

GATWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting held on 27th June, 2002, at Gatwick Airport.

Present:

Mr. P.W. Bryant (Chairman)

Mr. D. Dewdney, Ms. J. Houston, Mrs. E. Kitchen, Mr. J. McCall, Mr. D. Murdoch, Mr. G. Pixley, Mrs. E. Sampson and Mrs. H. Sewill.

Also present:

Mr. T. Lockwood - Director of Planning and Environment, BAA Gatwick

Mrs. A. Addy - Public Relations, BAA Gatwick

Mr. M. Young - Head of Environmental Services, Crawley Borough Council

Ms. R. Howell - Aviation Strategist, West Sussex County Council

Dr. J. Godfrey - Honorary Secretary

Mrs. P. Street - Assistant Honorary Secretary.

Apologies for absence were received from Dr. P. Ellis.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JUNE, 2002

118. Resolved - That the minutes of the Sub-Committee held on 13th June, 2002, be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Airport Related Car Parking Surveys

119. Reference was made to minute no. 91 regarding the results of the airport related car parking survey undertaken by Surrey County Council.

Mr. Lockwood advised that he was still awaiting the final report from Surrey County Council. Members asked Mr. Lockwood if he could pursue the matter with the County Council and so that a report could be made to the Consultative Committee at the earliest possible time.

Gatwick Airport Annual Monitoring Report

120. Dr. Godfrey informed members that officers of Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council were recommending to the Gatwick Airport Joint Authorities meeting that afternoon the list of items to be put forward for independent verification. The list of ten items was as suggested by the Sub-Committee with the exception of AQ1 (Retrofit FEGP on existing stands) being excluded from the list and WQ 8 (Avoidance of Flooding) being included, which was considered as a Priority 2 item by the Sub-Committee.

DRAFT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES - 25TH APRIL, 2002

121. The Sub-Committee received and noted the draft minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 25th April, 2002.

Planning applications for the Ground Run Pen (GRP) and Hangar 7

122. Mr. McCall referred to the report of Crawley Borough Council listing the planning applications that had been determined by the Council. He drew to members' attention the fact that the planning applications for the GRP and Hangar 7 had now been submitted by BAA Gatwick. The Sub-Committee felt that as these applications were of significant interest to the communities around the airport, it was important that the Consultative Committee received details of the applications and whether they complied with the terms of the legal agreement and Sustainable Development Strategy. It was agreed that the Honorary Secretary would produce a report for the next meeting of the Consultative Committee.

ILLEGAL MEAT IMPORTS

123. Mr. Young, Head of Environmental Services, Crawley Borough Council informed the Sub-Committee of the work of the Borough Council in tackling the problem of the illegal importation of meat and its role as Port Health Authority. He explained that one of the Borough Council's functions, as Port Health Authority, was to control products of animal origin. There were designated border inspection posts through which all meat must be imported but the problem was with the illegal trade (meat brought into the country in passengers' baggage or in freight). The problem was highlighted during the recent foot and mouth crisis and by the outbreak of classic swine fever the previous year, both of which were thought to have originated from contaminated illegal foreign meat. As a result this national problem was now an issue being addressed by the Government.

124. One of the main problems is that there are two different issues that need addressing. Firstly, there is the issue of dealing with unintended (innocent) illegal imports for a passenger's own consumption and secondly, the well organised black market trade mainly in African bush meat. The main problem was that Environmental Health Officers and Port Health staff had, until recently, no powers to search passengers' baggage and it was not in the remit of HM Customs to do this. The Borough Council therefore lobbied the Government for a change in the legislation. This had been successful as new powers came into force on 22nd May giving local Environmental Health Officers the power to open and inspect personal luggage and other packages. The Borough Council is now pressing the Government for the necessary resources fulfil its new powers effectively.

125. The Government has also put in place an action plan with specific measures to include the use of detector dogs (pilot scheme - two dogs being trained by the State Veterinary Service for use at Heathrow), the use of x-ray equipment to scan containers and personal baggage (currently being trialled at Southampton) and placing amnesty bins at Customs check points to encourage the surrender of

unintended illegal personal imports. Gatwick's Port Health staff were currently working jointly with HM Customs to target certain flights but this was not on a daily basis due to the resource issue.

126. Mr. Young explained that Crawley Borough Council was pressing the Government to seek a change in the EU legislation on personal allowances as this was considered confusing for passengers. In an attempt to address the issue of unintended importation of illegal meat the Borough Council was seeking a ban on personal allowances relating to meat products. The Government was currently in talks with the airlines and there were proposals to have information leaflets on board aircraft, an in flight video highlighting the scale of the problem and penalty free amnesty bins located in the Customs Hall.

