

5a Freight Action Plan refresh

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update members on progress towards a refreshed Freight Action Plan for the north east and to recommend a way toward agreement of a finalised version.

o Background

As members will be aware, Nestrans' Regional Transport Strategy is supported by a number of action plans, which provide greater detail and list specific actions for dealing with key areas of strategic policy. One of these is freight, which was identified as a critical policy area and requiring a supporting document for the Regional Transport Strategy. A Freight Action Plan was approved by the Nestrans Board at its meeting of 30 October 2009.

At its meeting on 28 August 2013, the Board approved a draft Freight Action Plan refresh for consultation.

An email circulation included all members of the Freight Forum and formal letters were sent to both local authorities seeking their consideration of the draft.

o Discussion

A draft Freight Action Plan 2 has been produced and consulted on with members of the Freight Forum, partner local authorities and has been available to the public through the Nestrans' website.

Responses have been received from Aberdeen City Council, the Road Haulage Association, Aberdeen International Airport, Serco Northlink Ferries and Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce. Copies of the responses are attached as Appendices A to E of this report.

o Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. note the responses to consultation on the Freight Action Plan refresh,
2. instruct officers to redraft the Plan in conjunction with Council colleagues, taking account of the comments received and
3. report a finalised version to a future meeting of the Board in the New Year.

RD 4 December 2013

Aberdeen City Council

Your Ref.
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Dear Rab,

Freight Action Plan 2

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the refreshed Freight Action Plan (FAP).

Officers from this service have been involved throughout the update of this plan and in the Freight Forum who have informed much of the content of this Plan. The original FAP has led to very positive activities to assist and support the local freight industry within the City and we look forward to continuing this joint working in line with the refreshed Plan.

Officers have taken the opportunity to consider the final draft and are broadly in agreement with the content. Our comments are as follows:

Action 3. Sustain a regular Freight Forum to enable communication between the north east industry, the freight industry and public sector partners.”

Aberdeen City Council will continue to be an active partner within the Freight Forum in order to maintain discussion with hauliers relating to their activities in the city centre. The Council considers Action 3 to be a priority.

Action 33. Nestrans and its partners will undertake a review of accident locations involving freight vehicles with a view to identifying the key locations where interventions could help improve problem junctions.”

Aberdeen City Council Traffic Safety Unit continues to monitor incidents involving HGV's on an annual basis. Actions will be taken where problems are identified.

The health and safety of those on the road network continues to be a priority for ACC both in terms of air quality and the interaction of HGV's and other vehicles or vulnerable modes. It is important to recognise the actions already taken by local freight industry, and to support and promote the improvements of these areas.

It is suggested that "new" Actions are highlighted within the FAP 2013 and that a list of those completed or not carried forward from the first Plan is provided in an appendix along with a brief summary of work undertaken or the circumstances that make them no longer appropriate. We feel that this will add value and completeness to the new FAP and its predecessor.

This response has been agreed by the Enterprise, Strategy and Planning Committee at its meeting of November 2013.

Please don't hesitate to contact Vycki Ritson – Senior Engineer - Transportation Strategy and Programmes, contact details as above, should you have any queries on the above and I look forward to receiving a copy of the finalised FAP Re-fresh in due course as this will inform the review of the City's Local Transport Strategy which is now underway.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and Sustainable Development

Email response from Serco Northlink Ferries received 12 November 2013

Dear Rab,

I've just read through the draft Nestrans Freight Action Plan for 2013 and was delighted to see that the Northern Isles Ferry service was included. As the Freight Manager for Serco NorthLink Ferries I'd be happy to provide you with information on the services we provide. In addition, I'd be happy to feed into your Freight Forum should you feel that would benefit the group.

