

GATWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 10th April, 2003.

Present:-	Mr. P.W. Bryant (Chairman)
Mr. S. Buck (Substitute)	- International Air Carriers Limited
Mrs. H. Clack (Substitute)	- Surrey County Council
Mr. D.G. Dewdney	- West Sussex County Council
Dr. P. Ellis	- British Air Transport Association
Mr. C. Hersey	- Mid Sussex District Council
Mr. R.A. Jones	- Burstow Parish Council
Mrs. E. Kitchen	- Horsham District Council
Mr. B. Kendall (Substitute)	- Horley Town Council
Mr. G. Larcombe	- Horley and District Chamber of Commerce
Mr. N.F. Maltby	- Mole Valley District Council
Mr J. McCall	- Environmental and Amenity Groups
Mr. J. MacDonald(Substitute) -	International Air Transport Association
Mr. D. Murdoch	- Crawley Borough Council
Mrs. M. Myland	- Tandridge District Council
Lt. Col. Pemberton	- West Sussex County Council
Mr. G. Pixley	- Passenger Representative
Mr.M. Qamaruddin (Substitute) -	Crawley Borough Council
Mrs. D. Ross-Tomlin	- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Mr. A. Rice (Substitute)	- Rusper Parish Council
Mrs. H. Sewill	- Charlwood Parish Council
Mr. A. Skudder	- Crawley Borough Council
Mr. R. Thomas	- East Sussex County Council
Mr. J. Woodward-Nutt	- Consumers' Association

Also present:

Mr. R. Cato	- Chairman and Managing Director, BAA Gatwick
Mrs. C. Nicholls	- Communications Director
Mr. T. Lockwood	- Director of Planning and Environment, BAA Gatwick
Mr. T. Hardy	- Director of Airside Operations, BAA Gatwick
Mr. P. Grindrod	- Department for Transport
Dr. J. Godfrey	- Deputy Honorary Secretary
Mrs. P. Street	- Assistant Honorary Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mrs. C. Blackwell-Gibbs, Mr. G. Blundell-Pound, Mrs. K. Hammond, Ms. J. Houston, Mr. B. Humphreys, Mr. C. Lloyd, Mr. I. Moore, Mrs. E. Sampson and Mr. V. Saunders.

MINUTES

132. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January, 2003 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

General Purposes Sub-Committee

133. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Sub-Committee held on 20th March, 2003, be received and noted (copy attached to the signed minutes).

Ground Run Pen

134. Members noted the current position regarding the planning application for the Ground Run Pen. Mr. Lockwood advised that BAA Gatwick was still looking at the specifications for the ground run pen and, in the light of the observations that had been received, the precise positioning of the development was being re-examined.

AIRPORT COMMENTARY

135. The Committee received the Managing Director's commentary on activity at the airport since the date of the last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes).

136. Mr. Cato reported on BAA plc's recent traffic figures which showed a fall in passenger throughput of 6.2% compared with the same period last year (although it was noted that Easter fell within March last year which needed to be taken into account). In BAA's full financial year, passenger traffic at Gatwick was down 2.8% and was still recovering from the impact of 11th September. Although tour operators' bookings were also down on the previous year there were signs of a recovery. It was hoped that with the hostilities in Iraq coming to an end, booking patterns would return. Members noted the continued impact and asked if BAA Gatwick could produce historic annual traffic figures which clearly showed the past traffic growth and the current impact. Mr. Cato agreed to circulate the figures with the minutes.

137. Members also noted that BAA plc would shortly be publishing its updated 10 year Capital Investment Programme (CIP). The updated CIP would not be dissimilar to the current programme and in respect of Gatwick was based on a one runway two terminal operation accommodating in the region of 40-42 million passengers per annum. Details would be given at the July meeting of the Committee.

138. Mr. Cato updated the Committee on the two recent security incidents at the airport, particularly with regard to the catering truck security breach. He reassured members that a full scale investigation with the Police and DfT was being carried out and that he had personally visited all the catering suppliers to ensure that their security measures and checks met all the necessary requirements.

139. Mr. Pixley referred to effect of the downturn in traffic on ground handling at Gatwick and the implications of lost business on performance standards and staffing. Mr. Cato advised that BAA Gatwick was not prepared to allow service standards to fall and had

recently set up a Ground Handlers Forum with the aim of improving ground handling performance. Although there had been some loss of business as a result of the downturn in traffic, the ground handlers were still recruiting staff to cater for the summer peak.

THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE UK: SOUTH EAST CONSULTATION DOCUMENT SECOND EDITION

140. The Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary providing details of the options put forward by the Government in the second Edition of the South East Consultation document (copy attached to the signed minutes). The Honorary Secretary also circulated at the meeting revised recommendations (copy also attached to the signed minutes).

