
SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - AIR QUALITY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2014

Present: Councillors Hammond (Chair), Coombs, Galton, Lloyd and Parnell

Apologies: Councillors McEwing and O'Neill

10. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignation of Councillor Thorpe from the Panel, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillor Lloyd to replace him for the purpose of this meeting.

11. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September, 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Page 8, Minute 9, Bullet Point 7 – “the data showed a 61% increase”

12. **ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS, DP WORLD SOUTHAMPTON AND THE SUSTAINABLE DISTRIBUTION CENTRE**

The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive relating to the impact that the operations at the Port of Southampton had on air quality.

A joint written statement was provided by Associated British Ports and D P World Southampton (DPWS) in the appendices to the report, together with the report from Meachers Global Logistics on a Sustainable Distribution Centre.

Aart Hille Ris Lambers from DPWS gave more details on the statement provided:-

- October was always a very busy month as deliveries were needed for the Christmas period.
- Peak hours within the port were not the same as the usual commuter peak traffic hours. The peak port hours were 13.00 to 16.00 hours.
- Bookings were restricted to 125 per hour in order for the vehicles within the docks to be serviced in an appropriate time.
- 36% of the containers were now carried by rail, reducing the number of lorry movements by 80,000 per year. This compared to 28% in 2007.
- There had been a large investment in the rail link. Including the gauge height of the tunnel to allow high cube containers to use the rail links; the Freightliner terminal had new cranes; and prioritising rail containers discharging from vessels as there was no flexibility on the train movements in the same way that there was with lorries.
- Energy reduction was currently measuring 22%.
- They were looking into the possibility of trials for compressed gas powered straddle carriers.
- Had previously trialled hybrid straddle carriers however they had not deliver.

- There had been major developments ship side with the opening of Terminal 5 which now meant new larger ships could berth. The newer ships were more energy/ fuel efficient.
- In January 2015 there was an agreement being introduced for ships to burn cleaner fuel. Marine gas oil was more expensive but less polluting.

The following responses were received to questions raised:-

- In principle DPWS would be supportive of a bid for the City to achieve Ultra-Low Emission City (ULEC) Status. And also involvement in community projects. There would need to be work with the community and viable for the business.
- The intension was to increase the use of the rail facilities, but this would be customer driven. There was pollution associated with rail however the impact was less than that caused by the road journeys. Currently it tended to be the shorter distances that the journey would be by road. Customers with deliveries further than Birmingham would look to use rail freight.
- London deliveries were not often rail freight. In order to go into London the vehicles have to be compliant with the rules of the Low Emissions Zone, so they would generally be newer and more environmentally friendly. This has had a knock on effect and Southampton is having cleaner vehicles visiting the City.
- Ship to shore power was still an area that was limited due to there being no industry standard on what equipment would be used. Therefore it was not viable to invest in quay side equipment that may not be suitable.
- Consideration of the increasing the slots available for vehicles could possibly be considered. They currently do not go over the current 125 slots per hour. Hours of operation had been increased recently over the weekend period however the take up had not been sufficient to continue. This would have been partly due to the current shortage of drivers and the rules regarding their driving hours.
- With regards to queuing lorries at Dock Gate 20, the Vehicle Booking System (VBS) meant that vehicles do not arrive at the docks unless they have a slot, therefore there should not be any queues. If drivers arrived earlier than their booking they were able to contact the VBS helpdesk to amend the time of the booking to ensure vehicles were not queuing. Parking areas within the docks was an issue and therefore it was important to ensure all vehicles were only arriving if they had a current VBS slot.
- There was a need for a local lorry parking facilities, particularly at night, in order for the lorries to have a place to go if they did not have a current VBS slot. Other ports had such facilities and they worked very well. They were privately operated and provided facilities for the drivers as well as parking.
- Idling of vehicles was not an issue. Whilst moving around areas there would be a small amount of idling, however when vehicles were waiting engines were switched off. It would not be economical for the engines to be idling.
- In principle DPWS would be supportive of a no idling policy as long as it did not affect the drivers getting to their destination or parking up.
- There was no need to have enforcement measures for drivers arriving without a VBS slot, as this did not occur. If companies were not registered to use the system then they were unable to collect containers.
- Companies were encouraged to use the off peak slots with the current charging structure. Peak time slots were more expensive. Some off peak slots were free.
- DPWS would be prepared to consider looking at supporting a monitoring station within the dock, dependant on cost.

