

**BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2006 AT 2.30 PM**

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Present: Mr Viv Astling OBE (Chairman).

In attendance from Birmingham International Airport Ltd:

Mr R Heard	-	Managing Director.
Mr J Morris	-	Head of Corporate Affairs.
Mr J Wilson	-	Head of Community & Environment.
Mr S Hill	-	Head of Planning & Transportation.
Mr D Hothi	-	Land Use Planning Manager.

In attendance from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:

Mr M Blamire-Brown & Mr L Stevenson	-	Representing the Secretary.
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Balsall Common Residents Association	-	Mr D Ellis
Balsall Parish Council	-	Cllr M Longfield
Barston Parish Council	-	Cllr D Read
Berkswell Parish Council	-	Cllr D Hitchcock
Bickenhill Parish Council	-	Cllr P Southwick
Birmingham City Council	-	Cllr J Whorwood
Birmingham City Council	-	Mr G Tringham
Catherine de Barnes Residents Association	-	Mr R Hogg
Chestnuts Neighbourhood Forum	-	Mr S Degun
Consumers Association	-	Mr P Orton
Coventry City Council	-	Cllr N Lee
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	-	Cllr K Turner
Kingshurst Parish Council	-	Cllr B Mulready
Fordbridge Town Council	-	Mr J Alcock
Friends of Elmdon	-	Mr G A Davison
Hampton in Arden Parish Council	-	Cllr P Adams
Hampton Society	-	Mr A Minton
Knowle Society	-	Mr J Rowley
Marston Green Residents Association	-	Mr J Stevens

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Passenger Representative	- Mrs R Tyler
Sheldon Residents Association	- Mrs M Kennett
Smith's Wood Parish Council	- Cllr F Churchill
Solihull Chamber of Commerce	- Mrs D Fennell
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr R Sleigh
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Mr L Osbourne
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Mrs B Hill
Warwick District Council	- Cllr G Guest

Apologies were received on behalf of: -

BA Connect Ltd	- Mr K Ilsley
Bickenhill Parish Council	- Cllr J Williams
Sandwell MBC	- Cllr Dr T Crumpton
Staffordshire County Council	- Cllr R N Smith
Wolverhampton City Council	- Cllr J Reynolds
The Wychwood Club	- Mr G A Heaps

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The Committee welcomed Mr D Hothi, BIA Land Use Planning Manager and Mrs R Tyler, Passenger Representative to the meeting.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Airport Consultative Committee, held on 26 July 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2006, be confirmed as a correct record subject to inclusion of Cllr R Sleigh, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council within the attendance list and the correction of a typographical error in Item 7, Environmental Monitoring Report – April to June 2006, under “Discussion Points” Chestnuts Neighbourhood Forum, 2nd line, to read “.....of respiratory disease”.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

Discussion Points

Marston Green Residents Association (Mr J Stevens) referred to Item 12, Constitution and Terms of Reference Review and asked if the two documents had been updated. The Secretary explained that minor revisions had been made to the documents in terms of membership and the updating of titles for the Working Groups.

The Airport Company gave a verbal update on the current position of the Draft Master Plan. The Committee were advised that the Airport Board recognised the concerns which were being raised by the delay of its publication, but emphasised that there were strategic issues associated with the Coventry Airport Inquiry which needed to be considered. The Airport

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Company undertook to provide a written update to the Committee on the Draft Master Plan and the Property Valuation Support Scheme in the coming weeks.

Warwick District Council (Cllr G Guest) supported what had been said above in relation to the provision of information relating to the Draft Master Plan and the Property Valuation Support Scheme.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted; and
- (ii) That a copy of the Committee's Constitution and Terms of Reference be circulated to the Committee.

4. AIRPORT ACTIVITIES REPORT – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2006

The Airport Company presented their Airport Activities report for the period July to September 2006. The contents of the report, on the following topics detailed below, were taken as read:

- Passenger, Cargo and Aircraft Movements.
- Flight Punctuality Statistics.
- Market Development – Aviation and Commercial.
- Customer Services.
- Operations.
- Airport Development.
- Planning, Environment and Transportation.
- Community Affairs.

In presenting the report, the Airport Company drew the Committee's attention to a number of Winter overnight runway closures for essential maintenance works which would take place during November. In addition, Members were advised that an Airship was likely to arrive at the Airport during the first weekend in November, however this event would be weather dependant.

