

AVIATION FORUM

16 April 2014

PRESENT: Councillors George Bathurst (Chairman), Malcolm Beer and John Lenton.

Regular Attendees: John Holdstock, Peter Hooper, M Jamieson and Paul Jennings.

Officers: Wayne Coles, Rob Cowan, Craig Miller, Chris Nash and Henri Rapson.

PART I

ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Alan Mellins.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Malcolm Beer declared a personal interest in matters relating to the expansion of Heathrow Airport due to its effect on Windsor where he was a resident.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 12 March 2014 be approved.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

In accordance with paragraph C2.2 of the Councils Constitution the Chairman of the Panel agreed to vary the order of business of the agenda.

ITEM 7 – SASIG NEWS BULLETIONS AND PARTY CONFERENCE SUMMARIES

The Forum received an update from Chris Nash, Team Leader – Environmental Protection, regarding SASIG (Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group). It was noted that SASIG was a group of Local Authorities all with an interest in strategic aviation issues.

Mr Nash noted that the SASIG was to meet on 7 May 2014. The SASIG would consider noise matrices, independent noise and their recommendations to the Davies Commission.

It was noted that new measures were to be introduced whereby aircraft would be held over Holland and Ireland. This would avoid aircraft holding over the stacks.

The Forum noted that a report had previously been published by ANASE (Attitudes to Noise from Aviation Sources in England). The report had initially received criticism from the government. However the SASIG had reviewed the report and concluded that its

findings were in line with current studies in Europe. The report placed the UK 'light-years' behind the rest of Europe in terms of noise.

ITEM 8 – HACC UPDATE

The Forum received an update from Councillor Malcolm Beer regarding the recent activity of HACC (Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee).

The Forum noted that the Davis Commission had recommended a review of HACC. The outcome would likely lead to a reduction of Council representatives, but not a reduction of representatives from the private sector. A working group was looking at the terms of reference. It was also noted that the secretary of HACC might be made redundant by Heathrow Airport Limited, despite the fact that HACC was independent of the Airport and therefore the secretary was not employed by Heathrow.

The Forum also noted the development of the 'Back Heathrow' campaign. Councillor Beer noted that the campaign amounted to scaremongering as Heathrow would not be forced to close should it fail to secure permission to build an additional runway. This was because the closure would lead to the loss of thousands of jobs.

It was noted that the Chief Executive of Heathrow Airport Limited was going to retire. It was suggested that this was due to dissatisfaction by HAL's Board regarding the handling of Boris Johnson, Mayor of London.

A presentation regarding Heathrow Hub had taken place, presented by an ex-Concorde pilot and other colleagues.

Heathrow were still considering appealing the refusal of their proposed north runway improvements by Hillingdon. This refusal had been grounded in inadequate noise mitigation. Hounslow objected to the Cranford Agreement. RBWM also expressed concern regarding noise mitigation and would only support the discontinuance of the Cranford Agreement if noise mitigation was improved in Windsor and the surrounding area. It was noted that there was a school at the end of the runway which would have to be closed should the Cranford Agreement be discontinued. This would allow take offs on the northern runway which were prohibited under normal operations by the agreement.

Councillor Beer noted that he was trying to push RBWM through the door with regards to the careers and apprenticeship schemes offered by Heathrow. It was noted that there were 5 priority Boroughs in this regard and RBWM was not on the list. Harjit Hunjan, Community and Business Partnerships Manager, was noted as working to improve this situation however he needed support.

The Forum learned that the NTK Working Group had been disbanded due to low attendance. The Group had mainly been attended by environmental officers from the surrounding Local Authorities. A noise group had been set up in its place and an environmental officer from Hounslow was attending.

Councillor Beer noted that there were still planes taking off late at the night under the dispensation rules. This continued to cause annoyance for residents in Windsor.

It was noted that the new Terminal 2 opened in early June 2014 and that it was nearly as big as Terminal 5. Terminal 2 would handle an enormous number of passengers.

Looking forward, Councillor Beer noted that HACC would continue to monitor the situation regarding an appeal of the Cranford Agreement. It was noted that, if the matter was appealed it would likely be considered by a Parliamentary Committee to avoid a long winded tribunal similar to that of the Terminal 5 appeal.

The Track Keeping group would still publish figures. Regarding Operational Freedoms trials, certain aspects were being trialled again despite no value being found in the first trials. This included changes to take-off routes whereby planes flew directly over Windsor as opposed to turning to fly by Windsor's flanks. This allowed for planes to take off closer together however it exacerbated the noise problem for residents.

Smoothing trials were also taking place. This allowed for flights originally scheduled between the busy 6am to 7am period to take place between 5am and 6am. This trial was noted as spreading the load and allowing for more alternation. However the Forum noted that Windsor did not have alternation. The local community was upset by this development.

ITEM 9 – LAANC UPDATE

The Forum received an update from Councillor Malcolm Beer regarding the recent activity of LAANC (Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council). It was noted that LAANC covered both noise and environmental nuisance.

The LAANC website was noted as having been unavailable since January 2014. As a result, the webmaster had been sacked and the Clerk of Old Windsor Parish Council was restoring the site. Finding an appropriate domain name for the site had proven difficult as over 40 organisations had the name LAANC, many having some connection to Los Angeles, USA.

The Forum noted that the Focus of LAANC was responses to night flights and the early conclusion of the Davis Commission.

It was noted that there had been a gradual increase to 470,000 out of 480,000 capacity flights per annum. However there had been substantially higher passenger seat take up to increase passenger numbers.

Compared with other international airports, it was noted that Heathrow was losing ground to Dubai which was rapidly growing.

Councillor Beer informed the Forum that various people, including the London Councils, would be meeting Davies Commission, on 10 and 17 June 2014.

The Forum noted the Quieter Heathrow sound proofing project which had had very few take ups. Only 200 people had signed up, most of whom were in the 100% payment zones which were the noisiest. These did not include the Royal Borough.

ITEM 5 – PRESENTATION FROM GATWICK AIRPORT LIMITED – PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL SECOND RUNWAY (1930-2030)

The Forum received a presentation from Mr Alistair McDermid, Airports Commission Executive Director, Gatwick Airport Limited, regarding Gatwick Airport Limited's proposals for an additional second runway.

Mr McDermid's presentation focused on three elements. First, he described the transformation of Gatwick. Second, what the problem was and how the options available compared. Third, he described the consultation undertaken by Gatwick and outlined the pros and cons of an expanded Gatwick.

Mr McDermid noted that Gatwick Airport was under new ownership and as a result there was a different 'feel' to the business. The Forum noted Gatwick Airport Limited's mission statement which was to "compete to grow and become London's airport of choice". Mr McDermid emphasised the need to compete and stated the word had not been given significant recognition. By way of example, it was noted that BAA had been broken up to give users a better deal.

The Forum noted a number of graphs in Mr McDermid's PowerPoint presentation which provided indicators that service at Gatwick had improved. It was noted that improvements had begun when ownership changed. There was a focus on attracting new airlines and it was noted that the Indonesian airline had been successfully attracted. There had been an increase from 30 million in the previous year to 35 million customers in the current year. Projections were strong with an estimation there would be 38 million customers the following year.

Mr McDermid raised the question of whether or not Gatwick could meet the demands of the Airport Commission and he advised the Forum that forecasts indicated they could. It was noted that Gatwick had the right type of capacity as airlines varied. BA was only one business model and a globally declining business model at that. Mr McDermid informed the Forum that EasyJet was now the biggest UK airline and RyanAir was bigger than EasyJet. Increasingly, the world was changing. For both long and short hauls, there was a shift in the market as customer preference moved away from 'legacy airlines' in favour of good value airlines. It was noted that 20% of EasyJet customers were commercial. Furthermore, EasyJet did not see their competition as RyanAir but BA. Additionally, EasyJet's profits were generated from short haul flights – the largest market, where BA only broke even.

The Forum noted that the Far East wanted London as a destination. This was a bigger market than the European and American markets together. Between 2006 and 2014, all growth of demand was from the Far East via Middle Eastern hubs. It was noted that London was the best connected city in the world, with a third more connections than New York. However it was noted that problems would arise if there was not an increase in runway capacity.

