

GATWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting held on 7th June, 2007 at Gatwick Airport.

Present: Mr. P.W. Bryant (Chairman)

Mr. Acraman, Mr. Barclay, Dr. Godfrey, Mr. Hobbs, Mrs. Kitchen, Ms. Knox, Mrs. Ross-Tomlin and Mrs. Sewill.

Also present:

Mr. T. Lockwood – Head of Corporate Responsibility, BAA Gatwick
Mr. C. Mathers – Environmental Information Manager, BAA Gatwick
Mr. F. Evans – Department for Transport
Mr. L. Hibbs – Reigate and Bansted Borough Council
Mr. J. Freeman – Crawley Borough Council,
Mrs. P. Street – Assistant Secretary.
Mrs. R. Howell – Technical Adviser

Apologies for absence were received from: Mrs. Denman, Mr. Maltby and Mr. Taylor.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22ND MARCH, 2007

132. Resolved – That the minutes of the Sub-Committee held on 22nd March, 2007 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

DRAFT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES – 19TH APRIL, 2007

133. The Sub-Committee noted the draft minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 19th April, 2007 (copy attached to the signed minutes).

GATWICK ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2007

134. The Sub-Committee had before it a copy of the draft Gatwick Airport Monitoring Report produced jointly by BAA Gatwick, Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council, together with a report by the Honorary Secretary (copy attached to the signed minutes). The Sub-Committee noted that its role was to assist Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council in the selection of up to ten items to be put forward for independent verification.

135. The Gatwick Local Authority Officers' Group had prepared an initial draft list of 15 items that they considered suitable for verification. Members considered the suggestions and agreed that the following items should be recommended for verification as follows: -

- TS7a – improve information as to onward travel from airport.
- TS30 – carrying out staff travel survey at least every three years to measure the impact of on staff travel of the Area Travel Plan.
- Sub-section 4.7 – targets for numbers of road trips to and from Gatwick, Crawley and Horley by 2008.
- AQ15 – check emissions from airside vehicles.
- AQ14 – record number of vehicles which are left unattended with their engines running and review enforcement.
- LE5 – develop and implement biodiversity action plans.
- CC1 – maintain systems that record energy use and monitor energy saving initiatives.

- CC5/6/7 – pursue initiatives to reduce energy consumption.
- Sub-section 11.18 – target to achieve a 5% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2010 on the 1999/2000 base.
- CC8 – report externally on the energy consumption and CO2 emissions data.

136. Members enquired how the monitoring process would be taken forward the following year in view of the fact that the 2001 legal agreement only required the monitoring regime to continue until 2008/09. Mr. Lockwood gave details of the transition arrangements and advised that BAA Gatwick, working with the local authorities, was looking at the commitments and legal obligations to sit alongside the airport master plan. The intention was that the annual monitoring report for the year ended March 2008 would be produced against the finalised list of commitments reflecting the scope and timeframe of the master plan to 2015. Mrs. Howell also advised that it had been agreed that the external verification process would continue.

137. Resolved – That the Sub-Committee on behalf of the Consultative Committee:

- (1) welcomes both the draft annual monitoring report and the opportunity to assist in the selection of commitments, targets and obligations for independent external verification; and
- (2) request the Honorary Secretary to advise West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council and BAA Gatwick on the list of commitments, targets and obligations (as set out above) the Committee would wish to form part of the external verification process.

FUEL BURN BY AIRCRAFT

138. Mrs. Howell reported on her research to ascertain whether it would be possible to establish an annual figure for CO2 emissions and fuel burn from departing aircraft at Gatwick Airport. She advised that in order to obtain a crude figure for Gatwick Airport data in relation to the landing and take off cycle of aircraft would be needed. However, in calculating a figure there were so many variables that would need to be taken into consideration such as aircraft types, the number of airlines and the routes they operated i.e. long haul or short haul, and the amount of fuel uplift. There was also a problem in that some aircraft arrived at the airport with fuel remaining and some would need to be refuelled. She emphasised that it was a complex issue with so many variables so any figure calculated would need to be treated cautiously.

139. Ms. Knox referred to the Sustainable Aviation Strategy produced by the aviation industry and advised that one of the Strategy's commitments was to develop and implement common reporting of total CO2 emissions and fleet fuel efficiency by airlines from 2006. Work on this was still progressing and the figures were not at present available. Members noted this commitment but commented that obtaining CO2 emissions by aircraft type would be more valuable as it would encourage airlines to operate less polluting and fuel efficient aircraft. It was felt that linking information from that reporting process could assist in the calculation of a figure for Gatwick. Mrs. Howell would discuss this further with BATA.

140. Members also enquired whether the DfT in taking forward its climate change agenda had any plans to address this nationally. Mr. Evans pointed out that, given the high number of airports in the UK, this would be a considerable task. In addition, there were a high number of variables which would complicate the issue of accurate comparative measurement. Mr. Evans noted the comments from members and offered to report back at a future meeting.

