

## **AVIATION FORUM**

**8 January 2015**

PRESENT: Councillors George Bathurst (Chairman), Malcolm Beer, Simon Dudley and Sayonara Luxton (Substitute).

Also in attendance: Councillors Christine Bateson, Wisdom Da Costa, Carwyn Cox, Lynda Yong.

Martin Bater, Robert Buick, Andrew Davies, Nigel Davies, Philip Dewey, Gary Evans, Lilly Evans, Anita Goddard, Patrick Griffin, Councillor Dorothy Hayes MBE (Bracknell Forest Council), Jamie Jamieson, Mark Johnson, Adrian Needham, Geoff Paxton, Nicola Pryer, Jack Rankin, Duncan Reed, Jan Sitkowski, Councillor Chris Turrell (Bracknell Forest Council), Tony Virgo and Paul Wheaton.

Officers: Rob Cowan (Clerk), Louisa Dean (Communications and Marketing Manager), Craig Miller (Community Protection and Enforcement Services Lead) and Chris Nash (Team Leader - Environmental Protection).

### **PART I**

#### **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed the Forum.

The Chairman informed the Forum that the meeting would be audio recorded.

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor John Lenton, Councillor Sayonara Luxton kindly agreed to substitute.

Apologies were also received from Paul Jennings, a regular attendee who wished to inform the Forum that he could not work under such undemocratic restrictions.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman declared a personal interest as he supported the Windsor Link Railway which was a competing solution to the Southern Railway Project discussed in item 'RBWM Submission to the Airport Commission'.

#### **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 10 November 2014 be approved.**

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

## MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman gave attendees who had registered to speak the opportunity to make comments. He also stated that he would relax the public speaking rules.

Dorothy Hayes, Councillor for Bracknell Forest, was of the opinion that Heathrow should demonstrate to residents of Bracknell Forest, Ascot and the surrounding area that flight noise had returned to pre-trial levels by extending the range of data available on their WebTrak online tool from 90 days to 365 days. Thus allowing residents to compare a pre-trial day in March or June of last year with a post-trial day in December. She questioned when Heathrow Airport would make the pre-trial months available. Mr Nash stated that RBWM would press Heathrow for this information so a fair comparison could be made.

Paul Wheaton, an effected resident, questioned why Ascot had been excluded from any Heathrow Hub exhibitions. Mr Nash highlighted that RBWM had historically spoken with the Chairman of Heathrow Hub, Mr Jock Lowe. He would ask Mr Lowe why the wider communities including Ascot had not been invited to their exhibitions, and ask they be included going forward.

**ACTION: Chris Nash, Team Leader - Environment Protection to contact Heathrow Hub requesting wider communities such as Ascot be invited to their exhibitions.**

## CRANFORD AGREEMENT APPEAL UPDATE

The Forum received an update from Chris Nash, Team Leader - Environment Protection, regarding the Cranford Agreement.

Mr Nash informed the Forum that the Cranford Agreement was a long standing verbal agreement in place between Heathrow Airport and the government which prohibited take offs over Cranford village. The agreement had been abolished which would allow fairer respite distribution. However Heathrow needed planning permission to install taxi-ways which had been refused by the London Borough of Hillingdon. The Airport had appealed this refusal to the planning inspectorate.

RBWM had submitted a letter dated 18 November 2014 to the planning inspectorate outlining the Council's support for Heathrow. The letter noted the following:

- The need to share the noise burden,
- The need to bring long overdue respite to the Windsor communities (acknowledging some communities would experience a net gain in air traffic movements).
- The dangers of mixed mode.
- The potential for intensifying the operations above the current cap of 480,000 air traffic movements which was described as a key risk.
- A s.106 agreement be undertaken to protect residents by increasing noise mitigation packages and additional noise monitors.

No response had been received to RBWM's letter yet. It was believed that the enquiry would begin on 2 June 2015 and last for approximately 12 days.

## RESIDENT POLL ON POTENTIAL FUTURE EXPANSION AT HEATHROW AIRPORT

The Forum received an update from Craig Miller, Community Protection and Enforcement Services Lead, regarding the resident poll on potential future expansion at Heathrow Airport.

It was noted that the poll began on 8 January 2015 and was carried out by Ipsos Mori. The Poll would obtain the responses of 1,000 residents via telephone. The results would be considered for inclusion in the response to the Davies Commission.

