

Minutes of the meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee held on 16th October, 2008.

Present:

Dr. J. Godfrey (Chairman)

Mr. W. Acraman (substitute)-	West Sussex County Council
Mr. P. Barclay	- Environmental and Amenities Groups
Mr. K. Blake	- Crawley Borough Council
Mrs. H. Clack (substitute)	- Surrey County Council
Mr. B. Ealey	- Gatwick Airline Operators' Committee
Mrs. T. Forbes	- Burstow Parish Council
Mr. D. Golletz	- SEEDA
Mr. N. Hague	- Charlwood Parish Council
Mr. P. Hall	- Passenger Representative
Mr. C. Hersey	- Mid Sussex District Council
Mr. M. Hudson (substitute)	- London Chamber of Commerce
Mr. R. A. Jones	- Tandridge District Council
Mrs. E. Kitchen	- Horsham District Council
Ms. I. Knox	- British Air Transport Association
Dr. R. Olliver	- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Mr. P. Pledger	- South London Business
Mr. A. Rice	- Rusper Parish Council
Mr. N. Smith (substitute)	- Tourism South East
Mr. J. Taylor	- CADIA
Mr. R. Thomas	- East Sussex County Council
Mr. D. Webb (substitute)	- Mole Valley District Council
Mr. J. Woodward-Nutt	- Which?

Also present:

Mr. A. Flower - Managing Director, BAA Gatwick
Ms. S. Hunter – Strategy and Finance Director, BAA Gatwick
Mr. T. Lockwood – Spatial Planning Manager, BAA Gatwick
Ms. J. Dawes – Operational Noise Manager, BAA Ltd.
Mr. F. Evans - Department for Transport
Mr. B. Smith – Deputy Honorary Secretary
Mrs. P. Street - Assistant Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr. Avis, Mr. Blundell-Pound, Mr. Brock, Mr. Collier, Mr. Ferrin, Mr. Maltby, Mrs. Myland, Mr. Whittington and Mrs. Howell.

SALE OF GATWICK AIRPORT

MR. COLIN MATTHEWS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BAA LTD.

38. GATCOM welcomed the opportunity to discuss with the Chief Executive of BAA Ltd., Colin Matthews, the sale of Gatwick Airport. Mr. Matthews confirmed that it was the intention to sell Gatwick as a whole enterprise, along with all the current development responsibilities, investment liabilities and legal obligations. He outlined the various stages of the anticipated sale process and emphasised that there was a need to minimise disruption to passengers, staff and other business partners operating at Gatwick throughout the sale process. He also highlighted that some transitional arrangements would need to be put in place to ensure that Gatwick could continue to operate efficiently following the transfer of ownership and he anticipated that the vast majority of staff would remain at Gatwick following the sale.

39. GATCOM sought assurances that steps would be taken to ensure that any future owner would have the capability, credibility and financial resources to meet the needs of stakeholders with an interest in Gatwick. Mr. Matthews confirmed that he was working closely with the management team at Gatwick and noted the Committee's request for the opportunity to have further private discussions with him at an appropriate time when a preferred buyer emerged.

40. Members congratulated Andy Flower and his team for the way in which the announcement of the sale was handled at Gatwick.

41. On behalf of GATCOM, the Chairman thanked Mr. Matthews for providing members with the opportunity to discuss issues surrounding the sale of Gatwick Airport.

MINUTES

42. Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July, 2008 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

GATCOM Steering Group

43. Resolved - That the draft minutes of the GATCOM Steering Group held on 18th September, 2008 be received and noted (copy attached to the signed minutes).

POLICING AT GATWICK

44. Superintendent Robin Smith, Gatwick Commander, Sussex Police updated members on policing at Gatwick. He explained that the level of threat for the UK continued to be 'Severe'. As national security was underpinned by neighbourhood policing, GATCOM welcomed the aims of Project Griffin and what had been achieved at the airport since the project was implemented.

45. Members were pleased to learn that the level of crime at Gatwick was lower than that compared with the previous year and that crimes per passenger continued on a downward trend.

46. Reference was made to the working partnerships with Surrey Police. Superintendent Smith assured members that Sussex Police had good cross border working partnerships and joint intelligence teams in place.

47. The Chairman thanked Superintendent Smith for providing an informative update.

COMPETITION COMMISSION'S AIRPORT MARKET INVESTIGATION: PROVISIONAL FINDINGS AND POSSIBLE REMEDIES –GATCOM'S RESPONSE

48. The Committee noted that following the consideration of the GATCOM Steering Group, a response had been submitted on behalf of GATCOM to the Competition Commission's consultation on the provisional findings and its possible remedies (copy attached to the signed minutes).

AIRPORT COMMENTARY

49. 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). The Chairman thanked Mr. Flower and his team for hosting an informative tour of areas of the airport that morning, which members found most beneficial.

Traffic and Service Performance

50. Mr. Flower was pleased to report that Gatwick had a successful summer season with continued improvements in delivering passenger performance targets across a range of services. He also reported on Gatwick's traffic performance over the past 12 months and it was noted that growth at Gatwick had slowed as a direct result of the current economic downturn on both demand and capacity. He explained that changes in capacity had been driven by the loss of individual services as a result of airline cutbacks and by the cessation of trading by a few airlines, in particular XL and Zoom. The CAA had put repatriation flights in place and this had had a slight impact on the night period.