141. The Sub-Committee recognised that this was possibly an area where the Consultative Committee could try and influence BAA and the DfT in establishing a way forward in the reporting of information. It was agreed, therefore, that in order to further consider these complex issues a paper on the factors that needed to be taken into account and the caveats would be prepared by Mrs. Howell for consideration at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

LOCAL AIR QUALITY MONITORING – ANNUAL REPORT

142. The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by Reigate and Bansted Borough Council and BAA Gatwick on the results from the 2006 air pollution monitoring programme undertaken on and in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members were encouraged to note that there was a clear downward trend in annual average nitrogen dioxide concentrations. It was noted that this decrease in pollution was most likely due to improvements in road vehicle emissions and was in line with predictions for non-airport nitrogen dioxide pollution at Gatwick and across the south-east.

143. Members also noted that the average PM10 concentration on airport showed a significant fall, compared to 2004 and 2005. Mr. Hibbs explained that this appeared to be due to a local site specific reason rather than due to a change in overall airport emissions or falls in particulate pollution across the south-east.

144. Members also noted that the results of benzene were still awaited but it was not anticipated that this would show any upward trend.

145. The Sub-Committee thanked Mr. Hibbs and BAA Gatwick for the producing such a well presented and understandable report.

AIR NOISE AND TRACK KEEPING ISSUES

Disturbance caused by aircraft flying over Hever

146. The Chairman reported on the visit to Hever to experience and discuss noise issues with local people and a representative of Hever Castle. It was explained that residents' concerns arose from the increase in noise nuisance caused by aircraft approach on landing from the east (i.e. westerly runway operation) which was about 75% of the time. It was also explained that CDA procedures were operated in about 80% of daytime and 90% of night landing movements. The Sub-Committee noted the current situation and the improvements that had been made in recent years to try and limit noise intrusion but acknowledged that the increase in the number of movements and their distribution throughout the day meant the noise continued to be a problem for many local people. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chairman Designate explained that they had observed that there was a considerable variation in the height of approaching aircraft and that approach paths to the ILS joining point were spread over a wide area.

147. The Sub-Committee, recognising that being so close to the ILS glide slope the scope for change in the Hever and Marsh Green locality was very limited, felt that there were some issues that would merit further study. It was emphasised that these further studies should also include an examination of the impact of arriving aircraft on areas to the west of the airport as those communities also suffered significant noise intrusion. The Sub-Committee in reaching its conclusions also emphasised that it did not wish to give any false hope to the residents of Hever or Marsh Green that changes in approach paths or the height of aircraft could be made particularly as the scope for change in that area was very limited.

148. Resolved – That:

- (1) The Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) continue to review the application of CDA procedures and encourage the airport, airlines, NATS and the DfT through forums such as FLOPC (Flight Operations Performance Committee) to explore opportunities to keep aircraft on approach higher for longer and to discourage those that are lower than necessary;
- (2) NATMAG look at the range of approach paths being used to see whether a more equitable distribution of aircraft movements would be possible; and
- (3) the interpretation of height and noise data be further clarified.

Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) – Disturbance caused by approaching aircraft

149. The Sub-Committee received a paper prepared by GACC for consideration by the Minister for Aviation on disturbance caused by approaching aircraft (copy attached to the signed minutes). Mr. Barclay advised that the Minister was currently considering the paper and a response was awaited. He agreed to share the response with the Consultative Committee when it was available.

Night Movements Summary

150. The Sub-Committee received a summary of night movements for the winter season (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that only 58.9% of the noise quota had been used and questioned whether the quota had still been set too high for the winter season. It was highlighted that due to the implementation of the new noise regime which also introduced a new QC 0.25 category, it was difficult to compare the movements and noise quota with the previous year.

Complaints Analysis

151. The Sub-Committee received the analysis of noise complaints for the period January - March 2007 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that BAA Gatwick had recently launched its on line aircraft tracking system “webtrack” and that, to date, there had not been a material difference in the number of complaints being logged. In respect of complaints handling, whilst the Sub-Committee congratulated BAA Gatwick on achieving its complaints handling targets, members noted that there had been criticism of the way in which BAA Gatwick handled multiple complaints. It was suggested therefore that BAA Gatwick in responding to such complaints communicate to those complainants at an early stage the way in which their complaint would be handled.