The Airport Company also explained that a progress report on the White Paper was due to be published in December 2006.

Discussion Points

Marston Green Residents Association (Mr J Stevens) referred to Section 2 of the report which related to Cargo. He observed that during the period July to September, air freight tonnes had increased whereby air transport movements (for both passenger and cargo) had decreased. The Airport Company stated that they were unable to explain these statistics but gave a view that the increase in cargo tonnage could be attributed to larger amounts of luggage in the holds of aircraft.

Reference was also made to Section 10 of the report which detailed Community and Environment issues. The Committee's attention was drawn to the recent and ongoing activity of the "Birmingham Airport Marie Barnes Award". Tribute was paid to Marie Barnes, BIA's former Community Affairs and Environment Manager who had sadly passed away in 2004.

Warwick District Council (Cllr G Guest) recalled instances of congestion at the Airport check-in desks in recent weeks and asked the Airport Company for their comments in light of there being no apparent prior warning for the delays. The Committee were advised that there were a number of factors to consider such as staffing levels but most importantly the heightened security checks which were in operation. There had been an initial high level of public awareness although it was apparent that the public were forgetting that such practices were in place which inevitably resulted in delays. The Summer schedule was due to finish on 28 October 2006 and Airport staff had been cancelling leave to help resource the new security

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practices. However, the Airport Company asked the Committee to recognise that this was purely a short term measure and was not sustainable.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr R Sleigh) drew the Committee's attention to Section 6 of the report, Market Development – Commercial, and spoke with regard to "Taxis", more specifically the surcharge issue. He explained that he thought the 20p surcharge as detailed within the report was actually decided as being 60p and asked the Airport Company to check this particular fact. He also explained that there was some opinion that taxi drivers were reluctant to do short journeys and, to that effect, customer service issues needed to be looked at. The Airport Company gave assurances that the job of the NCP control officer at the barrier to the taxi rank was to ensure that short journeys were treated with the same level of importance as longer journeys.

Balsall Parish Council (Cllr M Longfield) advised the Committee that the points which Cllr Sleigh had raised was a topic that the Passenger Services and Surface Transport Working Group could investigate and, if need be, raise with the relevant taxi federation.

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr K Turner) addressed the Committee on Section 3 of the report which related to Aircraft Movements and asked the Airport Company to elaborate on the apparent decline in air transport movements in comparison with the same period (July to September) of the previous year. The Airport Company drew comparisons with other Airports and explained that such a decline could be attributed to factors such as later holidays, heightened awareness of security issues or even people choosing to stay at home over the Summer months to watch the World Cup.

Berkswell Parish Council (Cllr D Hitchcock) gave an update on the recent activity of the Community Trust Fund, recalling a recent meeting in October whereby the Fund had considered fifteen applications. Cllr Hitchcock explained that some £20,000 had been allocated, some of which had been conditional. A small surplus now remained for applications which would be considered at the next meeting.

Smith's Wood Parish Council (Cllr F Churchill) referred to the reported Winter maintenance runway closures which were due to take place in November and asked if these would also apply to military flights as well. The Airport Company confirmed that the runway closures would apply to all flights.

The Airport Company advised the Committee that a meeting of the Air Transport Forum had taken place on 24 October 2006. The Forum had looked at the Draft Surface Access Strategy which was described as a short-term tactical document intended for due consultation. Copies were available for circulation to Members at the meeting. The Airport Company advised that the document would be finalised early in the New Year.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING REPORT – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2006

The Airport Company presented their Environment Monitoring report for the period July to September 2006. The report, as submitted, was then taken as read.

Discussion Points

Marston Green Residents Association (Mr J Stevens) referred to Section 2.3 of the report which related to Airline Night Utilisation and highlighted a typographical error in the table heading on the 6th page of the report under "Aug 2006". The word "Airline" should be replaced with the word "Quota". The Airport Company concurred with this observation.

Mr Stevens also spoke with regard to Section 7 of the report which dealt with Surface Water. The report set out that a biological survey had been undertaken in September and the Airport were asked for more information on the survey itself together with reasons for why it had been done. The Airport Company had no detailed information on hand at the meeting but undertook to send the information to Mr Stevens following the meeting.

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RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING WORKING GROUP

The Chairman of the Environmental Monitoring Working Group (EMWG) invited the Committee to receive both the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2006, together with his report which was circulated at the meeting. His report drew the Committee's attention to a number of issues which had been discussed on 4 October 2006. These topics included reporting formats; Night Flying Policy including night-time military flights; Engine Ground Running; and road traffic congestion.

