

## LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT

### Minutes of meeting No. 83 of the Consultative Committee held on Wednesday, 20 August 2014 at 2pm at Southend Airport

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<b>Present:</b> Stuart Greengrass	Chairman
David Osborn	Deputy Chairman
Roger Clements	Chief Executive, Stobart Aviation
David Lister (DL)	Operations Director, Southend Airport (AOD)
Jo Marchetti (JM)	Community Affairs Co-ordinator, Southend Airport
Iain Campbell	Ipeco Holdings
Councillor Peter Elliott	Maldon District Council
Councillor Heather Glynn	Rochford District Council
Elizabeth Georgeou	Southend Borough Council (Officer)
Nora Goodman	Eastwood & St. Laurence Residents Association
Councillor Ray Howard	Essex County Council
Councillor Vic Leach	Rochford Hundred Association of Parish Councils
Councillor Joan Mockford	Rochford District Council
Zhanine Oates	Essex County Council (Officer)
Councillor Alf Partridge	Castle Point Borough Council
Councillor Jill Reeves	Essex County Council
Les Sawyer	West Leigh Residents Association
Ron Smithson	Flying Clubs
Councillor Colin Seagers	Essex County Council
Councillor Mike Steptoe	Rochford District Council
Derry Thorpe	Southend Trades Council
George Crowe (GC)	Secretary

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#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from John Dallaway (Essex Chambers of Commerce), Wendy Harkess (easyJet) and Councillor Graham Longley (Southend on Sea Borough Council). They were also received from Richard Evans and Shaun Scrutton (Rochford District Council (Officers) and Neil Vann (Southend on Sea Borough Council (Officer)).

#### 2. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and particularly welcomed Councillor Jill Reeves and Elizabeth Georgeou who were attending their first meeting of the Committee. In response to a question from the Chairman, Elizabeth Georgeou advised that she manages the Environmental Protection section at Southend Borough Council.

The Chairman added that he was sad that the AOD was leaving. He said that DL had been very professional and extremely competent and he wished him well in his future life and career.

#### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Referring to minute 7 (26 February 2014), the Committee was informed that Wendy Harkess, easyJet's Station Manager at both Stansted and Southend airports, had agreed to be the representative of the airside users of the Airport on the Committee.

The Secretary was requested to provide a current list of members with the agenda for the next meeting. **Action: GC**

#### 4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2014 that had previously been circulated were, subject to the amendment of ‘Canvey Island’ in the 3rd paragraph of minute 12 (f) to ‘The Isle of Grain’, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes that would not be dealt with during the consideration of the agenda for this meeting.

#### 6. AIRPORT DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The Committee received the report for May to July that had been previously circulated with the agenda. The report was presented by DL.

##### (a) David Lister

The AOD’s report concluded with an item informing the Committee that he would be leaving the Airport at the end of August (see also minute 2 above). He advised that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time working at London Southend Airport and appreciates the support (and challenge) that the Consultative Committee had provided. Roger Clements spoke of his gratitude to DL who he called a consummate professional, an excellent AOD and a friend. He also expressed his best wishes to DL for the future.

It was noted that the Airport was recruiting a replacement Operations Director who would continue to have involvement with the Consultative Committee and that Roger Clements would provide the continuity in Airport representation ably assisted by Jo Marchetti. In answer to a question, members were advised that an offer of appointment had been made and that it was intended that the new AOD would be taking up the appointment in October.

##### (b) Performance

The report contained the following performance figures:

Total aviation movements	May	June	July	Total
2014/15	3,075	3,164	3,378	9,617
2013/14	2,910	3,039	3,378	9,327
Commercial movements 2014/2015	1,195	1,290	1,586	4,071
Commercial movements 2013/2014	1,195	1,297	1,321	3,813
Passengers 2014/15	103,619	105,278	114,295	323,192
Passengers 2013/14	77,467	87,646	112,043	277,156

##### (c) Overview

It was noted that in the last 3 months, six new routes into mainland Europe had been launched by Flybe and operated by Stobart Air. Flybe was also picking up the Newquay route previously operated by easyJet. Roger Clements advised that some of the six new routes may seem to be to rather obscure destinations but they had been selected because of

their flight times being little over one hour and there being little or no competition for those routes. He referred to 13,000 passengers so far using the routes in August and to it being hoped that there would be 200,000 in the year. He said that there had been a really positive response from the local authorities, the media, etc., at the launch of the routes and that the French press from Rennes would be visiting the Airport the following week. The Committee was informed that it was possible that not all of the new routes would be successful. Councillor Steptoe said that he had been on the inaugural flight to Maastricht and that he recommended the route, particularly because Maastricht was a very interesting place to visit.