51. Members were pleased to note that the number of passenger complaints had dropped by 28% compared to the same quarter the previous year. However, Mr. Flower reported that the significant area of concern was the special assistance service, specifically the late collection of passengers from arrivals, and a vast number of complaints had been received about the service. The problems were being addressed as a matter of priority with the new contractor.

BAA Gatwick Senior Leadership Team

52. Mr. Flower informed GATCOM that two new appointments had been made to the senior leadership team at Gatwick. Andrew McCallum had been appointed as Head of Communications and Andrew Hill appointed as Head of Supply Chain.

PASSENGER ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)

53. GATCOM received the report from the Chairman of the PAG in respect of the activities of the PAG since the date of the last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes).

54. Members welcomed the continued achievement of the security queuing time performance targets in both terminals and that the passenger's perception of queuing time also continued to improve.

55. GATCOM specifically noted the PAG's significant concerns about the poor levels of service for people who need assistance to help with their journey through the airport. Mr. Flower advised that the problems experienced by the new service provider, G4S, were being addressed and all parties were working in partnership to resolve the current problems. Whilst there was a need to increase the percentage of passengers who pre-notify the airport of their requirements, GATCOM acknowledged that this was only part of the problem. The airline community was pleased to report that a marked improvement in the contractor's performance had been achieved over the past few weeks and it was hoped that further improvements would continue to be made. The Passenger Advisory Group would continue to monitor performance.

56. Resolved – That:

- (1) BAA Gatwick be congratulated on continued improvements in performance of security queuing;
- (2) UK Borders Agency be invited to a future meeting to report on the development of service level agreements and to update on plans for automated systems; and
- (3) the Passenger Advisory Group's concern about service performance for passengers with reduced mobility be noted and that performance standards continue to be monitored.

NEW LEGAL AGREEMENT

57. GATCOM considered a paper by BAA Gatwick, West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council outlining the progress made on the discussions with local authorities on the new legal agreement (copy attached to the signed minutes).

58. Mr. Smith outlined the terms of the new agreement, which would now set out BAA Gatwick's three principal objectives for the sustainable development of Gatwick Airport. He explained the key areas of particular interest to GATCOM, in particular the new arrangements for the annual monitoring and reporting process.

59. There was some concern that the agreement appeared to contain fewer obligations to limit the environmental impact of the airport's growth and, in particular, no targets had been included in respect of limiting or reducing the noise impact. Mr. Smith advised that as the largest reduction in noise had already been achieved through the phasing out of the old Chapter 2 aircraft, it was doubtful whether further significant reductions in the area contained within the noise contours could be achieved. However, he reassured members that the agreement contained an obligation for BAA Gatwick to produce action plans to address air quality, noise, water quality and drainage, waste management and utility management which individually would contain targets and would be subject to scrutiny by the independent verifier as part of the new monitoring process.

60. Reference was made to the restriction on the use of the Povey Cross Access and there was concern that there was provision made for "such other users" to gain access following approval. There was concern that the approval would be given without the requirement to consult the Parish Council or the local member. Mr. Smith noted this concern and advised that steps would be taken to ensure there was a requirement to consult affected local members should a change in circumstances be proposed.

61. GATCOM was pleased to note that an obligation to address the impact of climate change had been included. It was commented however that BAA Gatwick's stated objective was not realistic as it was beyond the company's ability to help reduce the impacts of the aviation industry as a whole. Mr. Smith acknowledged that addressing climate change was a new aspect of the overall framework but it was felt important to include the company's stated objective as it was a basis on which to progress, influence and improve.

62. The progress made by BAA Gatwick, West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council on negotiating the new legal agreement was welcomed. The majority of members were confident that, together with BAA Gatwick's commitments and action plans, the new agreement provided a more robust and measurable framework to manage and monitor the future growth of the airport. GATCOM therefore urged all parties to finalise the draft agreement, along with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Gatwick local authorities, and arrange for the documentation to be signed at the earliest possible time.

CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT'S REPORT

63. Members noted the report by Crawley Borough Council Director for Housing and Environment's report on planning applications determined in respect of Gatwick since the date of the last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes). Ms. Cordery, Planning Officer, Crawley Borough Council advised that the Borough Council had also recently granted retrospective planning permission for the widening of the runway shoulders to accommodate A380 aircraft.

DEFRA CONSULTATION: GUIDANCE FOR AIRPORT OPERATORS TO PRODUCE NOISE ACTION PLANS

64. The Committee considered a report by the Secretariat outlining the content of the draft guidance produced by Defra on the preparation of noise action plans (NAPs). Mrs. Street advised that the NAP was required to be produced under the requirements of the Environmental Noise Directive (END) and would be based on the results of the END strategic noise maps published by Defra in December 2007. The noise action plan currently being prepared by BAA Gatwick under the terms of the new legal agreement was therefore different to the END NAP and consideration was being given as to how the two action plans could be combined into the one document. She also highlighted that there was no requirement under the terms of the END to address airport ground noise whereas BAA Gatwick's draft action plan took this into account.