Discussion Points

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr R Sleigh) drew the Committee's attention to the element of the EMWG Chairman's report which detailed Engine Ground Running and gave the viewpoint that the details contained therein would be unwelcome by the local community. Cllr Sleigh accepted that the Airport needed to remain economically viable but reiterated his concerns. Further details were requested as to the process that would need to be followed for a formal trial of idle engine ground running in the night time and morning shoulder periods. The Airport Company explained the process to the Committee and further advised that this issue would be reported to EMWG again in January 2007. Further details would emerge in due course.

Catherine de Barnes Residents Association (Mr R Hogg) asked of the purpose of the above trial and was advised that airlines had previously made representations with regard to operating difficulties being experienced in the morning shoulder period, particularly with early morning departures from all aprons and remote stands. The trial would allow an impact assessment to take place. It was emphasised that "idle power" was less than "taxi power".

Bickenhill Parish Council (Cllr P Southwick) expressed concerns at the perceived combination of noise sources, i.e. idle and taxi. The Airport Company advised that idle engine runs would be for a duration of between 5 and 15 minutes. The Environment Monitoring Working Group at a future meeting would look at the methodology of the trial and consultation with Solihull MBC would also form part of the process as planning consent was needed to vary the restrictions currently in place. As a reassurance, the Airport Company stated that they were happy to consult residents who were likely to be affected by the trial.

Smith's Wood Parish Council (Cllr F Churchill) referred to traffic issues and in particular, road congestion citing recent traffic jams backing up to Bird Island. The Airport Company stated that they had a regular dialogue with the Airport Police regarding the deployment of resources and it was likely that they were being drawn to security issues as opposed to traffic management. The Airport Company undertook to raise the issue with the operational Police on-site and they were hopeful of a satisfactory outcome. It was also suggested that the Police could be invited to the next (or future) meeting of the Passenger Services and Surface Transport Working Group to explain their practices.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr R Sleigh) observed that traffic congestion always appeared to be worse on a Sunday and supported an early dialogue with the Police (and possibly the Highways Agency) on local traffic management issues (i.e. the Airport Site, A45 Coventry Road and Junction 6 of the M42).

Marston Green Residents Association (Mr J Stevens) reiterated the concerns that had been raised by Cllrs Churchill and Sleigh and stated that there was an urgent need to re-establish responsibilities as traffic congestion was a serious issue for local residents as well as passengers. The question was asked as to whether or not the M42 Motorway Variable Message Signing (VMS) could help the situation. The Airport Company stated that VMS signage was likely to have little or no impact on day to day Airport congestion and they were hopeful that the Police held the key to a solution to the problem.

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr K Turner) stated that his attention was drawn to the comments that traffic congestion in and around the Airport Site was worse on Sundays. He enquired as to whether or not the traffic congestion was attributed to flight scheduling

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and was advised by the Airport Company that traffic congestion was difficult to identify or predict but they did accept that there was a problem with day to day active highway management. Flight schedules were due to change in the coming weekend which should hopefully ease the congestion although the Airport Company agreed that they would look at a long term solution for 2007. CCTV, also being installed around the Airport road network, would help with the traffic situation.

Balsall Parish Council (Cllr M Longfield) supported what had been said already, in particular the Police being invited to the next (or future) meeting of the Passenger Services and Surface Transport Working Group.

Coventry City Council (Cllr N Lee) added that delayed flights could be attributable to hot-spots of traffic congestion and sought opinions on flight arrivals information being visible to approaching traffic heading to the Airport to collect passengers. The Airport Company explained the signage restrictions for highways which had to be complied with but emphasised that "up to the minute" arrivals information was already available via telephone and teletext and they encouraged the use of those sources of flight information.

Berkswell Parish Council (Cllr D Hitchcock) stated that the problems highlighted with traffic congestion gave more weight to the argument that people should be encouraged to use public transport.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the minutes and report be noted.

7. PASSENGER SERVICES AND SURFACE TRANSPORT WORKING GROUP

The Chairman of the Passenger Services and Surface Transport Working Group invited the Committee to receive both the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2006, together with his report. The minutes and report were taken as read and the Committee made no observations.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the minutes and report be noted.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 28th February 2007 at 2.30pm at Diamond House.