues across Europe linked to logistics and urban locations. He went on to say that European Community Agenda can help to raise the profile of freight movement. Discussions at an EU level will give added value to work being undertaken both regionally and nationally.

When considering freight movement in urban areas, the issues surrounding sustainability should be considered at the same time. Freight movements and the business they facilitate are particularly important in urban areas; however the requirements of an area's population are also important. For example, the environmental impacts of freight movements and any congestion linked to freight movements are likely to impact upon the population of an area.

Looking to the European agenda, growth and sustainability are key considerations – we need to consider the affects of noise, fuel emissions and accidents.

The presentation suggested that there are practical steps available to meet urban freight related challenges. These include making the best use of available modes rather than relying on one – this may reduce the reliance on transport by road. It would be reliant on integrating different modes of transport to facilitate multi-modal journeys.

At an EU level they are working to optimise the use of all modes. Rail and inland water links to cities and ports are not sufficiently developed. The potential for short sea shipping should also be considered. Intermodal hubs in suburban locations would work towards encouraging and enabling modal change. Environmentally friendly modes of transportation should be invested in. To enable investment in the right areas, industry should reflect the true cost to society of transport by various modes and different fuel types.

Intelligent transport systems and clean vehicles have key future roles and require further research and innovation. New concepts and policies for distribution need to be developed. We need to consider if just in time deliveries are sustainable or efficient. Cities are subject to access restrictions – should we be considering out of hours deliveries and providing incentives to operators and receivers to move deliveries to non-peak times? CIVITAS are able to support new areas of development.

One key problem in terms of freight movements on rail is the priority given to passenger trains over freight movements at present.

The ability to share best practice and to alleviate persistent problems is important. Parliament prefers incentivisation to achieve integrated mobility. The plan of the commission is to help local authorities to achieve this. Data reliability is an issue; this is addressed via upgrading the available data and data collection methods.

The presentation concluded with the suggestion that an overall review of freight policy is required, seeking cooperation amongst all concerned, looking at technological advances, the use of rail, and mobility improvements. People need to think across modes, and be innovative in their approaches.

4. Freight Operations Recognition Scheme (FORS): How can Transport for London's successful model be applied to other cities

John Hix (AECOM)

The presentation considered whether sustainable freight was possible. It identified that there were many issues regarding the movement of freight and these were common across many locations. Various traffic control schemes have been developed across locations and examples of Transport for London controls were highlighted.

The background to FORS and the entry routes and progression for members were outlined. Although FORS was developed by Transport for London, FORS members are distributed throughout the country as the scheme applies to any operator that makes deliveries into London.

The presentation identified how FORS members were working towards three key indicators, these being increasing average MPG, reducing the number of incidents per 100km, and reducing penalty charge notices (PCNs) per 100km. All three indicators are used as useful benchmarks to assess how successful the scheme is amongst members.

5. Bremen's perspective on urban freight

Thomas Kirpal (City of Bremen, Germany)

Thomas Kirpal's presentation to delegates began with an introduction to Bremen, looking at the location of the city and its layout in terms of the road network and the natural divide created by the River Weser.

Bremen has constructed a freight logistics centre (known as a freight village) to consolidate the operators and freight distribution capabilities into one location. The centre is located such that it provides long distance connections and also has room for expansion. However, the logistics centre does require an extra step in the loading and unloading process to consolidate deliveries.

The presentation highlighted that Bremen had problems regarding air quality; monitoring stations are located around the city to capture emissions data. To help alleviate the problem a clean air zone has been developed across the city. Restrictions in the zone have been developed progressively to reduce type of vehicles into the zone (categorised in terms of emission), allowing companies' time to make changes to their fleets. Incentives are provided for cleaner vehicles, these include privileged access times and loading and unloading points in the city centre.

Thomas Kirpal also outlined the concept of fleet-wide contracts and fleet-wide agreements that are being implemented in Bremen. The fleet-wide measures provide assistance to companies using Euro-V vehicles and help smaller operators work towards Euro-V standards.