The Forum considered the projected growth of demand for 2012 to 2050. It was noted that though demand for all types of flight would increase (short haul, long haul to emerging markets, long haul to established destinations, transfers) short haul flights

would continue to make up approximately 60% of the demand. It was noted that Gatwick handled 1% more short haul flights than Heathrow with one less runway.

It was Mr McDermid's position that Heathrow Airport placed too great a focus on the transfers element of the market which was a misunderstanding of demand. Furthermore, as aeroplane technology advanced, planes were able to fly for longer reducing customers reliance on connections.

It was noted that the low cost airlines made their profits by making three rotations per day to keep costs down. Heathrow Airport found it difficult to turn the planes around quick enough to allow for three rotations in one day. An extra runway would exacerbate this.

A further runway at Gatwick Airport would provide extra connectivity, allowing for 27 more destinations than would be available if Heathrow Airport introduced a further runway. Competition between the two airports would improve as 82% of routes would be contested.

The Forum also noted that Heathrow charged passengers the highest fee for using the airport. It was currently £20 to fly in or out of the airport making it the most expensive in the world. The introduction of the third runway would see this increase to £35. In comparison, Gatwick charged £9 to fly in or out of the airport, and this would increase to £12 with an additional runway.

Mr McDermid noted that Gatwick had no duty to hold consultations however they had done so anyway. There were 3 alternative options.

- Option 1 – a new runway 585m south of the existing runway with one runway used for landings and the other used for take-offs.
- Option 2 – a new runway 1,045m south of the existing runway with one runway used for landings and the other used for take-offs, and a new terminal between the runways.
- Option 3 – a new runway 1,045m south of the existing runway with both runways used for landings and take-offs, and a new terminal between the runways.

Consultation ran from 4 April 2014 until 16 May 2014 seeking views on the three options. There had been 16 public consultation exhibitions. The questionnaire was available online at gatwickairport.com/consultation.

Mr McDermid informed the Forum that Gatwick Airport was the best connected airport in the UK bar none. Further, plans were in place to increase public transport. There would be a 50% increase in rail capacity and 25% increase in road capacity.

The Forum considered the Noise impact of Gatwick in comparison with Heathrow. It was noted noise at Gatwick would quadruple by 2050 if a second runway was introduced. However the noise would be significantly greater from Heathrow.

The Forum noted the grant scheme in place for affected residents. It was noted as a generous scheme and if it was applied to Heathrow it would cover residents in Windsor. It had been pledged that the same scheme would be in place for those affected by the second runway. Those worst affected by the scheme would have their council tax paid

indefinitely so long as they lived in the property. This was described as a start of a dialogue and discussions were on-going.

Mr McDermid took questions from the Forum. The Forum took the opportunity to thank Mr McDermid for an excellent presentation and confirmed their support of Sussex Council's position regarding Gatwick.

The Forum questioned the possibility of increased connectivity between Gatwick and Heathrow. It was noted that this would require a great amount of investment in the rail network which would only support a small amount of the market which was not justifiable.

Also, it was suggested that transport links between Windsor and Gatwick were in need of improvement. However the Forum learned that most customers came from Central London where the better transport links were.

It was suggested that computers could link the major airports in London improving connectivity.

Chris Nash, Team Leader – Environmental Protection, highlighted the need for a balanced economic approach from both airports and that Gatwick's proposal appeared to reflect this.

It was noted that Gatwick was to make its submissions to the Airport Commission by 14 May 2014 and that a letter of support from the Borough would be beneficial.

The Forum thanked Mr McDermid for giving his presentation.

ITEM 10 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ITEM 6 – AIRPORTS COMMISSIONING DRAFT RESONSE

The Forum noted that they would consider the proposals of both Gatwick Airport and Heathrow Hub before discussing their response. Heathrow Hub would attend the next Forum meeting.

The response would be completed in time for Phase Two of the Davies Commission in Autumn.

ITEM 11 – DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were noted as to be confirmed.

MEETING

The meeting, which began at 7.00pm ended at 8.20pm.