

AVIATION FORUM

THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden (Chairman), Dr Lilly Evans, David Hilton, Adam Smith and Malcolm Beer

Also in attendance: Murray Barter, Andrew Hall, Duncan Reed and Michael Sullivan

Officers: Andy Carswell and Chris Nash

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves. It was explained that proceedings were being audio recorded.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Lenton. Cllr Dr Evans was attending as a substitute.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously agreed as an accurate record.

Cllr Beer suggested that the names of non-Councillor attendees should be included on the minutes in future. The clerk indicated that he was happy to do this and asked for all attendees to sign the attendance sheet in order to facilitate this.

MATTERS ARISING

The Community Protection Principal informed members that the Transport Select Committee had announced an evidence gathering exercise since the publication of the Forum agenda. However the deadline for submissions was on the day of the Forum. The Community Protection Principal said he would refer to the Council's response to this during the item on the draft NPS.

Members were informed that there would be an additional agenda item, relating to the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation – South.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT NPS RESPONSE

The Community Protection Principal reminded the Forum that the Department for Transport had revised its draft NPS as the initial consultation launched in February was flawed, chiefly in terms of air quality assessment. The revised draft included 6,000 pages of material which outlined what work had been undertaken by the DfT and was appended by an appraisal of sustainability, a re-analysis of the air quality assessment, consideration of airspace policy changes, consideration of responses to the previous consultation. The consultation went live on October 24th and the deadline for submissions was December 19th.

Members were informed that the previous consultation had received 72,239 responses; of these, 58,277 had come from pro-Heathrow campaign groups, compared to 374 from recognised groups, which included the Royal Borough and the 2M group. The Community Protection Principal stated that in response to this a document had been produced by officers from the partnership of the four Boroughs; although this had been distributed to the Councillors who were members of the Forum, this document remained confidential and legally privileged. Members were informed that this formed part of the four Borough's submission to the Transport Select Committee, made in time for the deadline. It had been decided to submit responses under the umbrella of the four Boroughs, rather than individually. The Community Protection Principal confirmed that the Royal Borough had written to Sir Jeremy Sullivan to request that the deadline for submissions to the new consultation be extended; this was refused by the DfT but no explanation of any real substance had been offered. The Community Protection Principal said he would circulate the DfT's response to members. Cllr Hilton stated that he had submitted a response to the first consultation as an individual and announced his intention to do the same with the second one.

In outlining the key points to be made from the new consultation documents, the Community Protection Principal informed members of the following:

- Demand forecasts were predicted to be full by 2028, two years after the proposed opening of the new runway. It was feared that airlines could choose to prioritise international routes instead of promised domestic routes as a result.
- Flight paths would not be confirmed until after the DCO stage – at which point it would not be possible to challenge.
- The forecast also suggested the resilience of the hub model for Heathrow – the prime basis for the third runway - was weakened as a result of increased profitability of point to point routes.
- It had not been confirmed if the modal share could be achieved as there were no costs given for improving access to Heathrow.
- The four Boroughs had commissioned the work of an expert to look at air quality management. She was of the opinion that old data was being used.
- The report acknowledged that the 57dB considered the bottom of the threshold for causing considerable annoyance in terms of noise pollution should be reduced to 54dB.
- The predicted number of jobs had increased from 77,000 to 114,000, which had the knock-on effect of each local authority area being required to add 300-500 new dwellings per year in order to meet its housing need. In all it was estimated 70,000 new dwellings spread across 14 local authorities would be needed, but this would not be an even distribution.

The Community Protection Principal stated that a Heathrow Strategic Planning Group had been established and the four Boroughs had been attending meetings as observers to the process. However it had just been announced that each authority would have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreements in order for information relating to sharing planning considerations to be circulated. The Community Protection Principal informed members that this issue had been raised with the Council's legal team.

Regarding the DCO, members were informed that this was informal and not legally binding at this stage of the process.

It was confirmed that the Royal Borough's Local Plan had been produced on the assumption that there would be no expansion at Heathrow.

HEATHROW NOISE COMPLAINT SYSTEM

Andrew Hall introduced the item and explained that Heathrow operates a web tracker system as a mechanism of monitoring air traffic; however it was believed that this system was not completely accurate and would only record passenger flights and not cargo traffic. Andrew

Hall explained that if noise levels were shown to increase, but there was no flight recorded as being on the system, it would not be included in Heathrow's noise measurement statistics. As a result of this, Andrew Hall suggested an increased use in noise tracker microphones in order to monitor noise levels in areas of the Royal Borough with lots of residents. Andrew Hall explained that the best way of recording noise levels was for the microphones to be fitted with tracking logs, as this provided more accurate information on the time and location of flights and allowed it to be compared to Heathrow's tracking records. He stated that he had had such a microphone fitted to the roof of his property for a number of years.

Cllr Hilton explained that a trial that would produce a steeper gradient for aircraft taking off was currently taking place on 12 routes. One of these routes flies over Windsor, and a noise monitor that had been installed at the Clewer Fields allotment site had been identified as being a useful tool for monitoring the noise on this particular route. Cllr Hilton informed the Forum that independent research suggested that there was an underreporting of noise levels on some Heathrow flights.