The Poll would ask the following questions and provide residents with multiple choice answers which indicated their strength of support:

1. To what extent do you support or oppose the option for a new runway to the North West of Heathrow airport?
2. To what extent do you support or oppose the option to provide a new runway at Heathrow airport by extending the existing northern runway to the West?
3. And to what extent do you support or oppose the building of a new runway at Gatwick Airport?
4. In your opinion, should the number of flights at Heathrow Airport be increased, reduced, or remain the same as they are currently?
5. And in your opinion, should the number of night flights at Heathrow Airport be increased, reduced, or remain the same as they are currently? By night flights, I mean flights between the hours of 11.30pm and 6.30am.

Concern was raised by attendees that polling 1,000 residents was too low a number however it was noted that this number was arrived at in consultation with Ipsos Mori who were a leading company in market research. The 1,000 residents would be representative of the community. Furthermore, polling 1,000 residents produced results with 95% confidence and polling 10,000 residents produced results with 97% confidence. Mr Miller noted that the poll would provide scientific and robust results which could not be argued as having a bias. The poll would provide a digestible amount of background information informing residents as to what the Davies Commission was considering.

Louisa Dean, Communications and Marketing Manager, informed the Forum that the communications team was raising awareness of the issues surrounding the possible expansion of Heathrow Airport through a number of press releases and the use of social media. An article would also be included in the next edition of the Council's newspaper, Around the Royal Borough, which was published in February.

Councillor Malcolm Beer expressed dissatisfaction with the project, he believed more needed to be done to fight Heathrow's scare tactics. However Councillor Simon Dudley described the poll as democratic. The Chairman highlighted that the poll allowed RBWM to base its argument against the expansion of Heathrow on facts.

## RBWM SUBMISSION TO THE AIRPORT COMMISSION

The Forum received an update from Chris Nash, Team Leader - Environment Protection, regarding RBWM's submission to the Airport Commission. It was noted that Mr Nash would be working exclusively on the submission until its completion.

Mr Nash informed the Forum that the Aviation Forum's technical working group had met on 23 December 2014. He noted that there was a large volume of documents to read. Mr Nash stated that work was focused on the points which affected residents as well as strengthening technical points.

The Forum considered how RBWM was to respond to each of the questions set by the Airport Commission.

Question 1 asked "what conclusions, if any, do you draw in respect of the three short listed options?" It was noted that RBWM's response would cover the following key points:

- Noise, including inappropriate mitigation, respite, night flights and further ANASE. It would be reinforced that the current impact was not acceptable.
- Number of ATMs (especially new communities), flight paths, operations in interim period
- Housing Impact (including the amount planned for RBWM)
- Surface access, infrastructure demand, air quality
- Flooding
- Landscape, townscape, community cohesion impacts and tourism.
- Economic Considerations (including the amount of public financing), support for the expansion of Gatwick Airport on economic grounds, monopoly considerations and 'Hub' status considerations (and P2P).
- Future Implications, for example runway 3 necessitating runway 4.
- Reference to health studies (pollution, noise, school performance / cognition). It was noted that studies would have to be evidence based.

Question 2 asked "do you have any suggestions for how the short-listed options could be improved i.e. their benefits enhanced or negative impacts mitigated?" RBWM's response would highlight that the Council did not support the Heathrow expansion under any circumstances and would support the expansion of Gatwick Airport on economic grounds. Councillor Beer highlighted that there were environmental benefits to the Gatwick Airport option as well as economic grounds.

Question 3 asked "do you have any comments on how the commission has carried out its appraisal?" The RBWM response would note that the Council generally supported the commission, however the response would cover inappropriate timescales, concern over transparency and missing information relating to housing, mitigation, flooding, surface access and flight paths.

Question 4 asked "in your view, are there any relevant factors that have not been fully addressed by the Commission to date?" RBWM's response would differentiate between factors where more information was required and factors where information was not supplied at all. The response would cover the following focus points:

- Housing plans and the requirements on Local Authorities to meet housing needs.
- Noise mitigation plans and ensuring they were future-proofed.
- Surface access / AQ plan.

- Flooding plans.
- Inaccuracy of some of documents.