- DPWS would be able to provide details of companies that were already using Liquid Nitrogen Gas (LNG) as an alternative fuel.

Congratulations were given to DPWS for being awarded Global Port Operator of the Year 2014.

13. **BUS COMPANIES : FIRST HAMPSHIRE AND GO SOUTH COAST**

The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive relating to evidence from two major bus companies operating in Southampton and the actions being taken or that were planned to address air quality in Southampton.

Andrew Wickham from Go South Coast, operators of the BlueStar and Uni-Link buses in Southampton and Marc Reddy from First Bus Southampton both gave presentations, which included details of their current fleet and the measures that were in place to improve the emissions even further.

Both stated the importance of encouraging bus travel and that this could only be done by working in partnership with local authorities and also retailers.

The following responses were received to questions raised:-

- Hybrid buses were not particularly economical and that in most cases were only operational with support. There were issues with regards to range; and recharging for fully electric vehicles. Battery technology for these types of vehicle needed to be developed.
- Both operators would be supportive in principle of a no idling zone however there would need to be consideration of when buses were collecting/ dropping passengers and whether at these times it would be economical for the engine to stop. Stop/start technology was not at the same level for bus engines as it was for modern cars. Though buses do have idling limiters installed.
- Both operators would also be supportive of ULEC status, however they would need to evaluate what the impact would be.
- The best buses with regards to lowest emission levels were not specifically allocated to the routes with the worst air quality, however in reality these routes did often have these vehicles as they were often the busiest and the newest buses were allocated. Hybrid vehicles were often used on the western approach.
- The new technology for the Euro VI engines has taken longer to develop for the bus engines. It was thought that they may be available in 2015.
- Details for Southampton fleets were:
 - First Bus – 40% Euro V, 35% Euro IV and 25% Euro III
 - Go South Coast – 32% Euro V, 6% Euro IV and 62% Euro III
- If the increase in bus travel generated additional profit it would allow investment in the fleets.
- It was noted that the buses used for football match days were not part of the services provided by either First or Go South Coast. These were private organised by the Club. And although the emissions from these vehicles appeared to be poor they were only used for a very limited period and therefore did not have a large impact on the overall air quality.

- The introduction of the telematics systems initially caused some concern amongst the drivers, however they now see it as a tool to improve. It has created a healthy competition amongst staff.
- There was a preference to keep buses on the road rather than pulling into laybys when collecting and dropping off. This also created traffic calming.
- Both operators confirmed that priority bus lanes were the best option. Not only did this improve the journey time for the current users, it was a good way to encourage new users.
- Go South Coast indicated that there were plans to replace their Euro III buses. They invested year on year. The older part of the fleet was used less and were often only used for the college/school runs.
- It was reported that evening services had remained unchanged, however there had been some reduction in the night time service.
- Information was given about multi tickets and also that it was possible to purchase family tickets.
- It was agreed that advertising to reach non bus users was an issue but the operators were looking at using many different options as possible.
- Concerns were raised relating to queues of empty buses causing traffic delays along Shirley High Street. This caused cars to be stationary and creating more pollution. The suggestion of smaller buses during non-peak times was probably not a viable option as it would mean that operators would need to have two fleets. It was also important to remember that although the buses may be less than at capacity at this part of the route this did not mean that there were not higher numbers of passenger as other points, particularly with the cross city routes.
- Contactless payment systems may be something that could be introduced in the future however with different fare levels this would be very complicated with regards to the technology.
- Both bus companies indicated it would be helpful if the Council restricted certain types of land use. For example 'pop-up' car parks that appeared whilst waiting for land to be developed were not welcomed as they undermined the Council and the bus companies.