

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 19 January 2017 at 3.35pm.

Present:

Organisation:

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Secretary
Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)

Tandridge District Council
Flying Schools
London Borough of Bromley Residents Federation (BRF)
Private Owners
BRF and Crofton Residents Association
London Borough of Bromley (LBB), Officer
Tatsfield Parish Council
BRF/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association
Kent County Council
South London Business
Commercial Users, Transcity Exhibitions
LBB

Private Owners
Biggin Hill Residents Association

Representative:

Mr J. Bowden
Mr N. Kemp
Mr G. Crowe
Mr W. Curtis, Airport Managing Director (AMD)
Ms B. Russell, Policy & Ext. Affairs Coordinator
Councillor M. Allen*
Mr A. Bamrah
Mr V. Endacott
Mr D. Field
Dr R. Hadley
Mrs M. Manuel
Councillor I. Mitchell
Mr P. Osborne
Councillor R. Parry
Mr D. Ponnosami
Mr R. Shirley
Councillor Mrs M. Stevens
Councillor T. Stevens*
Mr J. Willis
Mr B. Wingate

* substitute member

1. Welcome and Chairman's introductory remarks

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and wished them a happy new year.

2. Membership

2.01 There were no membership issues to report.

3. Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Hodge (Surrey County Council), Councillor R. Hogarth (Sevenoaks District Council), Councillor D. Jecks (Tandridge District Council, substituted by Councillor M. Allen), Councillor T. Letts (London Borough of Croydon), Councillor P. Morgan (LBB), Mr S. O'Connell (Greater London Authority (GLA)), Councillor R. Scoates (LBB, substituted by Councillor T. Stevens) and Mr A.R. Walters (Chairman, BHAL).

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

5.01 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 Managing Director's report

- 6.01 Will Curtis's report on the fourth quarter of 2016 had previously been circulated and provided information on the following issues. At the start of the presentation of the report the AMD suggested that 2017 would provide plenty of challenges as well as opportunities.
- 6.02 Market conditions - with the assistance of graphs and a diagram the report updated the Committee on aviation activity in Europe and other parts of the world. The Committee particularly noted that the annual total of 798k business aviation flights in the whole of Europe in 2016 was down by 0.3% compared to 2015.
- 6.03 Biggin Hill movement summary - the Airport's movement summary for the last quarter of 2016 was included in the report and it was noted that total movements for the quarter were up 7.6% on 2015 figures with gains being made in all sectors except corporate jet and twin turboprop types. Flying club activity rose by 9.8% and the corporate sector rose by 1%. Despite winter weather conditions flying clubs increased their November and December activity over 2015 figures.
- 6.04 During the presentation of the report the AMD suggested that number of movements would be reduced to ensure that the year-on-year number would be below 50,000 from June onwards (the anniversary of the change in the lease) and the commitment to keep below 50,000 total aircraft movements until 2020 would be achieved. In answer to questions from Councillor Mitchell the AMD:
- o advised that the practical limit to the number of movements at the Airport was the amount of space in the air and on the ground and there were also the permitted noise limits;
 - o suggested that business aviation movements displaced from major hub airports such as Heathrow and Luton could choose from a number of alternative airports such as Biggin Hill, Southend, Lydd or Farnborough. It was not a foregone conclusion that Biggin Hill would attract this business and it would have to fight for its share of this displaced business. He added that maintenance companies such as Bombardier provide guaranteed income with only a few extra movements.
- 6.05 The operational movements during the fourth quarter of 2016 were:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld.	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Twin Corp.	Helis.	Military	Total
October	1,664	484	897	0	727	346	61	209	3	4,391
November	1,401	429	511	0	598	279	34	239	3	3,494
December	1,183	305	444	0	546	244	30	125	12	2,889
Total	4,248	1,218	1,852	0	1,871	869	125	573	18	10,774
Change	+327	+162	+187	0	+137	-100	-9	+50	+8	+762
Year to date	18,917	6,759	10,194	0	7,957	3,668	590	2,677	99	50,861

6.06 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
October	2,130	532	803	0	610	323	57	211	4	4,670
November	815	255	436	0	560	334	36	141	2	2,579
December	976	269	426	0	564	312	41	171	4	2,763
Total	3,921	1,056	1,665	0	1,734	969	134	523	10	10,012
Year to date	19,983	6,514	9,604	0	7,443	3,622	625	2,592	179	50,562

- 6.07 UK aviation policy and Biggin Hill Airport - the report advised that the Airport continued to lobby Government for a defined policy for Business and General Aviation. BHAL had recently hosted a visit by the Department for Transport (DfT). Ministers were interested in the potential for exported services at Biggin Hill and similar UK aerodromes. The DfT had

- expressed support for BHAL initiatives to attract foreign investment and recent Government policy was that local authorities should, generally, not stand in the way of such development.
- 6.08 The recent conditional decision to nominate London Heathrow for a third runway appeared to have had little effect on the industry due to any such development being a long time ahead. In the meantime, runway capacity was becoming more strained.
- 6.09 RAF Northolt - members were reminded that BHAL had written to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) setting out why it believes that the CAA had not complied with the law. A response had still not yet been received and BHAL was considering its position. Ministers and the Prime Minister had been asked to review the Joint Service Publication on the *Use of Military Airfields by British and Foreign Civil Aircraft* (JSP 360) in regard to activities at RAF Northolt. It was understood that Lord Ahmad, the Minister for Aviation had written to the CAA to ask for a substantive response to the issues raised and the outcome was awaited. In the meantime RAF Northolt appeared to be preparing to spend an estimated £40m on installing arrestor beds and resurfacing the entire runway. It was suggested that these improvements were intended to obviate some of the safety shortfalls highlighted by Mott MacDonald/Ernst & Young. The AMD said that the expenditure was being proposed despite that a third runway at Heathrow would make the use of Northolt for civil movements unviable. In response to a comment from Councillor Tim Stevens about the use of Northolt Airport by the Royal Family and Government ministers the Committee was informed that the declared length of the runway at Northolt was longer than it actually should be. The Prime Minister's VIP Airbus was raised and the AMD assured the Committee that this aircraft could not use either RAF Northolt or Biggin Hill airports due to runway length and runway bearing strength. It has routinely operated from RAF Brize Norton which has a long runway.
- 6.10 Referring to paragraph 5.10 (20 October 2016), the Chairman advised that no response had yet been received to his letter to the Prime Minister.
- 6.11 BHAL application to vary Airport operating hours - the report informed members that the Noise and Track Keeping System had undergone extensive testing and evaluation. Measurements to date had shown that the existing noise from business jets fell well within the permitted noise levels agreed pursuant to the lease variation for the extended hours. The consultants for Bromley Council, Vernon Cole, would be checking that the noise contours were being complied with and it was expected that LBB would be signing off the system in February 2017. The AMD advised that councillors would be invited to view the system when it was fully operational. In response to a suggestion from Deva Ponnoosami he confirmed that the system would be well publicised and added that a guide for the public on how to make use of it would be published.
- 6.12 The AMD added that there had been a system problem with the determination of the ceiling height of no fly zones which were not correctly recognised by the system. Consequently, it picked up all aircraft overflying a no fly zone, regardless of height and was causing the system to issue violation reports in respect of aircraft overflying at heights up to 41k feet. Since the system is designed only to catch low level aircraft which are under the control of Biggin Hill Air Traffic Control, this needed to be corrected before it could go live. The Committee was advised that work to identify and correct this software problem was well underway and a resolution was expected imminently.
- 6.13 Airport facilities - the runway 03 GPS approach continued to move through the formal Airspace Change Proposal process. The second consultation had been delayed until February 2017 whilst some technical issues were resolved with National Air Traffic Services (NATS). Implementation of the new approach may be further delayed until late in the third quarter of 2017. Inserting this new approach procedure into busy London airspace had not been easy but had been achieved with the cooperation of London Heathrow Airport in certain areas.

- 6.14 It was noted that, following a consultation with airport users, the decision had been taken to close the little-used runway 29/11. Whilst the General Aviation community was opposed to closure, business aviation had been in favour.
- 6.15 Construction had begun on a second aircraft parking hangar to the north of the main terminal area. It was expected to open in autumn 2017.
- 6.16 Design work on the new hotel continued and finance had been obtained, subject to contract. BHAL would be applying for planning in mid-2017 and begin construction in late 2017. In answer to a question from Deva Pannoosami, the Committee was informed that it was believed that no application had been made for a pre-application meeting with the planning officers. The AMD advised that it was anticipated that the provision of the hotel (as well as the proposed technology college) would help with the strategy of having more base operators at the Airport.
- 6.17 Tenants and businesses at Biggin Hill – members were informed that Bombardier was now open and that full base maintenance operations were expected to commence from the end of the first quarter of 2017. Based upon enquiries received, BHAL expected other Maintenance, Repair and Operations companies and Original Equipment Manufacturers to invest at Biggin Hill in the near to mid-term future.
- 6.18 Economic Development/LoCATE@BigginHill - this section of the report was presented by Bethany Russell.
- 6.19 *College Update* - it was noted that the Further Education Capital Investment Fund (FE Fund) had not been announced and that the GLA was waiting to hear from the Government for the go-ahead to allocate the fund. It was anticipated that the third round of the FE Fund would open in April. In response to a comment from Deva Pannoosami, the Committee was informed that it was understood that, due to the decision that the UK would be leaving the European Union, this would be the last round of FE funding. The AMD added that it was hoped that the support of Jo Johnson, the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, for the College would be forthcoming. Deva Pannoosami advised that he had spoken to Val Shawcross, the Deputy Mayor of London who was a Croydon resident and that she was very keen on the project.
- 6.20 It was noted that the Bromley Local Plan consultation had closed at the end of December and London South East Colleges had submitted a response which supported D1 (Education and Community Facilities) use at West Camp, as per the Council's Master Plan. The Colleges had proposed that the Aviation College would have a workshop/hangar and ancillary accommodation, circa 3600m². They had also made a case for D1 use elsewhere on the site to increase the likelihood of a successful outcome should West Camp be unfeasible. In answer to a question from Anoop Bamrah relating to the shortage of pilots and the absence of any airline transport pilots license training facilities in London, the AMD advised that initially the College would be focusing on the training of technicians.
- 6.21 *Infrastructure* - LoCATE had requested an update on the transport improvements earmarked in 2013. The URS report on *Planning for Growth* had advised that these would be needed irrespective of the Airport's growth plans. In addition, contact had been made with the Principal Transport Planner with responsibility for Aviation at Transport for London for continued use of the Strategic Outer London Development Centre status to inform transport planning policy and to promote business aviation in general.
- 6.22 *London* - the London Enterprise Panel, the Local Economic Partnership, had re-launched itself as LEAP (London Economic Action Partnership) and appointed a new committee chaired by the Mayor. The committee members were being written to individually to let them know about the LoCATE initiative and to invite them for a tour of the Airport.
- 6.23 LoCATE had also responded to the Mayor's, *City for All Londoners* report. The paper emphasised the Airport's low volume, high value business as well as the significant employment opportunities to, appeal to the Mayor's priorities for a greener and more

economically redistributive city. He had also proposed new Creative Enterprise Zones, so the case for specialist Aviation Enterprise Zones had also been reiterated.

- 6.24 *Other* - the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was releasing nearly £10m for various projects. LoCATE was investigating whether it could apply, possibly in partnership with LBB around the College proposal or with a view to improving IT access or carbon offsetting projects.
- 6.25 Since the last Consultative Committee meeting, the Government had announced its preference for a third runway at Heathrow. This was likely to affect the future of RAF Northolt, which more recently had been proposed as the site of a possible new garden city. LoCATE was watching this situation closely.
- 6.26 Health & Safety/security - the report advised that the Airport Safety Management System continued to deliver valuable information to airport management. 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.
- 6.27 It was noted that there had been no significant safety reports or major incidents.
- 6.28 Environment - the report advised that work continued to mitigate noise and the Noise Action Plan (NAP) and Ground NAP were becoming more effective now that noise monitors had been installed. BHAL remained committed to minimising any impact arising from its operations. The AMD added that in due course a ground jet engine running bay would be provided and that, on a trial basis, it was also proposed to prevent aircraft from being held at the end of the runway by only allowing them to access the runway when they were able to take off. Jet aircraft were being required to climb from the Airport more steeply. The Airport was already considerably quieter than most UK aerodromes.

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

- 7.01 The report of the Flight Evaluation Unit for the fourth quarter of 2016 was tabled together with a map that plotted the areas from which the comments had emanated. Councillor Parry, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, advised that 19 complaints had been received by the Airport of which 6 had nothing to do with the Airport. In the opinion of the Sub-Committee each complaint had been handled sympathetically and professionally. Representatives from LBB were present at the meeting and had commented on how thoroughly and authoritatively the complaints had been dealt with.
- 7.02 Councillor Parry referred to complaints relating to:
- jet blast;
 - a pilot who had turned his plane too soon and on the wrong track;
 - a pilot who had deviated but who had been authorised to do so;
 - a pilot who was to be admonished by the Sub-Committee.
- 7.03 Councillor Parry advised that in the past 8 years the highest number of complaints in any one year had been 1 per 1,000 movements.
- 7.04 Doctor Hadley mentioned complaints about a Piaggio aircraft. He was advised that the plane was noisy but within the noise limits and that there had been no complaints about the aircraft in the last quarter.
- 7.05 Vic Endacott referred to the Department for Environment consultation with the CAA on aircraft noise and to the Aerospace Noise Engagement Group. The AMD responded that the consultation relates to major airports and that Biggin Hill would not be represented. Nobody living near the Airport was within the 57 Laeq noise contour and so the Airport had not been asked to participate.

8. Planning issues

Mary Manuel:

- reported that there were no current planning applications relating to the Airport;
- referred to the West Camp plan;
- advised that the Local Plan consultation had ended and that the responses, including the one from BHAL, were currently being assessed. The Committee was informed that it was the intention that the report on the responses would be submitted to members in March. They would also be submitted to the planning inspector who would be examining the Plan.

9. Community Relations

- 9.01 Heritage Museum - the press cuttings for the last quarter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The Chairman particularly referred to the report in the *Sevenoaks Chronicle* about the award of £2m for the proposed Heritage Museum and the AMD commented that the cost of the provision of the Museum had now increased to £5m. Councillor Tim Stevens advised that an application had been made for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

10. Any other business

- 10.01 People trafficking – Deva Pannoosami referred to a recent media report about people traffickers using smaller airports. The AMD responded that that, generally traffickers choose to use airports without Border Force representation and Biggin Hill Airport has Border Force officers based there. He said that the Police and Border Force now largely rely on intelligence-based information for apprehending offenders and a £15m cocaine haul had been found at Biggin Hill. The Border Force knew that the offenders were coming and they were all arrested. He informed members that Lydd Airport was the subject of a press sting in which a reporter deliberately gave false passport details on the General Aviation report and yet made it to the UK without being questioned. She had since been arrested for making a false declaration on an official document. The AMD added that all airport users were very proactive in looking for any nefarious activities. The Chairman agreed saying that all airports are self-policing and any incidents of people that step out of line are reported. He said that all flights from abroad have a flight plan that is able to be tracked and suggested that the problem now mainly involved the use of small boats.

11. Dates of next meetings

- 11.01 Members were reminded that the dates of the next meetings had been agreed as follows:
- Thursday, 20 April 2017;
 - Thursday, 27 July 2017;
 - Thursday, 19 October 2017.
- 11.02 It was agreed that the first meeting in 2018 would be held on Thursday, 18 January at 3.30pm at the Airport.

The meeting closed at 4.30pm.