

AVIATION FORUM

TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden (Chairman), David Hilton, John Lenton, Malcolm Beer and Derek Wilson

Also in attendance: Murray Barter, Paul Graves and Andrew Hall

Officers: Andy Carswell, Chris Nash, Jenifer Jackson and Robert Paddison

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Dr Evans. Cllr Beer stated that he had notified members of the Englefield Green Action Group of the date of the meeting but none of them had been able to attend. The Chairman stated he had invited John Endacott, Helen Price and Cllr Da Costa to the meeting; Mr Endacott had sent apologies but he had not had a response from the other two.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on August 16th were agreed as an accurate record, subject to some minor amendments in the section on page 7 beginning 'The Forum raised the following points':

- The word government to be added so the first bullet point read 'There was no national airspace strategy and national airspace had not been agreed yet but *government* still agreeing to proceed'
- The figure of 24% per cent in the second bullet point to be amended to 54%
- The third bullet point to be amended to say 'sand and gravel extraction plant' instead of cement yard
- The word Grundig to be amended to Grundon in the fourth bullet point
- The first sentence of the fifth bullet point to be amended to read 'A site on Ham Island in Old Windsor has been identified as an open gravel pit to make the new runways and fill soft spots.'

It was also agreed that the minute for Any Other Business should be amended to say 'Maidenhead Conservative Constituency'.

MATTERS ARISING

The Community Protection Principal reminded Members that a rebuttal against the need for a third runway would be heard by the High Court. However the Council had also taken the decision to join the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group in order to allow input into discussions around providing the best possible mitigation for the Royal Borough in the event of the third runway being built at Heathrow.

The Head of Planning reminded the Forum that the HSPG had been set up in 2015 to provide a single contact point for local authorities and enterprise partnerships in the area surrounding Heathrow Airport. It was accepted that attitudes towards the proposed expansion varied amongst the local authorities, but there was a shared vision towards securing effective mitigation against the impact of expansion through the Masterplan Principles. A set of position papers had been produced, which had been developed on a without prejudice basis to enable each Council to make their individual comments and representations on the Heathrow expansion proposals.

Members were informed that a Heathrow expansion-related Transport Strategy was being worked on and refined, and an infrastructure study produced jointly with Heathrow Airport was close to being completed. An HSPG sub group had asked for a holistic approach to tackling the issues of access, air quality and lower emissions. An overarching Economic Strategy - which took into account the displacement of businesses and commercial premises during any construction work; workforce accommodation; the socioeconomic effect on low income groups living in the vicinity of the airport; and apprenticeship requirements for any construction - was also being developed over the coming months. A community compensation fund has already been set up by Heathrow Airport Limited. The Principal Planning Policy Officer stated his belief that the various strategies had not been advanced as far as Heathrow Airport would have wanted. Paul Graves stated that the only displaced residents lived in Hillingdon. He stated that 700 homes were planned for demolition in the event of expansion of the airport and a further 375 would no longer be habitable, with homeowners having the option of selling their homes to Heathrow Airport Limited. Paul Graves stated he had seen a recent press article which said the CAA were seeking clarification on how Heathrow Airport Limited intended to fund this, and there had been a very limited response. The Principal Planning Policy Officer said that Council officers shared those concerns about the lack of information on funding. The Chairman stated that Heathrow Airport Limited had recently taken on an estimated £1 billion of debt.

The Forum was told that the Stage 5 Infrastructure Study had been published earlier in the day. The Head of Planning confirmed that the study had been partially funded by Heathrow Airport Limited as part of the priority work for the Development Consent Order; however they had no say in the outcome of what was contained within the report. The Chairman informed Members that he had attended a recent HSPG event, and the subject of infrastructure had not been mentioned.

Cllr Beer stated that the HSPG had been set up for some time prior to the Council being made aware of its existence. Five priority councils had been identified at the time of HSPG's inception; Cllr Beer stated his belief that this had been a PR exercise. He stated that the Council had not been selected as the Royal Borough was a prosperous area in comparison to the priority councils. The Chairman informed the Forum that he had complained about the Royal Borough being considered as a council area that would not be affected by Heathrow expansion. The Chairman stated that he had been informed he was not entitled to take part in the strategic discussions at HSPG as he was not a Cabinet member. He stated that he had discussed this with the Council Leader and he may be elevated to a Cabinet position in order to represent the Council's views at HSPG. If this were done, there would be no additional financial cost to the Council. Cllr Beer stated his belief that it was undemocratic for Heathrow Airport Limited to dictate who could and couldn't be represented at the HSPG meetings. He also said it was perverse that the Royal Borough had been deemed as not being affected by any expansion work when it was the closest council area geographically to the airport. The Chairman added that the Royal Borough would also be impacted by work to reroute the M25. Cllr Beer highlighted that the London Borough of Ealing was much further away but had been selected as one of the HSPG's five priority councils. Cllr Beer stated his biggest concern related to housing needs that would be created by any expansion work. The Head of Planning reiterated that participation at the HSPG would enable the Council's views to be put forward, and allow for input into securing the best mitigation for the impact of expansion work.

INDEPENDENT PARALLEL APPROACHES

The Community Protection Principal explained to Members that Heathrow Airport occasionally needed to operate Tactically Enhanced Arrival Measures when incoming aircraft arrived late, which meant landing on the departures runway. However with the rise in Performance Based Navigation, consideration was now being given to the implementation of Independent Parallel Approaches. This would lead to delayed aircraft following set flight paths so as not to interfere with incoming air traffic that was running on time, and reduce stacking. A consultation on the proposed implementation of IPA had been carried out. A copy of a letter outlining the Council's response to the proposals was circulated to Members. The Community Protection Principal explained that although the Council's position was that it was challenging any proposed expansion of the airport, it agreed with the four basic principles relating to IPA that had been identified. However the response letter also noted that noise burdens were not equal for all communities, and no health impact study had been undertaken as part of the report proposing IPA. Members were informed that the topic of airspace change would be considered later during the Development Consent Order process, and this would have to go through the HSPG.

