

AVIATION FORUM

MONDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2018

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

Also in attendance: Michael Sullivan and Andrew Hall

Officers: Andy Carswell, Chris Nash and David Scott

WELCOME

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

Cllr Lenton informed the Forum that a regular attendee, Jamie Jamieson, had passed away on December 25th. His funeral was held on February 12th. Cllr Lenton stated his regret at his passing and asked for gratitude for the help that he gave the Forum to be formally noted. Cllr Beer stated that Mr Jamieson had been a founding member of the Aviation Forum and had provided members with a great deal of expertise on operations at Heathrow Airport from his time working as a customs officer there. Cllr Beer also expressed his regret at Mr Jamieson's passing.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence. Cllr Beer stated he had previously submitted apologies as he believed he would be attending a different meeting. However he had been informed he would not be able to attend so was rescinding his advance apologies for the Forum.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on November 30th 2017 were unanimously agreed as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising to report.

CONSIDERATION OF THE HEATHROW CONSULTATION

The Community Protection Principal introduced the item and explained to the Forum that the consultation had been launched by Heathrow, with an end date of March 28th. Members were reminded that this consultation was separate from the NPS one, which closed on December 19th. The Royal Borough had responded to this consultation as part of the Four Borough coalition and as a separate entity; however to date no response had been received.

The Forum was told that the consultation would form part of the informal pre-Development Consent Order stage, which would feed in to Heathrow's formal DCO application – effectively

the planning application for the proposed third runway. This would be after the NPS, to be discussed by Parliament in late spring or early summer.

The Community Protection Principal informed the Forum that a group of Council Members had received a presentation on the proposals from Heathrow on January 29th. It was felt that this presentation lacked information regarding a number of items including the impact on housing, number of jobs, congestion, pollution and the Council's Borough Local Plan. The Forum was told that a document which had been released by Heathrow as part of the consultation claimed that the number of local jobs to be created by the proposed third runway was anything between 40-80,000. The document also omitted information on the following:

- reference to flights landing between 11pm-7am, and the precise cut-off point
- the economic impact on the need to flatten the Grndon waste incinerator, BT data hub and the Immigration Centre
- alignment work on the Rivers Colne, Colnbrook and Wraysbury, and the associated additional local individual flood risk assessments
- whether the cap on 42,000 car parking spaces would be maintained
- Air Quality Management issues associated with junction 13 of the M25 at Wraysbury, following work to reposition the motorway through a tunnel at junction 14
- How the 50 per cent modal share of airport users arriving via public transport would be achieved.

The Forum was told that a Heathrow Strategic Planning Group, which had a remit of working with local authorities regarding impact on infrastructure and Local Plans, had been set up. The Royal Borough was an observer to this group, as part of the Four Boroughs coalition. The Community Protection Principal informed members that full membership of this group required the signature of a Non Disclosure Agreement, which had led to concerns over transparency being raised. An update on this matter would be provided at the next Forum.

In terms of construction work in the Royal Borough, the Forum was told that it had been proposed to build borrow pits, to help with gravel extraction, on Ham Island. However it was unclear how this would be achieved without removing the Thames Water facility and housing on Ham Island.

Members were told that the consultation document claimed that expansion of Heathrow would see an improvement in noise prevention measures; however the Community Protection Principal stated that this could not be proven, adding that proposed changes to flight paths that would result in the abandonment of the Cranford agreement were now being dispensed with. A Noise Envelope design group had been proposed by the Community Engagement Board. It was also stated that expansion should not be considered as it would worsen the air quality in an area which already had very poor quality air. It was also noted that Heathrow's share of the cost for infrastructure changes to the M25 had not been specified.

The Chairman stated that, once the expansion project had been completed, the middle of the three runways could not be used for mixed operations and aircraft would not be able to turn left or right away from the runway due to traffic using the other two runways. The Chairman stated that he had been informed that noise respite for the Royal Borough would therefore only be 25 per cent per day.

The Chairman informed the Forum that, in the Members' meeting referred to earlier, Heathrow had given assurances that they would contribute to making improvements to the rail infrastructure connecting the airport to the Great Western Railway network; however no figures had been mentioned and the Chairman stated that he had not seen any plans. He stated that consultation documents did not appear to make any reference to the Windsor Link Railway or which buildings would need to be demolished to make way for the runway. Suggested sites for a relocated Immigration Centre were available but not for the waste facility or database. The Chairman also highlighted the number of options that had been suggested in relation to alterations on the M25 and opined that in terms of planning and costing there was confusion as to the best course of action to take.

The Chairman stated that on February 9th, Windsor had been overflowed by Heathrow air traffic for 18 and a half hours. A total of 15 aircraft had flown over Windsor before 6am; a 16th was excluded from Heathrow's figures as it had been recorded as landing at 6.01am.

Cllr Beer stated that even if noise levels were reduced, an increase in population would mean more people would be affected. Regarding the remodelled M25 Cllr Beer stated that two thirds of it would go in a tunnel underneath the runway, with the excavations from this being used to build banks along the side of the remainder. Cllr Beer informed members that he had spoken to an engineer who had raised doubts over the load bearing capacity of gravel extracted from Ham Island, as historically it had been used as a landfill site. He also raised concerns regarding construction vehicles accessing Ham Island.