The presentation concluded by highlighting some of the obstacles the city had faced whilst working towards improving the movement of freight.

6. Involvement of the Local Freight Network in urban planning

Magnus Jaderberg (City of Gothenburg, Sweden)

Magnus Jaderberg's presentation began with the outline of historical problems relating to the movement of freight in Gothenburg. Over the last three years various interventions have been implemented to manage freight distribution. Currently there are no congestion problems in the city centre but problems do remain in other areas (not in City of Gothenburg's control). The Local Freight Network was one of the measures set up to reduce city centre congestion.

The presentation explained how the Freight Network operated; it has stakeholders from various areas who meet regularly to discuss freight operations and identify solutions to the movement of freight in the city. Those involved in the Freight Network are at a level where they are able to influence the decisions made in the city and implement solutions.

A range of measures put in place in Gothenburg over the last three years were then outlined. These measures, amongst others, include provision of delivery time windows in pedestrian areas, implementation of maximum length restrictions for goods vehicles and automatic bollards. A number of other measures which are in progress were also discussed.

7. Best practice, good practice and myths

Tom Zunder (Newcastle University)

Tom Zunder began the presentation by identifying that compared to twenty years ago we are consuming the same amount of goods in terms of weight but requiring double the number of deliveries.

The presentation discussed the quality of urban deliveries and the consequences of logistics sprawl. Various measures to control freight movements were presented, together with the relative strengths and weaknesses of each. These measures included banning lorries, moving freight to trams or trains and using night time deliveries.

Good practice was outlined, together with the ability for urban consolidation centres to be successful. The key example of best practice is planning for freight movements in the city. Examples of enforcement were also considered.

8. Electric vehicle infrastructure and innovation in Tyne and Wear

Sally Herbert (Newcastle City Council)

The presentation began with an outline of the role of Newcastle City Council in the provision of electric cars and their required infrastructure. The details of the Plugged in Places programme were outlined in terms of the number of charging points to be installed and the role of other local authorities in the region.

The role of the Integrated Transport Unit was also outlined, together with details of the adoption of electric cars throughout the Newcastle City Council fleet. Considerations regarding the role of the Traffic Signals team and methods of traffic management in relation to electric charging points were discussed. The electrical point infrastructure in place in Newcastle was shown, and the next steps were outlined, in terms of measures of success – looking at further fleet investment, monitoring the use of charging points amongst other possible measures and areas for work.

9. Question and Answer Session

The session consisted of both preset questions from delegates and delegate questions from the floor targeted at the presentation speakers.

- *Preset Question 1: Do measures taken by the urban freight industry to reduce CO² increase the cost of operations?*

Question by Dr Usha Ramanthan (Lecturer in logistics and supply chain management, Newcastle Business School)

Answered by John Hix (AECOM)

Operators are early adopters of new technology; however this does lead to costs at the outset, for example changing fleet vehicles but should in the longer term provide benefits that outweigh the costs. Many different interventions are available to reduce CO² emissions; in companies key people need to be given time and resources to adequately investigate options and test these before they are rolled out throughout a company.

Answered by Magnus Jaderberg (City of Gothenburg)

The cost of various technologies are not always clear or revealed, and maybe a deterrent for adoption.

- *Preset Question 2: Considering the amount of research information and engineering knowledge available, is it time for some joined up thinking, longer vehicles with increased capacity to trunk goods from region to region, complimented by alternative fuel vehicles (electric for example) for local distribution?*

Question by Jim Hamill (Teamtrain)

Answered by John Hix (AECOM)

There are benefits to longer/heavier vehicles with increased capacity. There are examples worldwide of high capacity vehicles making deliveries. However, there are restrictions for example in the quality of infrastructure and driving standards. In the UK there are no height limits on HGVs, this could facilitate high capacity vehicles. The ability to do this is dependent on local factors – for example blind spot recognition is being adopted.