Best Regards,

Kris

Kristopher Bevan
Freight Manager

Serco NorthLink Ferries
The Ferry Terminal,
Stromness,
Orkney,
KW16 3BH

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

1.0 Introduction

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) is North-east Scotland's leading private sector, member-focused, business organisation. The Chamber represents more than 1,200 businesses with 90,000 employees. Transport issues are consistently high on the priority list of our members. Research conducted by AGCC consistently shows that members regard the North-east's transport infrastructure as a barrier to growth. In the North-east Business Week Survey published in April 2013, transport connections were identified as having a net negative impact on businesses.

Our research also shows that businesses are negatively affected by the cost of congestion. Many businesses rely on the efficient movement of goods in order to do business, however almost a third of businesses have experienced unacceptable delays in the delivery of goods caused by congestion. We therefore support the creation of a Freight Action Plan, this plan should look to help address the issues so businesses can fulfil their growth potential. We have reviewed the consultation and discussed the content with our members, in particular with those who rely on the sending and receiving of deliveries in order to do business. The comments below reflect the views of these members and we hope these comments are taken into consideration when finalising the Freight Action Plan.

2.0 AGCC views

2.1 What has been achieved to date?

This will be the second Freight Action Plan and we agree that intervention is required to improve the movement of goods. However, like any initiative it is important that all stakeholders understand the benefits of interventions. Therefore to demonstrate continued need and opportunities it would be useful to understand more fully what has been achieved from the original Freight Action Plan. It may be that baseline data is available to assess the successes of the first Freight Action Plan.

For example, in relation to journey times, mode of freight transport used and so on. However, if this data is not available we would recommend that such an exercise is undertaken before the second iteration of the plan is finalised. The final version of the new plan should also include analysis arising from the assessment and be reflected in the outcomes or outputs, which could then be monitored against the newly established baseline study.

This approach would allow outcomes of the new plan to be monitored effectively and also improve future transparency about how objectives and action points were set in the new plan and also any future plans.

2.2 Vision & Objectives

The Chamber in principle supports the suggested vision and objectives of the Freight Action Plan. Chamber members agree that the objectives are appropriate to deliver improvement in the local freight industry.

Members noted that the proposed objectives fit well with the strategic objectives contained within the updated Regional Transport Strategy.

2.3 The Action Plan – Themes, Actions and Deliverability

2.3.1 Themes

Chamber members broadly agree that the proposed themes are the right ones to focus on in order to meet the objectives of the Freight Action Plan. In addition, they also agree with the suggested outcomes which are proposed for each theme.

We have noted that explicit monitoring activities should be undertaken to measure whether these outcomes have been achieved. Members consider that the theme “Adding Value to the North-east Freight Industry” could be strengthened further by adding an additional outcome which refers to the lobbying of government at all levels to encourage them to invest in the regions transport infrastructure.

Previous research conducted by the Chamber in 2012 has shown that 59% of businesses want to see investment in the transport infrastructure in the region. Chamber members regard the inclusion of an outcome which promotes the importance of lobbying for additional infrastructure investment as an important part of ensuring more competitive freight operations in the region.

2.3.2 Actions

Chamber members felt more reference to aspects of the action points for freight (IC9) in the Regional Transport Strategy could be made in the new Freight Action Plan. For example, more priority should be given to promoting mode shift and improving journey times for freight in the action plan.

We would encourage you to review the outcomes of the Freight Action Plan to ensure the strategic action points within the Regional Transport Strategy are reflected and so the freight industry are clear that they will be contributing to the overall delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy.

Action 6

The Chamber notes the action to create a local database of companies, capabilities and local specialisms. We agree that better knowledge of the type of freight businesses that operate in the North-east could assist better promotion of the sector. The Chamber could potentially assist in the delivery of this action and would welcome further discussions on this.

Action 8

Action 8 refers to developing, maintaining and strengthening links to other bodies. We suggest that you include the transport steering group within AGCC as part of that group of organisations. The Chamber has over 100 transport members who have an interest in the delivery of the freight Action Plan. In addition, the Chamber also has a significant membership of energy, food and drink and construction businesses who all rely on efficient delivery and sending of freight.