Question 5 asked “do you wish to comment on how the Commission has appraised specific topics (as defined in the 16 appraisal modules) including methodology and results”. The RBWM response would cover the 16 modules including the following points:

- Strategic fit, which was how the airport fitted into the local landscape. This covered air traffic movements, passenger numbers, hub status, possible exposure as well as local plan considerations.
- Surface access, which covered transport to the airport. It was noted that infrastructure was already unfit for purpose.
- Noise, including metrics and how it was calculated.
- Air quality, highlighting the congested road network which would be exacerbated.
- Water and flood risk, highlighting the abhorrent lack of mitigation.
- Place, including planning implications on land-take, landscape, townscape and heritage considerations.
- Quality of life.
- Community and the loss of community cohesion.
- Operational efficiency which was based on economics, meaning how the airport was going to run including safety and noise concerns.

Mr Nash also noted that he would ask the commission how they had arrived at their statement regarding the balance between impact and benefits which had no clear methodology. He also noted that the impact of the runways needed to be looked at as cumulative rather than considering each runway in isolation.

Councillor Beer highlighted that no one knew what the new flight paths patterns would be.

Councillor Lynda Yong highlighted that there were a number of special protection areas with endangered species and suggested that they be noted in submissions. Mr Nash noted he was keen to draw on specialisms that might be effected and collate this information. The Chairman noted that the Heathrow Hub option would destroy Windsor Castle as a tourist attraction and a location for state visits. He also noted that the north-west option would destroy Eton as a learning establishment.

Questions 6 (sustainability assessments) and 7 (business cases) would be considered after the response to question 5 had been drafted. However it was noted that the Heathrow option relied on ‘hub’ status when data showed the growth market was ‘point to point’.

It was suggested by one attendee that the Southern Railway Project, connecting Heathrow to Staines, was not a thoroughly thought out project. He believed work needed to be done to show this so assumptions regarding transport links would have to be reassessed.

It was noted that the deadline for submissions was 3 February 2015. RBWM had requested an extension of time though no response had been received.

**ACTION: Mr Nash to circulate the All-Party Parliamentary Group document 'Noise from Heathrow Airport'.**

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: The Forum endorsed the submission to the Airport Commission.**

### PARTNERSHIP BODIES

Councillor Malcolm Beer informed the Forum that there was no recent activity of LAANC (Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council) or HACC (Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee), apart from noting LAANC was preparing its own submission to the Airport Commission.

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman opened the floor for attendees to make any further comments.

Anita Goddard, a resident, was concerned about noise in the Datchet area. She felt that residents had not been consulted and were unaware of the effects the changes would have on the area. She informed the Forum that she was not a sound engineer however it was clear to her that the noise level would be very high. If the information was presented in plain English there would be public outcry. She asked how residents could be informed that they were going to be living under a runway and Datchet would be ruined. The Chairman stated that this could be done by the RBWM communications team, word of mouth and attending meetings such as the Forum.

Mr Nash stated that he understood that the terminology could be overwhelming. The commission had requested an Independent Noise Authority be organised however this had not been done. He noted that RBWM could advocate that this be set up and work through the communications team to get the message out. However it was difficult to provide details as Heathrow had not produced any flight plans etc.

Councillor Yong highlighted that the trials had made it clear how much of a problem the expansion of Heathrow would be. She also noted a huge community in Bracknell Forest had been affected as well.

Councillor Beer highlighted that the problem was the same for Old Windsor and West Windsor. He informed the Forum that he had arranged a public meeting at Ascot race course on 20 January 2015. He hoped to coordinate this with the Borough.

Alan Davies questioned how much greater AQ64 was than AQ63. He also noted that Heathrow was mounting a scare campaign and RBWM needed to rebut this in publications such as Around the Royal Borough. Mr Nash responded that the noise would double between AQ64 and AQ63. It was noted that it was hard to explain what each number was, but he likened AQ100 to a firework and AQ70-80 was comparable to a Hoover. It was noted that the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended 55DBA

for outside. RBWM were using this standard as their reference point. Mr Nash also stated that noise background was lower in rural areas so the noise generated would be more apparent.

Councillor Christine Bateson highlighted that weather conditions such as low cloud could affect noise. Therefore noise measurements needed to be taken over different times on different days to get an effective reading. However no measurements had been undertaken at all.

#### ITEM 11 – DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were noted as follows:

16 February 2015

#### MEETING

The meeting, which began at 7.00pm ended at 8.30pm.