In answer to questions, the Committee was informed that:

- members of staff of Stobart Air operate the movements but, since the company does not have its own booking website or recognisable name, it pays Flybe a percentage commission to use its website;
- Roger Clements hopes that the liaison could lead to Flybe deciding to introduce additional routes from the Airport using its own aircraft.

The number of direct destinations from London Southend was now up to 22 and the new routes were proving popular. The performance of the easyJet routes had also proved to be strong during the last 3 months.

## **7. PLANNING ISSUES**

The AOD's report included information about the following planning issues:

### **(a) Future projects**

Options for the location of a new Airport Fire Station and to improve the Fire Training ground continued to be reviewed.

### **(b) Footpath**

A planning inquiry had been held at the end of July to review the Airport's application for the permanent diversion of the footpath that crossed an airport taxiway and the decision was expected in 2 to 3 months. The proposed diversion was being progressed with the support of Rochford, Southend and Essex councils.

The Committee was informed that permission to further extend the temporary closure of the footpath had been secured.

In answer to questions, it was noted that:

- should approval for the permanent diversion of the footpath be refused, there are other legal means of obtaining permission that would be pursued as it was not safe or practical for the footpath to be reopened;
- approval for the temporary closure of the footpath extended into 2015;
- Stop Airport Extension & Noise (SAEN) and the Ramblers Association had opposed the closure;
- the Civil Aviation Act does not include provisions relating to the closure or diversion of footpaths on airports.

(c) Approach lights – runway 24

The process to allow the replacement of three old runway approach light masts with three new ones was continuing. The Committee was reminded that the replacement of these lamps would improve safety and reduce the number of occasions on which aircraft need to divert elsewhere in poor weather. Having failed to reach agreement with the landowner after over a year of negotiation, application had been made to the Secretary of State under the Civil Aviation Act to secure consent.

(d) Davies Commission

The AOD's report contained information including key quotations from and about the Airports Commission's initial report which mainly related to the recommendations for future runway capacity. It shortlisted two options at Heathrow and one at Gatwick and agreed to a review of the Thames Estuary Airport proposals to ascertain whether it should be added to the shortlist. Four feasibility studies relating to the estuary airport proposal had also been published. The AOD added that Stobart Air would not want the estuary airport to be shortlisted as such an airport would be likely to severely impact on Southend Airport. In response to a question from Councillor Howard he advised that, since the Commission was anticipating an increase in passenger numbers of in the order of 70 million, the 5 million passengers that it was envisaged would use Southend Airport was negligible by comparison.

Also included in the AOD's report was an extract from a paper produced by the Commission in June which discussed the part that Southend Airport can play in the short to medium term.

## **8. INWARD INVESTMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

Included in the AOD's report was information relating to inward investment, employment and training.

(a) Inward investment

In addition to the information contained in minute 6(c) above about new routes operated by Stobart Air to Rennes, Groningen and Münster Osnabrück, Cologne Bonn, Caen Normandie and Antwerp the report advised that the Airport continues to have discussions with many airlines over potential new routes and services. Swiss-owned SkyWork Airlines would be moving its twice-daily flights to the Swiss capital, Bern from London City Airport to Southend Airport in October.

Talks continued to take place with a number of investors who would like to secure additional hangars at the Airport.

The AOD advised that the application to reinstate controlled airspace had been submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and that, subject to an assessment of the submission by the CAA, the target date for it being re-installed was January 2015.

In the interim period a request to put in place a temporary radio mandatory zone (RMZ) had been approved by the CAA and became operational in July 2014.

In answer to questions, members were advised that:

- under the RMZ, pilots are required to let the Airport's air traffic controllers know they are entering the Airport's airspace;

- National Air Traffic Services (NATS) was working jointly with London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) and that this could work to the advantage of the Airport.

(b) Employment and training

The Airport had recruited additional staff for passenger services, cleaning, catering, air traffic control and retail for the summer season and had further recruitment in place for passenger services and the fire service. Stobart Air has recruited 60 new cabin crew and pilots to enable the launch of their 6 new European routes.

Questions were asked about additional Airport jobs and members:

- Noted that page 13 of the Annual Report (minute 11(a) below) included the information that there were 1,099 people employed at the Airport. The AOD added that this included 338 staff directly employed by London Southend Airport (not including Stobart Air staff);
- were informed that the above figures exclude employees of companies based on the Airport and Airport Industrial Estate;
- were advised that 10 apprentices are being trained by Prospects College.

## **9. LIAISON GROUP OF UK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES (UKACCS) MEMBERSHIP**

Circulated with the papers for this meeting was a paper written by the Chairman on his attendance, with Norah Goodman, at the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of UKACCS on 12 June 2014.

In introducing the report, the Chairman said that the meeting had been more interesting than he had expected. They had been on a tour of Gatwick Airport and been informed of its impressive development plan which included the construction of a second runway.

He also advised that, with hindsight, it would probably have been more beneficial to have attended on both days of the meeting. This had not been possible due to prior commitments.

It was noted that next year's Annual Meeting would be taking place over two days at Manchester Airport. Norah Goodman added that there had been a lot of references to the progressiveness of Southend Airport.

## **10. PRESS PACK**

The pack of newspaper cuttings relating to the Airport was available and noted.

## **11. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Included in the AOD's report was information relating to community relations.

(a) Annual Report

It was noted that Annual Report, the draft of which had been presented at the last meeting (minute 10 refers) had been finalised. Members noted that no further comments had been received since the last meeting and the amendments that had been made to the draft were outlined.

Copies of the final Report were made available to members at the meeting.

(b) Noise

It was noted that the total number of noise complaints for the May to July quarter was 187 compared with 100 for the previous quarter. In the same period in 2013 there had been 318, a 41% reduction year on year.

A number of the complaints related to delayed flights operating at night during the French air traffic control strike (25% of complaints in June) and a reasonable proportion (over 20% in June) related to non-London Southend Airport movements. It was noted that 14% of the complaints were from one person.

In response to questions from the Chairman, Jo Marchetti advised that:

- a meeting had been held with the person who had made 14% of the complaints who had been unsatisfied and had left the meeting prematurely. Complaints from the individual would continue to be logged but no responses would be sent. The complainant had previously been regarded as a vexatious complainant and had not received responses;
- the campaign to ensure that the Airport would receive as many complaints as possible appeared to be diminishing and there are fewer regular complainants. Most complaints about flights now relate to unusual movements. Attention now seems to be concentrated on the runway surface water issue (see minute 11(c) below).

The Chairman explained to the Committee that he had not been asked to consider agreeing to the abandonment of responses from vexatious complainants for some while.

Jo Marchetti also advised that a person who lives in Kent who had complained about a number of flights and now accepted that they had not been related to Southend Airport and no longer makes complaints.

Zhanine Oates suggested that the publicity regarding the consultation by NATS and the LAMP review (minute 8(a) above refers) may encourage and prompt people to make more complaints in next year. The AOD agreed and said that Standard Arrival Routes and Standard Instrument Departures would be reviewed to further reduce noise when the Airport has its own controlled airspace. In answer to a question from Zhanine Oates, the AOD confirmed that this exercise would be carried out in consultation with NATS.

Further questions were posed and the Committee noted that:

- Environmental Health only had jurisdiction in relation to noise from aircraft on the ground;
- discussions were taking place with the Ministry of Defence and QinetiQ in relation to the controlled airspace and routings.

The Chairman mentioned that some aircraft now appear to approach the Airport by overflying Foulness Island. The AOD advised that the Preferential Departure Route was over Rochford. Some complaints were sometimes received from Leigh on Sea residents regarding aircraft taking off in that direction. The AOD explained that the prevailing winds were from the south-west and that, taking that into account, 70% of flights would be expected to take off in that direction, ie., over Leigh on Sea. In fact, the percentage is lower

than that due to the Preferential Departure Route. The target was less than 50% of all flights taking off in the direction of Leigh on Sea and 43% was being achieved.

The Committee also noted that the Noise Action Plan for the Airport had now been formally adopted by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural affairs.

(c) Environment

Referring to minute 14(b) of the meeting held on 7 May 2014, the Committee was reminded that, as part of an agreed trial with the Environment Agency (EA), the Airport had been permitted to allow a maximum of 360 cubic metres per day of runway surface water to be run off into Prittle and Eastwood brooks for the last two winters. In practice this limit would only be required on very rare occasions when the weather was exceptionally bad. Extensive ecological monitoring had been taking place during this period and EA had reported that there had been little or no impact on water courses and wildlife.