Engagement with the Chamber through the transport steering group, and Chamber staff, will allow initiatives and outcomes coming from the Freight Action Plan to be disseminated throughout the business community. In turn, this will also support theme 3 to “promote an informed awareness of the North-east’s freight industry”.

Action 35 & 36

Chamber members welcome the inclusion of the local harbours’ in the draft action plan. However, they feel that the plan is weak on activity to promote and improve freight movement from Peterhead Port. We would encourage you to investigate how freight can be better supported around the Peterhead port in the final plan, given the key role it plays in the pelagic and white fishing industry.

2.3.3 Deliverability

We encourage outputs in the plan to be ambitious, but we also stress that they should be deliverable. Much of the action plan relies on external agencies delivering on initiatives on support and it could be that these organisations may not have the resources or drive to deliver their part of the action plan. To ensure deliverability of the action plan, we suggest that Nestrans undertake engagement prior to the Freight Action Plan being finalised, to ensure that external agencies are able to deliver in line with Nestrans' suggestions.

3.0 Improving the proposals

AGCC believe that any policy or legislative change should be assessed against four main principles:

1. Is the plan simple?
2. Is the plan transparent?
3. Will the plan support economic growth?
4. Will the plan be equitable for businesses?

On that basis and having consulted with our members we have summarised our views on how the proposals could be improved.

The Chamber policy team would be happy to assist with further engagement of the Freight Action Plan. Should you wish to discuss the impact of the proposals on the business community in Aberdeen or Aberdeenshire please do not hesitate to contact us.

- Conduct an assessment to find out what has been achieved through the original Freight Action Plan, for the freight industry to date.
- Use the assessment to determine whether the themes and outcomes in the updated action plan are appropriate and conduct a baseline assessment to allow future monitoring.
- Ensure the new Action Plan reflects the action points for freight contained within the Regional Transport Strategy.
- Fully consider some of the specific recommendations made above for example, in relation to reviewing the role of Peterhead Harbour.

The Chamber policy team would be happy to assist with further engagement of the Freight Action Plan. Should you wish to discuss the impact of the proposals on the business community in Aberdeen or Aberdeenshire please do not hesitate to contact us.

Aberdeen International Airport

Freight Action Plan consultation

Nestrans
Archibald Simpson House
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AB24 5AA

27th Nov 2013

Dear sirs,

I write in response to the above consultation.

Aberdeen International Airport (AIA) is Scotland's third busiest airport with around 3.3 million passengers in 2012. This represented an increase of 8% on the previous year, making AIA Scotland's fastest growing major airport. The airport is served by 20 airlines and serves currently serves 49 UK and international destinations.

Importantly the airport provides links to a range of destinations that relate to Aberdeen's position as Europe's oil capital, including Scatsta, Bergen, Kristiansund, Oslo and Stavanger. This role as the energy gateway also makes Aberdeen one of the world's busiest commercial heliports and results in the airport having a higher proportion of business passengers (over 60%) than most other UK airports.

Our revised 2013 Master Plan forecast growth in the coming years, which we expect will take our passenger numbers up to 4 million in 2020 and 5.09 million in 2040. This represents an average growth rate of 2% per annum, broadly in line with DfT forecasts.

Freight operations from the airport are growing year on year. In 2012 a total of 6,890 tonnes left Aberdeen by plane. This figure is just a fraction of the freight market that transits the airport campus. For example, Servisair Cargo handled a total of 12,090 tonnes last year as a mix of both air and road freight, all coming in via their airport depot. For 2013 their total already exceeds this number.¹

As such, it is timely that the airport, in partnership with our freight operators, take this opportunity to feed into the freight action plan. I hope to address the points in the 'Air Freight Actions' individually.

Action 43. Continue to provide a feedback mechanism between the airport, freight bodies, and north east industry through the Freight Forum, the North East Transport Consultative Forum and other existing airport consultation groups.

¹ Figure up to end October 2013 was 12,573 tonnes.