- *Preset Question 3: As congestion and air quality are not just an issue for large urban areas, do you see a role for consolidation centres/electric vehicles/low emission zones in smaller urban areas or will economies of scale and lack of demand mean that these measures are only implemented in large urban areas?*

Question by Mike Obst (Principal Transport Planning Officer, North Yorkshire County Council)

Answered by Thomas Kirpal (City of Bremen)

A number of solutions to congestion and air quality have been mentioned today. In Germany there are few available market options, particularly for electric vehicles – therefore there are issues surrounding

sales, development opportunities and cost. The solutions needs to be appropriate to the location and a wide range of solutions are not always available, and those that are implemented need to be suitable. The effectiveness of potential solutions needs to be debated, based on compromises by those involved and in a local and geographical context.

- *Floor Question 1: Members want consolidation centres but can't get funding, how can they work?*

Answered by Tom Zunder (Newcastle University)

Consolidation centres are criticised for not having a clear goal or a business plan. They go against a key business requirement of operators; to handle goods as few times as possible. In order to make them successful operators need to see profit. Many of the stakeholders involved also see themselves as having limited or restricted choices. To invest, retailers need to see the economic advantage of the operation. From the outset the purpose of the consolidation centre needs to be identified.

- *Floor Question 2: Is there evidence of town and city centre HGV restrictions leading to retailers moving to out of town locations?*

Answered by Magnus Jaderburg (City of Gothenburg)

In Gothenburg cooperation has been key to the successful implementation of any restrictions. Suppliers and retailers have been consulted and well informed. Control measures decided by those in the city are more likely to be acceptable.

Answered by Tom Zunder (Newcastle University)

There is likely to be a lack of evidence from Europe as out of town shopping locations are particularly common in the UK, but not so in other parts of Europe.

10. Workshop Session Summaries

Delegates split into one of three workshops, to discuss issues relating to urban freight transportation. The workshops enabled a discussion forum to share knowledge, experience and best practice. Each of the three workshops began with a short presentation; followed by wider discussions around the topic area.

Access Restrictions

The main themes from this workshop centred on:

- Are electric vehicles feasible? – considered in terms of cost and emissions from power source development etc.
- Can delivery restrictions be harmonised? Would better signage and access help, along with clearer indication of preferred routes?
- Consultation is important to achieve the best solutions to challenges associated with freight transport.
- Cooperation amongst operators and receivers – would either be willing to open earlier/stay later to facilitate alternative delivery times?
- In Sweden, shops open at 10am, this allows a 'Golden Hour' between 9am and 10am where deliveries in the city centre can be made outside of peak traffic periods.

Consolidation Centres

The group identified a set of requirements in order to make consolidation centres viable.

- Each centre must have a purpose;
- A business model is essential;
- Cooperation of all parties is required (operators, retailers and local authorities);
- It should be part of a package of measures (LEZs, delivery window restrictions); and
- How would success of the centre be measured? eg construction industry centres are considered to be successful.

Other thoughts considered:

- Funding subsidies – over an initial period, but the long term objective would be for centres to operate commercially.
- Idea of compulsory users – this is not considered to be feasible.
- They enable goods storage and effective utilisation.
- Would they move emission problems from one area to another?
- Night time deliveries are not restricted in Newcastle.

Routing and Mapping

The group identified a number of key themes from their discussion:

- Relating to routing products such as satnavs smaller operators generally take longer to invest in new or improved technologies.
- Integration between local authorities is a problem, with differences in preferred routes and mapping arrangements across authorities.
- Only a small proportion of a journey is through the town or city centre 'the last mile' concept – the delivery route is often chosen based on experience rather than guidance from authorities.

11. Site Visits

To bring the conference to a close, delegates were invited to attend one of two organised site visits; to the John Lewis Partnership Newcastle Warehouse or to Smith Electric Vehicles. Both visits were well attended, and offered delegates an insight into industry operations.

12. Summary

These notes have been compiled to summarise the Tyne and Wear European Freight Conference on February 22nd. All presentations, the question and answer session, workshops discussion groups and the site visits have been summarised. Further details of the presentation are available on the Freight Partnership website (<http://www.tyneandwearfreight.info/>).