Regarding mixed mode, Cllr Beer stated that this had never been used at Heathrow as it was too dangerous due to the volume of air traffic. According to statistics presented at a recent HACC meeting 40 flights or aborted flights were operated through mixed mode each month. In relation to trains servicing Heathrow, Cllr Beer stated that the only way of increasing capacity was by using longer trains; however trains were already too long to stop at some stations in the Royal Borough, and some had to block level crossings while stationary.

Cllr Hilton informed members that he had attended the information roadshow event in Ascot and was of the view that the consultation was just a PR exercise. He stated that Heathrow had the capacity to convey 96 million passengers annually, but this could only be done through using larger aircraft. Cllr Hilton claimed that there were 10,000 HGV movements at Heathrow each day; however this figure was likely to be double as empty vehicles were not included in this data. Cllr Hilton also voiced concerns at the lack of parking for staff at the airport and associated businesses such as hotels and catering firms, and the amount of landtake that would be used as part of the redevelopment of the infrastructure.

Cllr Hilton stated that Councillors had been informed at their briefing that other airports had been supportive of Heathrow expansion. Much of the expansion focused on the creation of a 'hub' airport at Heathrow; Cllr Hilton stated that the hub in Paris had been formed through using three airports, and suggested that a similar system could be operated in London by Heathrow working together with Gatwick and Stansted. Cllr Hilton also stated his belief that the environmental disbenefits were so great that expanding Heathrow could not be justified, and added that the public could not be asked for their views on it as there was so little available information for them to make an informed judgement.

Andrew Hall asked if there were any other airports in the world that operated three parallel runways. The Chairman said he was only aware of one, in Phoenix, Arizona.

Michael Sullivan stated that the community roadshows had been poorly advertised. The Chairman said he had asked for greater publicity for the events but this had not been forthcoming. Michael Sullivan said there was no data relating to how many people currently used public transport to get to Heathrow, so there would be no comparable data to prove the 50 per cent modal share target.

Regarding the proposed noise envelopes, the Community Protection Principal informed members that approval of these was ultimately the responsibility of the Civil Aviation Authority.

Cllr Beer informed members that a shorter third runway had been proposed. This would cause fewer problems in terms of reconfiguration of the infrastructure around Heathrow, but would mean that the new runway would be unsuitable for use by larger aircraft. The Chairman added that the stress point on the shorter proposed runway would be directly over the M25 tunnel.

The Community Protection Principal proposed ten points to be debunked in a document compiled with the help of the Communications team and Legal. The suggested points were:

- 1) Noise respite will be reduced from 100 per cent on landings to 50 per cent;
- 2) Claims that improvements to current operations can only be made through expansion are false: implementation of the Cranford Agreement and better utilisation of slots can occur now;
- 3) No detail on flightpaths or likely noise impacts presented to residents; particularly prevalent for new communities such as Datchet and Eton, which will be overflowed at much lower altitudes;
- 4) No detail on planning / Local Plan impacts;
- 5) No detail on the number of additional homes likely to be required within the Royal Borough, with the airport stipulating the signing of a non-disclosure agreement before RBWM representatives were allowed to attend their strategic planning group;
- 6) Earmarked demolition/quarrying of Ham Island, Old Windsor as a borrow pit;
- 7) Plans to reposition/replace large sections of surrounding roads, including the M25 junctions 14-15 resulting in heavy congestion, potentially worsening air quality in the Royal Borough at our AQMA declared at J13/Wraysbury Road;
- 8) The airport's claims to be able to achieve 50 per cent public transport access to the airport by 2030 are unfounded, with the airport already struggling to just about meet 40 per cent public transport use today;
- 9) To expand Heathrow in what is an area of poor air quality (below current standards) would be an incorrect interpretation of current air quality law and illegal in the view of our legal team;
- 10) Lastly, Gatwick can be built quicker, cheaper and with far less environmental impacts.

It was unanimously agreed by members to progress the communication of the ten points to residents via the Council's communications channels, subject to legal clearance.

PARTNERSHIP BODIES

SASIG

The Chairman informed the Forum that the AGM would be taking place on February 16th and that he would be attending.

HACC

Members were informed that the group had been rebranded as the Heathrow Community Engagement Board. Cllr Beer informed members that this was to enable a greater amount of community participation, which had been identified as a weakness. It was still to be decided which groups would be represented and a chairman had still to be appointed, although it was a statutory requirement for them to be independent. Cllr Hilton stated that the number of groups holding Heathrow to account had dwindled. He asked if the Engagement Board's terms of reference could be brought to the next Forum for comments to be made.

LAANC

Cllr Beer stated that the last meeting had been disappointing as a number of members were unable to attend due to illness. It was not known if the group was quorate as the administrator was one of the people who was unavailable. A representative from Elmbridge District Council had recently joined LAANC, which suffered from some noise pollution but residents were generally felt to be in favour of Heathrow expansion.

The Chairman opened up the Forum for any other items of business. Cllr Hilton said there had been discussions about climb routes out of Heathrow and whether it was better for aircraft to climb as quickly as possible. Currently aircraft took off at a four degree angle; a trial for a five degree angle had been announced, which Cllr Hilton stated would make no difference.

Cllr Beer introduced members to the No Third Runway Coalition group, which was comprised of community representatives – many of whom had expertise in the field of aviation. Some

members had spoken at Transport Select Committee meetings and had had good responses to their presentations. A lot of promotional work to advertise the group was being carried out. Cllr Beer encouraged members to seek out what the group was doing.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting was noted.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....