127. The Chairman thanked Mr. Young on behalf of the Sub-Committee for the update on the current situation. Whilst members were pleased that the Government was tackling the issue, there was grave concern that the Government had not yet been forthcoming with the necessary funds to enable the Port Health Authority and Local Environmental Health Officers to fully carry out their functions. The Sub-Committee therefore agreed that the Honorary Secretary would write to DEFRA expressing concern.

BAA GATWICK'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN BEYOND 2008

128. Mr. Lockwood outlined to the Sub-Committee the relationship between the Sustainable Development Strategy and the new investment programme for Gatwick as set out in BAA's Capital Investment Programme. He explained that the Sustainable Development Strategy set out how the airport was to develop to meet the forecast growth in passenger numbers to around 40 million passengers per annum by 2008. The new BAA Capital Investment Programme for BAA's London Airports was published for consultation with the airlines and other interested parties in April 2002. It sets out BAA's investment programme for the next 11 years which looks beyond the forecasts and proposed developments in the Gatwick Development Strategy.

129. The investment programme for Gatwick is based on the Sustainable Development Strategy and notwithstanding the severe impact the events of 11th September had on Gatwick's traffic, it still forecasts a growth of 40 million passengers per annum by 2008/09. Beyond that, the programme assumes that Gatwick will have an incremental growth of 0.5 million passengers per annum. This would be achieved by increasing throughput in the off peak and shoulder periods. BAA Gatwick was however giving priority to develop a better understanding of the overall consequences of change in traffic mix at the airport due to the scaling down of British Airways' operation, the increase in 'no frills' services, the reintroduction of cross Atlantic routes and the reduction in cargo operations. He commented that as the fuller consequences emerged it might be that the development requirements for the airport need to be adjusted from that identified in the Development Strategy. If that was the case then BAA Gatwick would need to

discuss changes with the local authorities. Nothing radical had yet emerged but BAA Gatwick would keep the situation under close review.

REGIONAL AIR SERVICE STUDIES AND SERAS

130. The Sub-Committee received a report by the Honorary Secretary giving details of a presentation by the then DTLR to the Annual Meeting of Airport Consultative Committee Chairmen and Secretaries on 31st May, 2002 on the current position on the seven Regional Air Service Studies (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted in particular the broad timetable for the consultation arrangements and that the Government was still aiming to publish the consultation documents in the summer although the timetable was being considered as a matter of urgency by the new Secretary of State, Mr Darling.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SEEDA) REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY CONSULTATION

131. The Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary outlining the content of the Regional Economic Strategy insofar as it related to Gatwick Airport and suggested a response to the consultation (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted that the Strategy recognised the important role both Heathrow and Gatwick had in the economic development of the Region and that the principles of sustainable growth and development with effective protection of the environment were acknowledged. However it was questioned whether the drive in the Strategy to increase development in an already successful area was the right approach rather than seeking to spread that economic success to other Regions.

132. The Sub-Committee also noted that the Gatwick - Brighton area had been identified as one of those areas currently enjoying economic success, although there were serious problems with skills shortages, recruitment and affordable housing. Members noted the key actions to address these issues, although the section on affordable housing was very thin. They were not however convinced that the Strategy provided the right level of leadership for the Region to take these important issues forward. Members believed SEEDA had an important role in supporting and participating in the work of both the Airport Employment Forum and the Gatwick Airport Transport Forum set up by BAA Gatwick to consider amongst other things, these issues and asked that this be emphasised to SEEDA.

133. As regards access to the airport, members were disappointed that, despite SEEDA recognising that both Heathrow and Gatwick were critical hubs and transport interchanges, the document made no mention of the need to bring forward a project to improve Gatwick Railway Station. This was crucial if Gatwick was to continue to grow as a major transport hub. Members felt this should also be emphasised to SEEDA.

134. Resolved - That the comments set out in the Honorary Secretary's report together with the comments made by the Sub-Committee be submitted to SEEDA as the Committee's response to the consultation.

EMERGENCY PLAN EXERCISE

135. The Sub-Committee received a report by BAA Gatwick providing feedback on the emergency plan exercise which took place on 9th April, 2002 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members were pleased that overall the exercise went very well and a number of learning points had emerged which were being addressed by the agencies concerned.

NOISE AND TRACK MONITORING ISSUES

Ground Noise Committee

136. The Sub-Committee received and noted the minutes of the meeting of the Ground Noise Committee held on 10th June, 2002 (copy attached to the signed minutes). It was noted that the then DTLR had indicated that it did not consider it appropriate for a DTLR representative to be present at the Ground Noise Committee meetings. The reason for this was that although the Department was interested in the issue of ground noise, it had no locus in the enforcement of the relevant air navigation regulations and it was a matter for the airport to take forward mitigation measures. In view of this, the Sub-Committee considered it important that the precise responsibility for mitigating and controlling ground noise be clarified. The Honorary Secretary was asked to provide a paper for the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

137. Members who served on the Ground Noise Committee, whilst recognising that the Committee was still evolving, commented that more time needed to be given to the meetings and suggested that they be held after the NATMAG meetings. Mr. Lockwood agreed that the matter be discussed at the next meeting of the Ground Noise Committee.

138. Reference was made to the table showing the Fixed Electrical Ground Power (FEGP) availability over the past year. Members commented that the issue was not whether FEGP was available for use but whether FEGP was used if available. Mr. Lockwood informed the meeting that to provide this information would generate a vast amount of data. Consideration would however be given as to whether sample reporting could be undertaken.

Minutes of the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)

139. The Sub-Committee received and noted the minutes of the meeting of NATMAG held on 10th June, 2002 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Mr. Lockwood drew to members' attention the date which had been set for the Noise and Track Keeping Seminar. This was Thursday 21st November, 2002.

140. The Sub-Committee was also informed that the sites at Capel and west of East Grinstead for mobile noise monitors had now been confirmed.

Night Movements Summary for the Winter Season 2001/02

141. The Sub-Committee considered the night movements summary for winter season 2001/02 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members commented on the number of quota points used during the winter season and the fact that at Gatwick the usage always fell well below the Government's quota limit.

Analysis of Aircraft Complaints

142. The Sub-Committee received and noted the analysis of aircraft complaints for the period 1st January to 31st March, 2002 (copy attached to the signed minutes).

Overflight of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

143. Ms. Howell, Aviation Strategist, West Sussex County Council presented a map showing the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) around Gatwick with overlays showing the tracks of aircraft overflying these areas at an altitude of below 10,000 feet. She explained that the airport was ringed by AONBs, namely the High Weald, the Sussex Downs, Surrey Hills and the North Downs. Aircraft navigation beacons were located at the edges of these areas at Goodwood, Midhurst, Mayfield and Seaford and these were shown in relation to the Standard Instrument Departure (SIDs) routes and the Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs).

144. The SIDs were situated on the outskirts of the AONBs but by definition the NPRs are designed to minimise overflight of populated areas and hence this meant they were over the AONBs. As regards aircraft arrivals, the navigation beacons are used to direct flights into the airport or holding stacks. The most frequently used routes are from the south west via the Goodwood beacon with aircraft descending from around 13,000ft above the AONB, and from the north via the Midhurst beacon with aircraft flying generally at a lower altitude due to the cross over of traffic using Heathrow. Members also noted the location of the ATC holding stacks over the AONBs to the south east of the airport. Ms. Howell would produce a paper setting out what she had said and a map showing the information and altitudes of aircraft for members and BAA Gatwick's Flight Evaluation Unit.

145. The Chairman thanked Ms. Howell for the informative presentation which gave the Sub-Committee a better insight of aircraft movements over the AONBs and how the use of the airport impacted on those communities and recreational areas further afield.

AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICE

146. The Sub-Committee noted that at the Annual Meeting of Airport Consultative Committee Chairmen and Secretaries delegates approved some Guiding Principles for Best Practice (copy attached to the signed minutes). Following the endorsement of the guidelines by the airport consultative committees represented at the annual meeting, it was the intention to submit the guidelines to the Government

so that they could be taken into account in the forthcoming Aviation White Paper. Members noted the thoroughness of the Guidelines and felt that the majority of the guiding principles were already reflected in the Committee's constitution. Subject to the inclusion of passenger interests in the section on "The need for airport consultative committees" and placing greater emphasis on the importance committees had in ensuring that all interests were taken into account, the Sub-Committee endorsed the Guidelines.

147. Reference was made to publishing information on the Internet, and it was agreed that the Honorary Secretary would prepare a paper for a future meeting of the Sub-Committee suggesting options for an Internet site for the Committee.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

148. It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Sub-Committee would take place on Thursday, 3rd October, 2002, at 10.00 a.m.

CHAIRMAN