The Chairman explained that a Time Based Separation could also be in operation, which when combined with IPA would enable an even higher number of aircraft to land when strong headwinds and inclement weather was taken into consideration. An Enhanced Time Based Separation system had also been suggested. This system would mean greater overflying of the Royal Borough on easterly landings at lower heights. However both the implementation of IPA and TBS would need to be agreed by the Department for Transport.

Andrew Hall stated that there was evidence that not all aircraft were sticking to the set flight paths, and that this had been noticed by residents who lived under the flight paths. Cllr Hilton said that the concentration of aircraft noise at ground level in Ascot during trials in 2014 had caused anger to residents. The Community Protection Principal said that the topic of expectations of noise levels at ground level had been raised during the High Court legal challenge.

The Chairman informed the Forum of two recent examples of aircraft coming in to land at Heathrow that had not followed the flight paths. The most serious of these involved an aircraft that failed to land and passed in close proximity over central London to another aircraft, which had been forced to take evasive action. The Chairman stated that at one point the two aircraft were just 500 feet apart. He stated that he would be following up to see what the outcome of this incident would be.

Cllr Hilton then gave Members a presentation on his personal experience of the Heathrow Community Noise Forum, which had initially been set up as a consequence of the 2014 Performance Based Navigation trials. Since its first meeting in 2015 the number of attendees had more than doubled. The Forum had verified the use of HAL's noise and track keeping systems, but had also learnt that its modelling system had underestimated the process of how recording noise levels worked. Cllr Hilton stated that the Forum had learnt that HAL had little understanding of how aircraft were flown, how airlines change climb rates, where they fly within the SIDs, and the gradual process of concentration. The number of noise monitors deployed by the group had been increased to 45, and a standardised local reporting format for noise, track keeping and aircraft movements had been established. Members were told that the Forum had initiated a 5 per cent climb rate trial on the Detling SID, and the final report on this was due in early 2019. Cllr Hilton said the Forum had helped all of the individual community noise groups to have a collective voice.

Cllr Hilton said that HAL had agreed to fund an Independent Technical Advisor. The position would be advertised prior to an interview process, with the community representatives drawing up a shortlist before the HCNF made the final selection.

The first independent project proposed by the HCNF would be a comparison of noise levels, comparing World Health Organisation guidelines against the results of the Survey of Noise Attitudes. Cllr Hilton stated that the WHO guidelines matched the results of a different study that had been discredited.

With regards to Performance Based Navigation, Cllr Hilton informed Members that there had been much resistance to it from communities that had been affected by its introduction. It was perceived that the only beneficiaries to its use were the airlines. Cllr Hilton highlighted cases in the USA and Canada where legal challenges against the use of Performance Based Navigation had been launched.

Regarding the Future Airspace Strategy, Cllr Hilton said that eight high priority risks had been identified, the most significant of which related to the redistribution of aircraft noise. Cllr Hilton said the redistribution of noise impacts risks deterring the re-design of SIDs and arrival procedures or aircraft at low altitudes. He said that if local consultative groups were effective in blocking the proposals, sponsors could become unwilling or unable to incur the costs associated with deploying the changes required to realise sufficient benefits from some FAS initiatives.

Cllr Hilton informed the Forum that Heathrow Airport's Sustainability Director Matt Gorman had recently accepted that the airport may not be able to realise the full capacity of a third runway because of the amount of resistance from campaign groups, including the HCNF. He said he hoped the HCNF would continue to work with the CAA and DfT in order to find a solution.

TEDDINGTON ACTION GROUP PRESENTATION

The item was deferred to a future meeting.

PARTNERSHIP BODIES

Regarding the Local Authority Aircraft Noise Council, Cllr Beer informed Members that this had yet to get going again following the recent death of the group's main administrator.

Regarding the Heathrow Community Engagement Board, Cllr Beer said there was dissatisfaction at the way the most recent meeting had been run, with attendees talking amongst themselves before a presentation from a Heathrow Airport representative. Cllr Beer stated his belief that the Chairman of the HCEB did not know anything about the purpose of the meeting and that it had been a waste of time as no progress had been made. Cllr Beer informed the Forum that he had been asked to write to the HCEB Chairman on behalf of LAANC to raise these concerns. The Chairman repeated what he had said earlier about the Royal Borough not having proper representation on the HCEB, and that ways of ensuring this in the future were being investigated. He said he agreed with Cllr Beer's concerns that the latest meeting had been a waste of time. Cllr Hilton also said he did not believe the HCEB had the capability to deliver anything for residents affected by any expansion work.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Andrew Hall asked if there was an update on the legal challenge against Heathrow expansion. The Community Protection Principal said there would be a pre-trial review hearing in the week commencing January 14th, with the main hearing taking place in the week beginning March 11th at the High Court. An update would be provided at the next Aviation Forum. Paul Graves said that campaigners intended to peacefully attend the pre-trial review, and also a climate change march that was due to take place at the weekend.

The Forum discussed Heathrow's use as a hub airport for domestic flights and noted the financial difficulties affecting Flybe, who flew into Heathrow from Newquay. It was suggested

that regional airports were still in favour of expanding Heathrow as a hub airport for the regions. The Chairman said this would be possible if a shorter third runway was approved as it would only be suitable for smaller aircraft, such as those used on domestic flights. A smaller runway would also reduce the cost of building.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 9.08 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....