141. Mr. Cato referred to the letter that BAA Gatwick had sent out to a wide range of stakeholders, including the members of the Consultative Committee. The letter had stated that BAA plc recognised the importance of both the 1979 and 2001 legal agreements. BAA plc had again confirmed that it would not suggest to the Government that the 1979 agreement should be overturned. He also advised that BAA plc was aiming to publish its formal response to the consultation in May 2003, which he hoped other interested parties would find helpful. Mr. Cato was asked about the feasibility of the Government's option of a third runway to the north of the airport at this early stage in the consultation process. He advised that this option had significant civil engineering and operational limitations, as well as associated surface access issues, which needed to be closely examined.

142. Dr. Godfrey drew members' attention to the Committee's previous view that its composition precluded a decision being taken on the choices to be offered and that remained the function of the bodies represented on the Committee. The General Purposes Sub-Committee had again endorsed this view and felt that the main contribution of the Committee would be to highlight the issues associated with each option and to put forward agreed points of principle regarding the Government's future airports policy in respect of Gatwick Airport. In this way, it was hoped that all interests could come together on a number of points of principle, in particular, the importance of honouring the 1979 legal agreement. The Chairman added that he hoped the Committee could give its unanimous support to the principle of honouring the 1979 legal agreement. He stressed the importance of legal agreements for the aviation industry generally and also the partnership working that had been developed over the years at Gatwick. Any decision by the Government to overturn the 1979 legal agreement would have wide and unthinkable consequences beyond the world of aviation not just locally but across the UK.

143. Whilst it was the majority view of the Committee that the 1979 legal agreement should be honoured, including some support from certain airline industry representatives, Mr. Buck (International Air Carriers Association) felt the charter airlines would have difficulty in lending their support to this part of the recommendation. He stressed that a second runway at Gatwick was vital from the charter carriers' perspective in retaining and securing the future development of the charter airline base at the airport if no additional runway was provided at Heathrow. Mr. MacDonald (IATA) added that IATA wished to see an additional runway at Heathrow first and a second runway at Gatwick later. However, if the Government decided that no additional runway would be built at Heathrow then there would be pressure to increase capacity at Gatwick before 2019. Dr. Ellis

(BATA) advised that whilst BATA's view was not yet known, British Airways supported the principle of honouring the 1979 legal agreement.

144. Mr. Murdoch (Crawley Borough Council) also advised that it was premature for the Borough Council to give a view on the 1979 legal agreement at this stage until detailed consideration had been given to the implications of and timing for the packages of options. The Borough Council would be able to give a view on this at the special meeting of the Consultative Committee in June.

145. Members noted the arrangements for the DfT's public exhibition of the Gatwick options and that all members of the Committee had been invited to attend the preview of the exhibition on 1st May at the Gatwick Hilton. It was also noted that there would be free car parking at the airport for attendees at the exhibition. The local authority representatives expressed their disappointment that the preview of the exhibition was to be held on local election day which would preclude a number of members from attending on that day. There was also some concern about the locations chosen for the exhibition and some members from the Surrey authorities felt the exhibition should also be held in Horley. The Chairman advised that this was a matter for those individual organisations concerned to pursue this with the DfT.

146. Resolved -

- (1) That, whatever may happen after 2019, it is the majority view of the Committee that the 1979 legal agreement must be honoured and no additional runway be built at Gatwick before 2019;
- (2) That the Consultative Committee finds the interim statement issued by BAA Gatwick on its intention to honour the 1979 agreement helpful;
- (3) That the Consultative Committee urge BAA plc to be more emphatic about the importance of honouring the 1979 legal agreement and that its response to the Government should state that the Government should uphold the legal agreement;
- (4) That the Consultative Committee's previous view that its composition and role may preclude a decision being taken on the choice between the options for new runways be endorsed;
- (5) That, in considering its response to the Government's consultation document, the main contribution of the Consultative Committee would be to highlight the issues associated with each option and to put forward agreed points of principle regarding the Government's future airports policy in respect of Gatwick Airport; and
- (6) That the programme of special meetings of the Committee and the General Purposes Sub-Committee as set out in paragraph 5.6 of the report be noted.

ON-AIRPORT AIR QUALITY ISSUES

147. The Committee considered a paper by BAA Gatwick responding to questions raised by The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign on the management of air quality issues within the airport boundary (copy attached to the signed minutes). A copy of the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign's letter was circulated at the meeting (copy also attached to the signed minutes). Reference was also made to minute no. 79 of the General Purposes Sub-Committee on this issue.

148. The Committee noted the way in which on-airport air quality was currently managed at Gatwick. Air quality within the airport boundary was a serious issue, particularly for those staff working on the airfield. Members therefore considered it important for staff to be properly informed of the potential air pollution problems.

149. As regards off-airport air quality, it was generally felt that this would be a significant consideration for organisations when responding to the Government's consultation on the runway options for Gatwick, particularly the impact on areas of Horley and Charlwood. Mr. Lockwood advised that in respect of future air quality implications, BAA plc. was carefully examining the issue, especially in relation to Heathrow where studies were currently being undertaken to gain a better understanding of the likely impact. At Gatwick, BAA was currently working with the local authorities, particularly with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council with regard to air quality issues around Horley. He stressed that BAA Gatwick was not complacent and reminded members that there were a number of commitments contained in the Sustainable Development Strategy which aimed to reduce emissions to the air and the impact of the airport on the local community.