The Chairman told the Forum that he had put in frequent noise complaints over flights that had departed Heathrow after 11.30pm. He explained that one of the main culprits was a flight to the Philippines that could leave Heathrow as late as 1am, which due to the age of the aircraft used caused a greater amount of noise than other flights. The Chairman added there was a DHL freighter that frequently took off during the night, as it was required to wait for road traffic to deliver its cargo to the airport.

The Chairman stated that the most recent statistics for Heathrow noise complaints had been published on November 1st. He said that around 20,000 complaints had been received; of these, 10 individuals accounted for a third. He also noted that the number of complaints had reduced from 25,000 the previous year. The Chairman stated that HACC would be asking for more information on what times complaints would most frequently be lodged, to see if more complaints were made after 10.30pm or 3.55am.

Murray Barter suggested that the angle at which planes took off from should be looked into as a possible reason for noise levels. He stated that aircraft departing Heathrow would take off at an angle of 4-5 degrees, compared to the 12 degree angle used at Madrid. The Chairman explained that increasing the angle placed additional strain on the aircraft engines and increased fuel consumption.

Cllr Beer suggested that a list of locations suitable for noise monitors in the Royal Borough could be drawn up, stating that places with low levels of background noise would be the most suitable. The Community Protection Principal asked for members to suggest a site for assessment, for discussion at the next meeting and with a view to writing to Heathrow to make the suggestions.

FUTURE AIRSPACE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION - SOUTH

Cllr Hilton introduced the item by explaining the presentation was given at a meeting of the Community Noise Forum by Jane Dawes, Heathrow's Airside Business Change Manager, the previous week.

Cllr Hilton explained to members that FASI-S was designed to modernise existing airspace infrastructure and was due to be implemented by 2024. The first route to go through the process would be Compton. Cllr Hilton said the potential positives from the project included reduced flight times, reduced delays and cancellations, and a reduction in the impact on the environment. Many of the routes would require aircraft to fly at 9,000ft. It was also stated in the presentation that communities would have a significant role to play in designing the airspace strategy which, importantly from the Royal Borough's perspective, included an expanded Heathrow.

Cllr Hilton said that the Airspace Change Process would begin in January and would run alongside the Development Consent Order. However, clearly defined flight routes would not be created until after any expansion of Heathrow had been given the appropriate planning permission. Cllr Hilton noted that it would therefore not be known what the noise levels from

the new routes, and the direction the noise would be projected in, until after planning permission had been given. The Chairman noted that the illustrative flight paths included in the presentation slides appeared to suggest that all Heathrow departures would be going to the north.

Cllr Hilton stated that the intension of FASI-S was to reduce the number of people who would be adversely affected by noise from air traffic into and out of Heathrow; however he also stated that there appeared to be no information to explain precisely how the performance-based navigation would ensure that this would happen. It was explained that any solution should not have a negative impact on the proposed third runway.

Cllr Hilton said the first of three consultations on FASI-S would be around a set of key design principles that had been identified by Heathrow, which would run for a year. Cllr Hilton stated that he hoped lots of residents would make representations on this consultation, as one of the principles seen as important to Royal Borough residents – minimising the population that is newly exposed to being overflowed – was towards the bottom of Heathrow's list of priorities. He stated that this consultation should be publicised by the Council.

Cllr Hilton informed the Forum that it had been established that the government took overall responsibility for airspace, and that Secretary of State would retain call-in powers over the Strategy.

Michael Sullivan asked if any noise impact assessment had been done regarding the possibility of two aircraft landing in parallel, coming in over Datchet. Cllr Hilton said he would raise this at the next Community Noise Forum.

PARTNERSHIP BODIES

SASIG

The Chairman said there were no updates in relation to SASIG.

HACC

The Chairman informed members that HACC was set to be relaunched as a Community Engagement Board. It was currently unclear if the Community Noise Forum would be incorporated into the new Board, although it was anticipated that it would remain a separate entity. The Community Protection Principal asked if terms of reference for the new Community Engagement Board could be brought to the next Forum in order for them to be scrutinised. The Chairman stated his belief that a chairman for the new Board had already been identified and agreed and informed members that it was hoped to have the new Board up and running by April.

The Chairman stated that he had recently been invited to attend a meeting of the Westminster Environmental, Engineering and Travel Group where he was unsuccessful in asking for the direction of travel of aircraft flying out of Heathrow. No information was able to be provided on the costs of upgrading transport links to the airport, such as upgrading of the Piccadilly Line.

LAANC

Cllr Beer informed members that an Executive meeting was held recently, which considered comments regarding the new Community Engagement Board and the response to the second draft NPS. Cllr Beer requested that the Chairman apply to join the Executive, in order to receive further information in between Aviation Forum meetings.

Moving on to other matters, it was confirmed that there Heathrow expansion would be subject to a Parliamentary vote.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next two meetings were noted.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.52 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....