NOISE AND TRACK MONITORING ADVISORY GROUP (NATMAG) AND GROUND NOISE COMMITTEE – KEY MESSAGES

152. The Sub-Committee considered the key messages arising from the recent meetings of NATMAG and Ground Noise Committee (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted BAA Gatwick’s proposal to streamline its noise monitoring reporting process and that it was now the intention to produce one FEU report four times per year to be presented at various forums. It was hoped to prepare an example of the form of report for consideration at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

NOISE INSULATION SCHEME

153. Mr. Lockwood updated the Sub-Committee on the position following the close of the consultation on the proposed residential noise insulation scheme. He advised that 27 responses had been received and the key issues raised were the boundary for the night time contour and the use of a combination of the contour and man-made boundaries; the timeframe for the phasing of the scheme; the choice of the noise contour to be used; and the possible inclusion of all rooms rather than just bedrooms. BAA Gatwick was still considering the responses and had not yet set a date to announce the scheme.

INTERIM CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2007

154. The Sub-Committee noted that BAA Gatwick had issued its Interim Capital Investment Programme (CIP) to airline users and other key stakeholders for comment on 25th April. As the closing date for responses was before the Sub-Committee was due to meet, the Honorary Secretary had submitted a response following consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chairman Designate.

155. Members were anxious about the absence of a reference in the interim CIP to Network Rail's proposals for Gatwick Station particularly as Network Rail was hoping to commence construction of a scheme in March 2009. Mr. Lockwood assured members that BAA Ltd was fully supportive of a scheme and was currently engaged with Network Rail on considering the possible options. Ms. Knox also advised that the options under consideration were being looked at as part of the Constructive Engagement process with the airlines. Members nonetheless felt that the final CIP document should include a reference in the supporting text to the possibility of a scheme coming forward.

156. The Sub-Committee endorsed the response (copy attached to the signed minutes).

PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: WHITE PAPER

157. The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary summarising the proposals set out in the Planning White Paper insofar as they related to nationally significant infrastructure projects and national policy statements (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that for key national infrastructure such as major airport projects the Government was proposing to replace the multiple existing consent regime with a new system which it believed would enable decisions on infrastructure to be taken in a timely and efficient way.

158. The majority of the Sub-Committee while acknowledging that there was a need to change the existing system, felt that the proposals contained in the White Paper still required further clarification and modification. In general terms, the proposal to establish a more inquisitorial system was supported but there was concern about the role, composition and accountability of the proposed independent infrastructure planning commission.

159. The local authority and environmental representatives in particular were concerned about the removal of democratic involvement in the decision making process and questioned the accountability of proposed Commission. In addition to this, the extent to which the public would be able to participate at inquiries was questioned and members emphasised the need for genuine participation in the process and not just involvement in the proposed "open floor" stage.

159. Ms. Knox advised however that there was much support across the industry for the proposals contained in the White Paper and she believed that local discussions and participation in the process would continue.

160. It was agreed that the initial form of response set out in the Honorary Secretary's report be revised to reflect the views of members for consideration by the Consultative Committee at its next meeting.

DFT CONSULTATION – AIR TRAVEL FOR DISABLED PASSENGER AND PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY

161. The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary providing details of a consultation by the DfT on the enforcement of the EC Regulation 1107/2006, concerning the rights of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility (PRM) while travelling by air (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that the DfT was proposing to delegate the enforcement of the regulation to the CAA by way of a criminal sanctions regime with an extensive menu of penalties. The initial handling of complaints would be delegated to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

162. The Sub-Committee agreed with the suggested form of response set out in the Honorary Secretary's report. Members acknowledged that the proposed system would be consistent with the criminal sanctions regime across all legislation enforced by the CAA but felt there was a greater likelihood of court action being pursued by complainants as it related to a personal service disabled passengers and PRMs were legally entitled to receive. Members were therefore most concerned about the proposed regime of criminal sanctions and felt that a regime of administrative sanctions should be reconsidered by the DfT. It was also questioned whether individuals at airports should attract a criminal record where there has been a failure in the provision of assistance which may be inadvertent, unspecified or marginal in magnitude.

163. In respect of the proposals for complaints handling, the Sub-Committee agreed that it was sensible to delegate the complaints handling function to the DRC particularly as that organisation already handled complaints from other transport related issues.

164. Resolved – That:

- (1) the comments set out in section 4 of the Honorary secretary's report for the basis of the response to the DfT's consultation; and
- (2) the Passenger Services Sub-Committee be asked to continue to monitor the implementation of the new legislation.

ANNUAL TOUR OF THE AIRPORT

165. BAA Gatwick circulated at the meeting an initial suggestion for the annual tour of the airport which was to take place on 19th July, 2007. The Sub-Committee supported the suggested new emphasis on touring the terminal buildings to view and experience a passenger's journey through the airport.

MR. P. W. BRYANT, CHAIRMAN

166. On behalf of the Sub-Committee, Mrs. Sewill paid tribute to Mr. Bryant who was to hand over the chairmanship to Dr. John Godfrey at the next meeting of the Consultative Committee. She thanked him for his dedication to the work of the Committee and for the fairness he applied in managing and summing up debate on a range of complex and important issues at Gatwick.

CHAIRMAN