ON-AIRPORT CAR PARKING

150. The Committee received a paper by BAA Gatwick explaining its proposals for increasing on-airport car parking capacity for Summer 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). It was noted that in Summer 2002 the demand for on-airport car parking exceeded capacity which meant some of the contingency parking areas needed to be used. The change in traffic mix at the airport, the reduction in transfer passengers and passenger requirements over the past year had created a growth of around 20% in car parking demand. BAA Gatwick therefore proposed to increase long-term car parking capacity by around 4,000 spaces. A copy of a plan showing the areas of the airport where the additional parking would be accommodated was circulated at the meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes).

151. Whilst members welcomed the proposal to increase car parking provision as it relieved pressure on street car parking and at unauthorised sites, there were concerns about the implications of this on the long term passenger growth forecasts for the airport and the assumptions made in the Government's consultation document in relation to the runway proposals. The Government had stated that there were excellent public transport connections at Gatwick, but given the increased in demand for car parking, the public transport system was clearly not attractive enough for passengers. Mr. Cato emphasised that BAA Gatwick would continue to pursue initiatives to seek to encourage greater use of public transport and the proposals were being discussed with West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council. BAA Gatwick had however been asked to re-examine the

ways in which it encouraged the use of public transport and it was currently looking at its pricing policy and targets in the Transport Strategy. Mr. Cato would provide a copy of his response to the local authorities to members of the Committee. The Committee hoped that BAA Gatwick would continue to seek ways of encouraging both passengers and staff to access the airport by sustainable modes of transport.

PASSENGER SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

152. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Passenger Services Sub-Committee in respect of the meeting on 27th February, 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Mr. Pixley advised that since the meeting of the Sub-Committee the new ground handling agent, Groundstar Ltd., had commenced business. Mr. Cato reported that there were some teething problems mainly with check-in which BAA Gatwick was investigating.

153. Mr. Pixley also expressed the Sub-Committee's disappointment at BAA Gatwick's disruptive passenger poster which had been erected in the central search area. The original poster had been replaced with an A4 size corporate design poster. For many months, the Sub-Committee had urged BAA Gatwick to revert to the original poster that also carried the endorsement of Sussex Police. In addition to this, the Sub-Committee wished to see the poster displayed in more prominent positions around the airport, both landside and airside. Mr. Cato agreed to look into the matter.

154. Members noted that the Sub-Committee remained concerned about the congestion in the South Terminal arrivals hall and hoped that BAA Gatwick's plans to use the buffer lounge could be implemented quickly. Mr. Cato advised that discussions were still taking place regarding the use of the buffer lounge and that the lavatories in that area first needed attention to cope with increased passenger use.

155. The Committee noted its involvement in the independent validation of BAA Gatwick's report, required to be submitted to the DfT at the end of May, on how well it was implementing the EU Voluntary Commitment on Air Passenger Rights. The Committee agreed that the Passenger Services Sub-Committee should consider BAA Gatwick's report and, after consultation with the Chairman, to submit a response to the DfT on behalf of the Committee.

CAA'S PRICE CAPS ON AIRPORT CHARGES FOR 2003-2008

156. The Committee received and noted a copy of the CAA's press release setting out its decision on how charges to airlines levied by BAA London airports would be regulated over the next five years (copy attached to the signed minutes).

GROUND NOISE COMMITTEE

157. The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Ground Noise Committee held on 6th March, 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that the Ground Noise Committee would in future meet quarterly.

FLIGHT EVALUATION UNIT COMMENTARY

158. The Committee considered the commentary by the Flight Evaluation Unit on the work of the Unit, headline statistics and the key points arising from the Noise and Track Monitoring Group's meeting on 6th March, 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes).

159. Members noted that the 4,000 ft. vectoring trial on a number of the routes out of Gatwick, which commenced on 28th October, 2002, had proved successful and would be made permanent.

CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING REPORT

160. The Committee received and noted a report by Crawley Borough Council's Director for Environment and Housing on planning applications determined in respect of Gatwick since the date of last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes).

GATWICK AIRPORT COMMUNITY TRUST - CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATION

161. The Committee noted that Mr. Pixley's, the Committee's nomination to serve on the Gatwick Airport Community Trust, term of office was due to expire in April 2003. Mr Pixley was willing to continue to serve on the Trust for a further year.

162. Resolved – That Mr. Pixley continue as the Consultative Committee's nomination to the Gatwick Airport Community Trust for a further year.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES

163. The Committee noted the dates of the next meetings of the Consultative Committee as follows:-

Special meeting of the General Purposes Sub-Committee - Thursday, 29th May, 2003 at 10.00 a.m.

Passenger Services Sub-Committee – Thursday, 5th June, 2003 at 2.00 p.m

General Purposes Sub-Committee - Thursday, 26th June, 2003 at 11.00 a.m.

Special meeting of the Consultative Committee - Thursday 26th June, 2003 at 2.00 p.m.

Consultative Committee – Thursday, 24th July, 2003 at 2.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN