

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 20 October 2016 at 3.30pm.

Present:

Organisation:

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Secretary
Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)

Flying Schools
London Borough of Bromley (LBB)
Private Owners
Sevenoaks District Council
Tandridge District Council
London Borough of Croydon
Tatsfield Parish Council
Bromley Residents Federation/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association

South London Business
Private Owners
Biggin Hill Residents Association

Representative:

Mr J. Bowden
Mr N. Kemp
Mr G. Crowe
Mr A.R. Walters, Chairman
Mr W. Curtis, Airport Managing Director (AMD)
Ms B. Russell, Policy & Ext. Affairs Coordinator
Mr S. Bamrah*
Councillor J. Benington*
Mr D. Field
Councillor R. Hogarth
Councillor D. Jecks
Councillor T. Letts
Councillor I. Mitchell
Mr J. Musson*
Mr D. Ponnosami
Mr J. Willis
Mr B. Wingate

* substitute member

1. Welcome and Chairman's introductory remarks

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Membership

2.01 There were no membership issues to report.

2.02 On behalf of the members, the Chairman welcomed Councillor Keith Jecks who was attending his first Consultative Committee meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr A. Bamrah (Flying schools, substituted by Mr S. Bamrah), Dr R. Hadley (BRF and Crofton Residents Association), Councillor D. Hodge (Surrey County Council), Mrs M. Manuel (LBB, Officer), Councillor P. Morgan (LBB), Councillor S. O'Connell (Greater London Authority), Mr P. Osborne (BRF/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association, substituted by Mr J. Musson), Councillor R. Parry (Kent County Council), Mr R. Shirley (Commercial Users, Transcity Exhibitions) and Councillor Mrs M. Stevens (LBB, substituted by Councillor Benington).

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

- 5.01 Referring to paragraph 6.10 the Chairman reported that he had written to the Prime Minister about damage to private sector investment arising from Northolt Airport being allowed to operate commercial movements without complying with safety regulations applicable to privately-owned airports. The letter had also been sent to the Treasury, Ministry of Defence, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the local MPs as requested by the Committee. To date he had only received an acknowledgement from Bob Neil, the MP for Bromley and Chislehurst, which asked that he be kept informed of any developments. Councillor Letts advised that she still had not received any responses to her earlier letter on the same subject.
- 5.02 The AMD referred to paragraph 6.12 of the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2016 and advised that the CAA had written to the Airport advising that its approval was not required. It had, nevertheless, commented on the proposals. It was agreed that the paragraph be amended to read as follows:
 “Airport facilities - the new runway 03 GPS approach had passed the stakeholder consultation stage and a report setting out the proposal had been submitted to the CAA. Implementation of the new approach was expected in the autumn of 2016. Approach lighting to serve the new runway 03 GPS approach would be installed during the summer months.”

6. Airport Managing Director’s report

- 6.01 Will Curtis presented his report on the third quarter of 2016. It provided information on the following issues:
- 6.02 Market conditions - the report updated the Committee on aviation activity in Europe and other parts of the world. Graphs and a diagram illustrated the summary. The Committee noted that the UK was the European country with the highest growth due, he suggested, to the falling pound following the decision to leave the European Union.
- 6.03 Biggin Hill movement summary - the AMD’s report summarised the Airport’s movement summary for the last quarter and it was noted that, overall, the total movements for the quarter were fractionally down on last year. During the presentation of the report, the AMD advised that some business was being gained from Luton Airport. This was due to the shortage of runway capacity there and because it was now unattractive for business aviation as an access road from the M1 had been blocked and a former parking area handed to easyJet. He advised that each jet aircraft based at Biggin Hill can generate up to 8 new jobs and \$5m of spend with the Airport and third party airport supply companies. A substantial proportion of that would end up as Gross Value Added to the local economy.
- 6.04 The operational movements during the third quarter of 2016 were:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld.	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Twin Corp.	Helis.	Military	Total
July	1,625	814	1,295	0	936	396	68	328	2	5,464
August	2,298	1,047	1,215	0	662	212	51	192	28	5,705
September	1,625	677	1,091	0	862	358	76	300	3	4,992
Total	5,548	2,538	3,601	0	2,460	966	195	820	33	16,161
Change	-1,171	+365	+310	0	+248	+25	+34	+63	-82	-208
Year to date	14,669	5,541	8,342	0	6,086	2,799	465	2,104	81	40,087

- 6.05 During the same quarter of 2015 they had been:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Corp. Twin	Helis.	Military	Total
July	1,856	685	1,084	0	799	340	60	309	54	5187
August	2,488	768	1,081	0	682	239	51	170	47	5526
September	2,375	720	1,126	0	731	362	50	278	14	5656
Total	6,719	2,173	3,291	0	2,212	941	161	757	115	16,369
Year to date	16,062	5,458	7,939	0	5,709	2,653	491	2,069	169	40,550

- 6.06 UK aviation policy and Biggin Hill Airport – the AMD’s report advised that the weak pound was making the UK an attractive proposition for the service sector and was expected to assist maintenance providers. Business aircraft owners would be likely to choose a UK service provider over a Euro denominated one as there would be an instant 20% saving in so doing.
- 6.07 No decision has yet been made regarding additional runway capacity for London but a decision was expected before Christmas.
- 6.08 The Regional and Business Aviation (RABA) group continued to push for a defined policy for business and regional aviation and were lobbying ministers accordingly, focusing on a modified RAF Northolt as a regional airliner-reliever airport for Heathrow. The MOD appeared to reject such a proposal.
- 6.09 RAF Northolt - members were informed that BHAL had written to the CAA setting out why it believes that the CAA had not complied with the law as clarified by the judicial review. A response was awaited. A letter to the Department for Transport had produced a response that the CAA had been asked for its answer. BHAL was considering its position and may opt to take the matter back to court for determination. In the meantime, an appeal had been made to the new ministers and to the Prime Minister to ask for a review of JSP 360 (which deals with the use of military airfields by British and foreign civil aircraft) and the civil activities at RAF Northolt. Until a response was received further action would be deferred. BHAL anticipated that the results of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2016 would be published in November and hoped to see a comprehensive reappraisal of the civilian movements at RAF Northolt. In response to a suggestion from Deva Ponnosami, the Committee was informed that the Health and Safety Executive has no jurisdiction in the matter.
- 6.10 As mentioned in paragraph above, 5.02 above, the Chairman of the Committee had also written to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Committee.
- 6.11 BHAL application to vary Airport operating hours – the report advised that the Noise and Tracking System was now installed and undergoing testing. An example of the post-flight data (relating to a complaint to the Airport which actually related to a business jet flight repositioning from Gatwick to Biggin Hill) was shown in the report. The system would allow complaints to be responded to using detailed track information along with the data from the noise monitors. Once the system had gone live, the public and LBB officers would be able to view this information directly via the web portal and the workload of LBB officers and Airport staff would be reduced because the response to such complainants would be more automated. In answer to questions, members were advised that:
- the system would be available for public use by early 2017;
 - it would enable the public to see the tracking information and also where the aircraft was operating from/to;
 - 100% of aircraft movements would be tracked provided that the aircraft had a transponder.
- 6.12 It was noted that measurements to date had shown that the existing noise from business jets falls well within the permitted noise levels agreed pursuant to the lease variation for the extended hours. LBB would be invited to review and sign off the system in November. The Airport would then be free to open for longer, all other conditions of the variation having been met. However, in practice, it may take some months to achieve the changes to deliver the facilities required to give effect to the new operating hours.
- 6.13 Airport facilities - The runway 03 GPS revised approach continued to move through the formal Airspace Change Proposal process. Some changes had been made to the approach with a revised track to the south-west of Biggin Hill in order to better address Gatwick interactions. These changes would require a second consultation which would add around 4 months to the expected programme. Implementation of the new approach was, therefore, expected to be delayed until late in the second quarter of 2017, depending on the CAA’s reaction.
- 6.14 Approach lighting to serve the new runway 03 GPS approach would be installed to meet the revised timeline. Planning permission for the installation of the requisite approach lights had been received and terms for lease of the land agreed with the land owner. Final survey work would shortly be completed.
- 6.15 Consultation with the general aviation community had begun over the future of runway 29/11 which was not used by business jets except as a taxiway to access the South Camp and better surface access to the

Rizon area for business jet types was now required. Additional parking ramps would also be needed next year and this may make the retention of the tarmac runway 29/11 financially unviable. The option of a grass runway 29/11 running parallel to the existing runway was being explored. In presenting the report the AMD advised that John Willis had pointed out that his report did not give the full picture in that the use of the runway depended on the pilot.

- 6.16 BHAL had made the decision to invest in a second terminal hangar at a cost of £6.5m which was being located to the north of the terminal, supplemented by an increase in ramp area. It would be oriented to separate the ramp area from residential areas and thus blocking noise. The hangar would be occupied by aircraft from August 2017 and the office space available in late 2017. In answer to a question from Councillor Letts, the AMD advised that, unless the hangar was built, new operators would not be able locate to the Airport and that he anticipated that the hangar would be filled relatively quickly.
- 6.17 Design work on the new hotel continued and a planning pre-application meeting had been sought. The final design had been agreed on the day preceding the Consultative Committee meeting and BHAL hoped to start work on the building from mid-2017. In answer to questions, members were advised that:
- the hotel would initially have 50 bedrooms and be designed so that it could be extended to 75 bedrooms;
 - it would be located further back towards the Bombardier building. The design was attractive and should improve the look of that corner of the Airport;
 - the previous planning permission had been for a 100-bedroom hotel and was now out of time;
 - the hotel would be built by BHAL and it would hire an experienced hotel manager to run it;
 - it would be available for use by the general public;
 - it would not have any meeting rooms or conference facilities and would be a cross between a boutique and a 4-star hotel.
- 6.18 Tenants and businesses at Biggin Hill - information was provided in the report about Bombardier Business Aircraft aiming to open for business in November 2016 and the former Heritage Hangar having been purchased by Zenith Aviation. These investments had been driven by the agreement to vary the Airport's operating hours. Since this agreement, BHAL had received approaches from many companies wishing to relocate to Biggin Hill.
- 6.19 Economic Development/LoCATE@BigginHill – Bethany Russell reported on LoCATE issues and it was noted that LBB was due to consult on its draft Local Plan (DLP) this month. Having secured additional opening hours at the Airport, LoCATE stakeholders were collectively urging LBB to deliver land allocations needed to complement the business generated by the additional hours. In particular, the release of land at and to the south of East Camp was paramount for job creation. It was believed that LBB was being overly restrictive on the spatial planning front. The 2014 public consultation showed that local people want the jobs and the aviation academy. However, these would only be deliverable with the release of the strategic land.
- 6.20 The London Borough of Croydon was at the partial review stage of its own Local Plan and had recently completed its public consultation. Biggin Hill Airport had responded to the consultation by welcoming Croydon's aspiration to develop improved links to the Airport from the Fieldway and Addington wards. Croydon aimed to capitalise on the strategic position of the Airport and the investment in supportive infrastructure was well aligned with the LoCATE vision up to 2030. Councillor Letts said that the Local Plan had been discussed the previous day and that she would like to arrange a meeting between representatives from Croydon Council and the Airport at the Airport on 30 November 2016, following the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement.
- 6.21 In September, the main opposition group to the Airport, Flightpath Watch, had finally conceded that their Judicial Review had been rejected. It had indicated that it will monitor the Airport closely in order to scrutinise compliance with the lease and the delivery of the Noise Action Plan (NAP).
- 6.22 The Airport had been in preliminary discussions with surrounding local authorities to discuss the possible creation of an Enterprise Zone comprising a technology corridor spanning Croydon, Bromley and Sevenoaks. It would complement the creation of the world-class aviation academy, dubbed the 'London

Aerospace and Technology College' (LATC) which was set to become one of the London South-East College's campuses, focusing on engineering and high-end technologies. The College would be applying for GLA funding. The AMD advised that the Airport had stepped back from leadership on the scheme which was now with the Aviation Skills Partnership. Nevertheless, the Airport would help when required and it would be an important cornerstone of the Enterprise Zone/technology corridor strategy.

6.23 Councillor Letts mentioned that the proposal builds on work already underway in Croydon where a building, Davis House, in the High Street had been refurbished. Further space was available there and could be included in the corridor. She also suggested that the Sussex Innovation Centre at Croydon could be included. It was agreed that the Aviation Technology College should be included in the AMD's report to each meeting of this Committee. **Action: AMD**

6.24 Councillor Hogarth said that Sevenoaks Council was also supported the proposal and he referred to planning permission being granted at Porton Down's Fort Halstead site and that he could see links with the Aviation College. In answer to a question he said that Qinetiq would be staying at the site.

6.25 The AMD's report continued by informing the Committee that the Autumn Statement is expected to emphasise improved infrastructure, which the Airport welcomed. LoCATE had networked with other local businesses to discuss shared concerns around increasing strain on local infrastructure and there appeared to be an emerging consensus that carefully planned investment was needed to mitigate the infrastructural deficits of the 'empty quarter' in South East London and North Kent. Bethany Russell advised that she hoped to have more information for the Committee at its next meeting.

6.26 The Government was expected to make a decision this month on a third runway at Heathrow.

6.27 The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, had met with American and Canadian companies with bases in London and visited Bombardier at Montreal. He was due to open the new Biggin Hill Bombardier facility on a date to be arranged (it was noted that the date suggested in the AMD's report, 25 November 2016 was no longer viable). Because Bombardier's announcement came after the Brexit vote, the GLA had welcomed this as a clear vote of confidence by global partners in the London economy.

6.28 Health & Safety/security - the Airport Safety Management System continued to deliver valuable information to Airport management and the output had resulted in actions to improve some areas of infrastructure on the Airport. The Safety and Noise Review Board (SANARB) continued to monitor noise and safety complaints and to take action against those failing to abide by published procedures.

6.29 There had been no significant safety reports or incidents.

6.30 Environment - work continued to better mitigate noise and the NAP and Ground NAP were becoming more effective now that noise monitors had been installed. BHAL remained committed to ensuring that it would minimise any impact arising from its operations. Biggin Hill Airport was already considerably quieter than most UK aerodromes but would ensure that every avenue would be investigated and best practice adopted.

7. Report by the Chairman of the Noise and Safety Sub-Committee

7.01 The report of the Flight Evaluation Unit for the third quarter of 2016 was tabled together with a map that plotted the areas from which the comments had emanated.

7.02 Councillor Parry, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, had been unable to attend this meeting and had provided a report which was tabled. It advised that 34 complaints had been received by the Airport in the third quarter of 2016.

7.03 Ten of the recorded complaints did not relate to Biggin Hill Airport. In the opinion of the Noise and Safety Sub-Committee each complaint was handled sympathetically and professionally and also that all responses to the complainants provided comprehensive information and explanations.

7.04 In summary, Councillor Parry's report said that there were 14 genuine complaints and:

- 7 were occasioned by a single, but repetitive, helicopter test flight;
- 4 related to the flight of a RAF Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft based at Biggin Hill for the Eastbourne Air Show;

- 1 related to the use of an Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) in an area which allowed the resulting noise to affect a nearby dwelling;
 - 2 were occasioned by Spitfire flights when the aeroplanes were flying outside the Airport's Controlled airspace.
- 7.05 Three safety issues were reported namely:
- a tailwind approach and circle to Runway 03,
 - an unlocked Challenger 300;
 - a drone sighting in the vicinity of the Airport.
- 7.06 The three incidents were the subject of discussions at a meeting of SANARB which had made those individuals and companies who were responsible for the incidents aware of the problems resulting from their actions. It had also issued details of the consequences of any repetition of such unacceptable conduct.
- 7.07 In conclusion, it was the opinion of all of the Members of the Sub-Committee that the Airport continued to liaise with and respond to all who contact the Airport swiftly and professionally.
- 7.08 The AMD advised that an agreement had been reached with the operator of the helicopter referred to in paragraph 7.04 above which had led to the nuisance being eliminated. The same protocols now existed with helicopter operators as with conventional aircraft operators.
- 7.09 In answer to a question from Councillor Mitchell, it was noted that the incident marked in yellow on the map referred to in paragraph 7.01 above, related to a complaint about a helicopter that was operating from Redhill Airport.
- 7.10 John Musson said that Downe residents were still having difficulty in locating the complaints line telephone number. The AMD said that he would try to ensure that it was more prominent on the Airport's website and pointed out that it was displayed each week in *Biggin Hill News*.

8. Planning issues

- 8.01 Biggin Hill Memorial Trust Museum - Councillor Benington advised that the creation of the Museum was progressing. St George's Chapel would remain as a place of worship and the museum building would wrap around it. The memorial garden would also remain. An application had been submitted for £2m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £5m was required for the endowment fund. The plans would be on show all day on Tuesday, 25 October 2016. John Musson added that a choral fund-raising event to raise funds for the Trust was to be held on Sunday, 6 November 2016. Tickets were on sale for £5 from the Lookout or Spitfire cafés.
- 8.02 Councillor Benington asked whether there were any developments on the proposals for West Camp. The AMD reported that he was aware of the LBB plans for the area and suggested that there needed to be a Plan B in case Formula One was not prepared to sell the site.
- 8.03 In the absence of Mary Manuel there were no further planning issues apart from those referred to in the AMD's report (minute 6 above).

9. Community Relations

- 9.01 Press cuttings - The press cuttings for the last quarter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. Particular reference was made to a cutting about the incorrect report in the edition of *News Shopper* dated 7 September 2016 that the e-pens at the Airport were to be demolished. The story was retracted by the reporter in the edition of the *Sevenoaks Chronicle* dated 14 September 2016, a copy of which was also included in the cuttings. The AMD said that the structure pictured in the article was not an e-pen and was not located on the Airport but in West Kent Golf Course. There were no plans to demolish the remaining e-pens and the story was erroneous. He mentioned who he thought was behind the story and added that the Airport was working on a scheme to refurbish the former scramble hut.

9.02 Members mentioned they were pleased to see the reports that Stephen Inch, a former employee of the Airport, had graduated through officer training at the RAF College, Cranwell (*Biggin Hill News*, 17 August 2016).

10. Any other business

10.01 there were no items of any other business.

11. Dates of next meetings

11.01 Members were reminded that the dates of the next meetings had been agreed as follows:

- Thursday, 19 January 2017 (with AGM).
- Thursday, 20 April 2017;
- Thursday, 27 July 2017;
- Thursday, 19 October 2017.

The meeting closed at 5.10pm.