Due to the public interest shown in this application the EA had held a public meeting in Rochford to enable interested persons to discuss the matter with the EA.

## 12. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 106 AGREEMENT

The Quarterly Section 106 Return for the three-month period to the end of July 2014 was received. It set out the statistics relating to the requirements of the Section 106 agreement entered into in relation to the planning permission for the extension of the runway. The Committee noted that there had been 10 departure movements that had been identified by the Airport as not following the Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs). Of these, 5 had departed from the NPR due to instructions from the air traffic controllers for safety reasons.

Two papers were attached to the Return that:

- gave further information about departing aircraft of over 5.7 tonnes that had been identified as not following the NPRs and advised that infringement notices had been issued in respect of the 5 movements ;
- provided more information about the 5 in respect of which infringement notices had been issued.

During that the presentation of the Return members noted that airlines were currently allowed two non-compliances before further action would be taken. The NPRs were no longer new and should be familiar to pilots, particularly to the base airline ones. Consequently, the Committee may wish, in due course to, consider dropping the warning, particularly for Southend based pilots.

The Committee agreed that it was an issue that it would wish to review in 6 months, i.e., at the February 2015 meeting.

**Action: AOD/GC**

## 13. ALLOCATION OF FINES IMPOSED FOR INFRINGEMENTS OF NOISE PREFERENTIAL ROUTES

The Committee was informed that the Sub-Committee set up by minute 15 (7 May 2014) consisting of Les Sawyer (Chairman) and Councillors Peter Elliott, Heather Glynn and Mike Steptoe and had met immediately before the meeting.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee, Les Sawyer reported that independently each member had favoured the £1,500 being allocated for the benefit of young people.

The Committee was recommended that £500 be donated to each of the following and further information about the organisations was provided:

- St John Ambulance, South Anglia Youth Team;
- Unlock a Life for Lockett (a small charity providing support for children recovering from cancer);
- Peaceful Place (a charity that helps to improve the lives of people in south-east Essex with young onset dementia).

The sub-committee had also recommended that the presentation ceremony be arranged.

The Committee agreed the recommendations and the Airport representatives agreed to arrange a presentation ceremony. It was also agreed that Les Sawyer would present the cheques.

The Committee decided that, whilst further funds may not be forthcoming, the Sub-Committee would remain in existence.

#### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Runway extension

Ron Smithson referred to rumours about a further runway extension. The AOD replied that he suspected that the rumours arose from the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAPP) report and assured the Committee that there were no plans for a further runway extension.

(b) Which? Magazine – survey of best airport for customer satisfaction

The AOD reminded the Committee that, in 2013, the Airport had been named as the best Airport in the country as measured by a survey of customers with a satisfaction rate of 83%.

This year *Which?* had again named both Southend and Doncaster Sheffield Robin Hood airports as the best airports with a satisfaction rate, this time, of 85%.

Since this item was embargoed by *Which?* until Friday, 22 August, members were asked to keep this information confidential until it was published on that date.

(c) Possible Icelandic ash cloud

In answer to a question from Councillor Mrs Reeves about the potential volcanic eruption in Iceland, the Committee was informed that, should the airspace be closed, the decision would have to be accepted. However, a lot of research had been carried out by NATS and other organisations about the effects of volcanic ash in the atmosphere since the last incident in 2010.

(d) Hand luggage

A question from Les Sawyer about who has the final say regarding whether a piece of luggage can be taken into the cabin of an easyJet aircraft as hand luggage, the AOD advised that the item has to be no larger than the specified size. EasyJet allow no leeway.

The AOD advised that he would ensure that Airport employees apply the rule consistently.

**Action: AOD**

(e) Security

Councillor Steptoe referred to having lost an iPad which had been placed in a tray to go through the x-ray machine. He had been delayed at the x-ray machine. The AOD suggested that the member provide details as CCTV cameras are in operation in the security screening area.

## **15. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Members were reminded that it had been agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 19 November 2014 at 2pm.

The Committee agreed that meetings in 2015 would be arranged to be held at 2pm on the following dates:

- Wednesday, 25 February 2015;
- Wednesday, 20 May 2015;
- Wednesday, 19 August 2015;
- Wednesday, 18 November 2015.

**The meeting ended at 3.20pm.**