Aberdeen International Airport would be keen to see the membership of the Freight Forum revisited and revised, to better reflect the diversity of the sector. On investigation with on-site freight partners this was a forum of which they were unaware, yet keen to engage with. As such, we feel it would bring benefit to ensure that air freight was represented on this forum, by the individual operators themselves.

We would also like to see the NETCF membership revisited, to ensure that the correct individuals are represented, at an airport operator level.

Aberdeen International Airport will undertake to ensure that NESTRANS are included in all relevant steering groups established, such as for the Surface Access Plan and future Master Plan work.

Action 44. Nestrans will support measures which will enable improvement in the levels of service and overall efficiency of Aberdeen Airport's air freight services.

Under this point we noted that membership of the Freight Forum would allow for better engagement between Nestrans and the relevant companies in order to monitor performance.

Action 45. Nestrans will continue to work with the operators of Aberdeen Airport to support the implementation of the airport Surface Access strategy.

We commit to re-launching the first stage of this plan in the coming months and will ensure that Nestrans have a place on the steering group set up to lead the direction of the strategy itself.

Action 46. Nestrans will collaborate with the operators of Aberdeen International Airport to undertake a needs assessment for improved air cargo and freight handling capabilities.

We whole-heartedly agree that in order to progress and expand the air freight operations in Aberdeen, a substantial study would be beneficial - reflecting where the potential growth could lie. Aberdeen International Airport, and the on-site air freight partners, feel this needs to be done in collaboration with all affected parties and encourage Nestrans to bring a proposal for consideration.

On the final point, we support any work done to minimize the negative impacts of all movements both in and out of our airport and support the work being done by our freight partners to monitor their own environmental performance.

I do hope that this response reflects our willingness to work together to support and develop air freight opportunities in and out of the North-east of Scotland. This response has been developed with input from both DHL and Servisair Cargo in Aberdeen.

Best regards,



David O'Neill, interim Commercial Director, Aberdeen International Airport

Road Haulage Association

RHA Response to NESTRANS Freight Action Plan Consultation November 2013

The Road Haulage Association is content with the draft which covers all the issues affecting freight transport. We support the specific objectives and focused themes and will make every effort to contribute to the success of the plan.

After studying the proposed actions, in particular, we are pleased with:

Action 9 Construction of the AWPR and A96 upgrade. These schemes have always had RHA support as they will improve journey times, reduce emissions and improve road safety.

Action 11 Improved communication with planning authorities. When the two councils were involved with the FQP many years ago, all freight operators were happy with the rapport with the various planning departments and we are pleased to see this continue and develop.

Action 15 Supporting the adoption of best practice in freight operations. RHA will continue to assist and promote freight best practice at every opportunity.

Action 22 Nestrans support for dedicated lorry parking within a park and ride site. Nestrans have led the way in assisting the road freight industry. This initiative deserves success and to be promoted as a good way to utilise this amenity.

Action 26 Potential HGV priority on principal freight routes. Again, Nestrans has been to the forefront in implementing schemes that not only will benefit road freight but reduce emissions.

Action 32 Promote awareness of freight vehicle requirements amongst other road users. We fully support this action and would be delighted to assist Nestrans in any way necessary to help reduce accidents and improve understanding of all road users' needs.

Over the years we have worked well with both councils through the Freight Quality Partnership and latterly with Nestrans. The vision for improvement enhances their reputation and shows an excellent understanding of freight requirements.

We acknowledge the need to monitor air quality within certain areas of Aberdeen City and with continuing reductions in lorry emissions we are confident freight is making a significant contribution to air quality improvement. This will be more evident with the introduction of Euro6 standard in early 2014.

As has been shown in the past, the engagement with freight operators has proved beneficial within the Nestrans area and it is pleasing to see many hauliers attending the Freight Forum meetings. Other RTP's do not get this level of support.

RHA will continue to work with Nestrans and look forward to contributing to the successful implementation of the Freight Action Plan.

Phil Flanders

Director, Scotland & Northern Ireland