65. Members noted that NAPs were to be prepared in consultation with local communities and they welcomed the proposed role for airport consultative committees in the development of the NAPs prior to the formal public consultation. The comments on the draft guidance set out in the suggested response set out in Appendix 1 of the report were endorsed and it was suggested that reference should be made to the need to provide greater clarity on the protection of quiet areas in agglomerations as this would be relevant at Gatwick following the second round of strategic noise mapping in 2012.

66. Resolved – That, subject to the inclusion of a reference suggesting greater clarification be given on the protection of quiet areas, the response set out in Appendix 1 be approved and submitted to Defra.

FLIGHT EVALUATION UNIT (FEU) REPORT

67. GATCOM considered the quarterly report of the FEU together with the key messages arising from the recent meetings of the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) and the Ground Noise Committee (copy attached to the signed minutes).

68. Ms. Dawes referred members to the comment on the night noise section on page 23 of the report and advised that it should have stated:

“There was a lower than expected demand for night-time slots this winter with the overall total movement usage standing at about 90% of the available seasons quota. However unlike previous seasons there was a change in trend towards the use of aircraft with larger QC values has continued and arriving aircraft continue to form the majority of night quota movements. Details...”.

69. Members also noted the update on the work of ANMAC in that the current arrivals procedures at the South East airports had been referred to Eurocontrol for their analysis and comments.

NOISE EXPOSURE CONTOURS FOR GATWICK AIRPORT 2007

70. Members received a report from West Sussex County Council's Director – Operations Infrastructure summarising the results of the DfT's noise monitoring results for a period of summer 2007 (copy attached to the signed minutes). GATCOM noted that the results of the noise monitoring showed a broadly similar noise exposure position to that of 2006.

71. Resolved – That:

- (1) The new noise monitoring information be noted;

- (2) BAA Gatwick and the airlines operating from the airport be urged to increase the use of quieter rather than noisier aircraft; and
- (3) The DfT be asked to ensure the prompt publication of the noise exposure contours for Gatwick Airport 2008.

GATWICK RAILWAY STATION AND SOUTH CENTRAL FRANCHISE UPDATE

72. GATCOM received a report from the Secretariat setting out the current position in respect of the Office of the Rail Regulator's (ORR) proposed funding for the Gatwick Station redevelopment project and the latest position in respect of the South Central Franchise and the changes to the Gatwick Express service (copy attached to the signed minutes).

73. Mrs. Street advised that there had been tremendous support from a wide range of stakeholders in the campaign to secure appropriate funding for the Gatwick Station preferred scheme. The outcome of the ORR's consultation was due to be announced on 30th October. Members noted the response that had been received from the DfT's Rail Division and was disappointed that it had not been more positive in recognising the importance of Gatwick and the aims of the Air Transport White.

74. Reference was also made to the response that the Secretariat had received from the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) regarding GATCOM's concerns about the proposed reduction in funding. It was noted that as the ODA had taken a neutral stance on the matter, the impact of traffic arising from the Olympic Games should be further considered. It was suggested therefore that Mr. Danny Sloan, BAA Director - Planning 2012 be invited to attend the next meeting of GATCOM to outline BAA's latest Olympic forecasts and plans.

75. The Chairman advised that members would be kept informed of the ORR's Final Determinations and any further proposed action by GATCOM.

ON-STREET CAR PARKING ISSUES IN CHARLWOOD/HOOKWOOD

76. Mr. Hague, Charlwood Parish Council, outlined the problems currently being experienced in Charlwood and Hookwood with airport employee related car parking. Whilst he acknowledged that BAA Gatwick had a strategy to encourage airport workers to use public transport by limiting parking at the airport, this had caused airport workers to park their cars on roads close to the airport, who then used local buses to access the airport. Surrey County Council had undertaken a survey of parking activity and it was now proposed to impose parking restrictions in some roads. However, it was feared that this would only move the problem to other areas in the immediate vicinity of the airport.

He asked whether BAA Gatwick could address the problem by releasing land for airport workers parking.

77. Whilst the particular problems in the Charlwood/Hookwood area were acknowledged, a number of members advised that this was an issue of concern for other communities around Gatwick. Other problems associated with airport related car parking in local roads close to the airport were highlighted and discussed. BAA Gatwick noted the range of concerns and it was agreed that it would undertake a review of the situation, including how other airports address the problem, and it would consider the effectiveness of the airport employee car parking strategy. A report would be given at a future meeting. In the meantime, members were invited to put forward ideas on how the airport community could address the problem.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

78. The Committee noted the calendar of meetings for the ensuing year as follows:

Passenger Advisory Group

Thursday 15th January, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Wednesday 15th April, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Wednesday 1st July, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 8th October, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 14th January, 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

GATCOM Steering Group

Thursday 8th January, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 2nd April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 2nd July, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 1st October, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 7th January, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

GATCOM

Thursday 29th January, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 30th April, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 23rd July, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 22nd October, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 28th January, 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN