

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FREIGHT FORUM

**Tuesday 19th June, Brentwood Hotel,
Crown Street, Aberdeen**

Note of Discussions and Actions

**Presenters/
organisers** Derick Murray, Nestrans (Chair) (RGM)
Rab Dickson, Nestrans (RD)
Nicola Laird, Nestrans (NL)
Will Hekelaar, Aberdeen City Council (WH)
Philip Smart, Aberdeenshire Council (PS)
Jim Cargill, Calibre International Ltd (JC)

Attendees Ian Armstrong, SCDI
Richard Freeland, Freeland Freight
Chris Little, RHA
Jip Faas, RHA
Colin Lawson, Colin Lawson Transport
Jason Moir, Dyce Carriers
Colin Johnstone, Dyce Carriers
Kris Bevan, Northlink Ferries
Amye Robinson, Aberdeen City Council
Andy Willox, Federation of Small Businesses
John McGuigan, Aberdeen Harbour Board

Item		Action
1	Introduction & Apologies	
	RGM thanked everyone for attending and gave apologies for Eddie Anderson, who had been due to chair and Paul Finch, who had been due to present. Members around table introduced themselves.	
2	Major Projects Update & Hierarchy: Derick Murray	
	RGM ran through presentation on progress and the roads hierarchy. Focused on the impact that the Diamond Bridge has already had and what the AWPR should be able to achieve.	

	<p>RGM discussed the impact that the AWPR will have on road traffic and looked at the opportunities this will create to reduce traffic in the city centre. Combined with the City Centre Masterplan, there is scope to create a new roads hierarchy and ensure that the city centre is a destination rather than a through route.</p> <p>RGM highlighted the key principles of the roads hierarchy and noted some of the options such as encouraging use of the AWPR and reprioritising radial routes over orbitals to facilitate travel (e.g. Anderson Drive junctions priority could be east/west rather than north/south).</p> <p>Andy Willox (Federation of Small Businesses) noted that it was important to ensure that this was done correctly by involving as many people in consultation as possible. Also commented that signage is very important and will need to be considered carefully in order to ensure people are advised to travel the correct route.</p> <p>RGM commented that there has been a number of surveys already done so there has been good feedback. However, more work is required in order to assess how big a change people are willing to accept. There has not been a decision yet on how this will be done but will likely require a major consultation.</p> <p>RGM agreed that signage is very important and noted that the AWPR is already meeting this, with new signs going up to complement the construction. However if the city centre is changed as well then there will need to be more consideration given to signage in this respect.</p> <p>Jason Moir (Dyce Carriers) asked if there was a plan to make Anderson Drive a congestion zone, or whether HGVs would be banned from using it.</p> <p>RGM did not believe that this would be the case. Aim was to offer an alternative and encourage people to use it through the use of priority at signals and other benefits. Believes that most will likely wish to choose the AWPR and radials with a focus on the east/west movement as this is where the priority will be, with signals prioritising the crossing of Anderson Drive rather than travelling up it. Whether this will require further enforcement depends on whether people are willing to accept it.</p>	
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	<p>Jason Moir also queried whether there will be congestion issues at the Stonehaven roundabout where AWPR meets A90 at rush hour.</p> <p>RGM does not anticipate this being the case given the volume of traffic that will be using the route.</p> <p>The question of enforcement was discussed further with Jason Moir anticipating that this would be the only way for the council to ensure that people follow the recommended routes. With regards to freight, this is particularly due to time pressure and the drivers making the majority of the routing decisions.</p> <p>John McGuigan (Aberdeen Harbour Board) commented that they have up to 600 vehicles per day into the harbour, many turning right from Market Street, which presents a continued challenge on a congested route.</p> <p>RGM agreed that the harbour being in the heart of the city is a challenge and that there needs to be a focus on best using the systems that are available.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>The Civitas Portis Project: Rab Dickson</p>	
	<p>RD ran through his presentation. He summarised the work of the Civitas project and identified some of the key findings from the preliminary baseline work and reports, including the results of the hauliers survey completed early 2018.</p> <p>RD also discussed the main objectives of the project and what is hoped to be achieved, and invited members to help shape this through the later discussion.</p> <p>The baseline reports and survey results are available online through the Nestrans website: 4ABZ1 Baseline Report (Freight Routing); 4ABZ3 Baseline Report (Freight Distribution); and Initial Assessment of Freight in Aberdeen.</p> <p>RGM added that the project will also be looking at the current classification of roads in Aberdeen and whether they are still appropriate following the opening of the AWPR. This may relate to the outcomes of the proposal to make 20mph the default speed limit for urban roads.</p> <p>Jason Moir agreed with the presentation that consolidation needs co-operative working from all parties as one and</p>	

	cannot be prescribed by a single group. However, he also noted that the oil and gas sector have not been amenable to collaborative working in the past.	
4	EcoStars Update: Philip Smart	
	<p>PS ran through his presentation on the current status of EcoStars, noting that the majority of people present in the room were already members but inviting them to speak to other operators.</p> <p>PS advised that there was scope through EcoStars to use telematics if there was an appetite for it.</p> <p>Andy Willox brought up the topic of LEZs and asked whether all cities would be expected to follow the same system, as this would be easier for hauliers travelling long distance to deal with. Does not want different rules for different locations as this could create confusion.</p> <p>PS commented that this is currently difficult to identify as LEZs are still in their early stages.</p> <p>RD added that the Scottish Government are looking for consistency in LEZs, but that it will be up to local governments to decide on specifics.</p>	
5	Collaboration and Opportunities: Jim Cargill	
	<p>JC introduced himself to the group and ran through his presentation. Focused on the potential opportunities for collaboration already identified including with oil and gas for offshore and onshore distribution, last mile deliveries and the use of vehicle hire for small scale operations. Discussed the potential savings of this, both in financial terms and in driver hours.</p> <p>John McGuigan noted that he was interested in the potential savings regarding the oil and gas sector, although also commented that the earlier 600 vehicle comment did not include vehicles associated with oil and gas. He also commented that whilst aspirational, he did not believe the savings mentioned could be possible.</p> <p>JC agreed that the maximum savings were unlikely to be achieved but advised that this was the best solution and that any agreement would likely be somewhere in between.</p>	

	<p>Better to shoot for the moon initially and show what could be possible.</p> <p>There was discussion on what was possible with consolidation and cost savings.</p> <p>Noted that suppliers need to plan for cost savings through increased flexibility and cohesion. Currently there are a lot of empty hours and wasted time for a few busy days. Could ensure that there are the right amount of trucks for the right amount of work, but this will be difficult to achieve without everyone on board. Requires all hauliers to make a change.</p> <p>There was discussion on the challenges of working with the oil and gas sector and the fragmented nature of the industry. Noted that the business model is not based on operational efficiency and currently focuses on transplanting any risk to the haulier.</p>	
6	Q&A/ Discussion	
	See above	
7	Workshop Session	
	<p><i>Distribution Issues:</i></p> <p>Routeing after AWPR opens Peterhead to the south is likely to be straight down the AWPR.</p> <p>Jason Moir commented that the AWPR is beneficial for them as it is conveniently located. Will have a massive difference to costs, time and wages. Could be a difference for drivers getting wage rises with savings. Noted that new technology such as double clutches will also help. Capital investment but will get it back through savings.</p> <p>Colin Lawson (Calin Lawson Transport) noted that some customers will notice quicker routes and will try to benefit from it.</p> <p>Richard Freeland (Freeland Freight) commented that the AWPR will provide increases in distance from Altens to the north. Need to balance whether to take quickest route which could add up to a third more mileage or go shortest route which is still through town. The ideal route is not always the fastest route. Need to consider fuel use as well. Peterhead to Altens is 35 miles now but will be 49 on AWPR. With an hourly rate getting the vehicle to Peterhead quicker is not as much of an advantage vs. reducing fuel consumption. Depends which route will use more fuel.</p>	

	<p>Jason Moir noted the elevation difference in some locations on AWPR may have issues with driving conditions in winter eg. Kirkhill forest.</p> <p>RGM noted that the new harbour will require drivers to go south to go north as cannot turn right from it. To access existing harbour will also need to go around as cannot go through Torry.</p> <p>Colin Lawson asked whether there was more consideration to build a new road through Tullos. RGM noted that there is currently a consultation/study ongoing looking at options.</p> <p>Andy Willox liked the planned restriction regarding access/egress from the new harbour and noted that his members will be supportive of it as well. Asked whether there are plans for improving Wellington Road at the site of the old prison. RGM commented that there is current debate regarding the buying of the land. Wellington Road study is also currently ongoing and this is likely to be an option as part of that assessment.</p> <p>Andy Willox noted that Wellington Road is restricted as it is the only route to the harbour. Cannot use any alternative routes here so everything is on the one route. Has historically been an issue and needs further consideration.</p> <p>Group was asked whether they would be amenable to re-routing after the opening of the AWPR. Dyce Carriers see themselves re-routing for southbound traffic. Regarding local routes in Aberdeen they will need to wait and see. Cannot take the potential risk of running an unknown route without knowing the facts and what works.</p> <p>RGM noted that 15% of the traffic coming into the city is bypassable. The AWPR may also change routes in Aberdeenshire, which might need to be considered. Noted AWPR will not function in isolation but will be in tandem with the City Centre Masterplan.</p> <p>Richard Freeland asked how traffic management is looked at. Seen previously that small roundabouts can work better than 4 stage lights. Fears that there will be 4 stage lights coming in for bypass. RGM noted that decisions on the bypass will be for others as it is under control of Transport Scotland.</p>	
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	<p><i>Efficiency and Last Mile:</i></p> <p>Jason Moir commented that consolidation needs to be cooperative or it won't work. Everyone needs to buy in. Alternative fuels are not being pushed in the freight market due to not being effective or reliable enough yet to invest in. Can see it is gathering momentum but is not there yet.</p> <p>Andy Willox asked if there is anything new in technology that can be used on AWPR? RD noted that one of the Civitas projects originally explored idea of an app but now understands there is better ways of getting information out there. However, there is potential to innovate and would like north east to be at forefront. No money specifically for technology on AWPR but Transport Scotland have hub at South Queensferry. Have cameras all over and can update quickly to inform Traffic Scotland. Mainly central belt at the moment but is being extended to the rest of Scotland. Signs allowing for this are in place on AWPR, so when available the road will be able to show real time journey times, traffic information, etc.</p> <p>Regarding last mile Richard Freeland noted that they were wrong people to discuss with not particularly involved in this aspect. Colin Lawson noted there was an initiative a few years back but didn't work.</p> <p>Jason Moir brought up the FORS system in London. Not an ideal model as there is no competition, with only one company running it. Requirement to pay per vehicle in order to be part of the system, despite most vehicles not going to London.</p> <p>Chris Little (RHA) commented on slide for Amazon (Collaboration and Opportunities presentation). Asked whether there were studies on how many vehicles would be taken off the road in city centre if cargo bikes were used. JC noted he does not know of any studies but Amazon were very keen to invest in this type of scheme. Likely to bypass vehicle restrictions and be able to follow Deliveroo model in small scale deliveries.</p>	
	<p><i>Lorry Parking:</i></p> <p>Truck stops in Netherlands across motorway network are free.</p>	

	<p>Colin Lawson asked whether anyone knew where the lorry park was in Aberdeen. Majority of hauliers in room were unaware. No longer what it was previously, therefore many hauliers park anywhere they can. Drivers do not like parking in lorry parks as facilities can be poor and not pleasant to stay at. Stracathro was mentioned as an example. Due to cost of parking in these locations as well as the quality of them, drivers prefer to park by road.</p> <p>John McGuigan noted that they have drivers ask them to park at Harbour, but cannot do so overnight.</p> <p>RGM noted there was a proposal for a park and ride in Portlethen with lorry parking but Aberdeenshire currently do not have provision for this.</p> <p>Richard Freeland noted that in Aberdeen it is not a large concern (as they are Aberdeen based) but is a concern nationally as the same issues appear everywhere.</p> <p>Would expect the Dutch model, which would require government to build sites to keep people in an area that is safe, clean and people are together.</p> <p>Jason Moir agreed that the current sites are too expensive. Does not want driver to spend £30 of company money each night so drivers tend to stay in places that they know, often not in main locations.</p> <p>Charging is a major issue for operators.</p> <p>Basic human right to have access to facilities and toilets.</p> <p>Andy Willox asked how and who to lobby to. RHA are lobbying to Transport Minister but not likely to change any time soon.</p> <p>A9 dualling has provision for space to be made available for rest areas, facilities for drivers and would include the needs of lorry drivers. RHA believe Transport Scotland could do more than they currently do in this regard and dualling of A96 may provide opportunities for similar.</p> <p>RGM noted that NTS is currently ongoing and parking provision could be considered as part of review. Encouraged hauliers to write in.</p> <p>Richard Freeland noted that driving is not an attractive job due to the conditions that are outwith the direct control of the</p>	
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	<p>hauliers – people are leaving and difficult to attract younger drivers.</p> <p>Fear also if you help younger drivers to get through training etc – large costs but unlikely to stay long term as not attractive to do so.</p> <p>Andy Willox asked Nestrans to write to Transport Scotland. RGM noted that Nestrans would do so but recommended letters have more weight to come from hauliers themselves.</p> <p>Group asked to get guidance on what to say and where to send it. Action for Nestrans to draft some letters and pass them round for operators to personalise and distribute.</p> <p>Group admitted they were unaware of Fraserburgh and Peterhead lorry parks. Noted that viable sites would be more likely to be at either end of the AWPR. If going to Peterhead likely to stop well before arriving there.</p> <p>Believe Altens lorry park no long exists so is not used.</p> <p>Stracathro is privately owned. No competition to rival it and no appetite for hauliers to stay there unless they have no other option.</p>	<p>RD/NL</p> <p>RD/NL</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Close (or feedback/plenary)</p> <p>RD thanked everyone for their contribution and for coming along today. Advised slides and minute will be made available.</p>	