

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 20 April 2017 at 3.30pm.

Present:

Organisation:

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Secretary
Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)

Tandridge District Council
Private Owners
London Borough of Bromley Residents Federation (BRF)
Sevenoaks District Council
London Borough of Bromley (LBB), Officer
Tatsfield Parish Council
BRF/Cudham & Downe Residents Association
Kent County Council
London Borough of Bromley (LBB)

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
Councillor K. Jecks
Mr D. Field
Dr R. Hadley
Councillor R. Hogarth
Mrs M. Manuel
Councillor I. Mitchell
Reverend J. Musson
Councillor R. Parry
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.

2. Membership

2.01 Members noted that:

- Rob Shirley from Transcity Exhibitions who represented commercial users had resigned as a member of the Committee since he was no longer working at the Airport for;
- due to business commitments, Vic Endacott was unable to attend all of the Committee's meetings. The Reverend John Musson would represent BRF/Cudham Residents Association and Vic Endacott would deputise when necessary.

2.02 The Committee was also informed that Councillor Richard Parry, the Chairman of the Noise and Safety Sub-Committee, was not standing for re-election to Kent County Council at the local elections to be held on 4 May. Members were reminded that the new Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping system had recently been implemented and that Councillor Parry had been involved in its development. It was suggested that it would be a pity for the Sub-Committee to lose his expertise. Consequently, it was proposed that Councillor Parry should continue to be the Chairman of the Sub-Committee and that he be appointed as an ex-officio member of the Committee. The Committee agreed the proposal and members mentioned that they were pleased that he would continue to serve on the Committee.

3. Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr A. Bamrah (Flying Schools), Councillor D. Hodge (Surrey County Council), Councillor T. Letts (London Borough of Croydon),

Steve O’Connell (Greater London Authority), Peter Osborne (BRF/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association), Deva Ponnosami (South London Business) and Councillor Richard Scoates (LBB) who was substituted by Councillor Tim Stevens).

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 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 which provided information on the following issues had previously been circulated.

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 Business Aviation activity had increased this month at almost all of the busiest airports.

6.03 Biggin Hill movement summary - the Airport’s movement summary for the first quarter of 2017 was included in the report and it was noted that total movements for the quarter were up 8.4% on the 2016 figures with gains being made in all sectors except in the ‘club other’ category. Privately-owned light aircraft movements had increased by 14% compared to 2016. Club circuit training flights which had increased by 3.5% would probably have gone up by more than that if the demands upon air traffic control capacity by the commercial market had not been so high. The commercial and executive market sector had increased by 16.8% over the same quarter in 2016. The biggest gain (28%) had been in the air taxi/charter classification.

6.04 The operational movements during the first quarter of 2017 were:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld.	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Twin Corp.	Helis.	Military	Total
January	1,473	310	470	0	557	249	29	124	8	3,220
February	877	211	427	0	674	249	26	199	3	2,666
March	1,571	452	757	0	720	297	56	293	6	4,152
Total	3,921	973	1,654	0	1,951	795	111	616	17	10,038
Change	+134	-104	+202	0	+426	+10	-24	+141	-3	+782
Year to Date	3,921	973	1,654	0	1,951	795	111	616	17	10,038

6.06 During the same quarter of 2016 they had been:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld.	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Corp. Twin	Helis.	Military	Total
January	1,030	341	377	0	446	234	32	120	6	2,586
February	1,174	293	399	0	463	273	47	178	6	2,833
March	1,583	443	676	0	616	278	56	177	8	3,837
Total	3,787	1,077	1,452	0	1,525	785	135	475	20	9,256
Year to Date	3,787	1,077	1,452	0	1,525	785	135	475	20	9,256

6.05 UK aviation policy and Biggin Hill Airport - the report advised that there had been no significant developments since the last meeting. Runway capacity at major London airports continued to be increasingly constrained by expanding airline operations, driving business aviation to airports such as Biggin Hill.

- 6.06 A delay of up to eight years had been announced to the London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) 2 which was seeking to gain more capacity in the upper airspace. This could result in airspace access becoming a matter over which some influence was needed in order to protect the Airport's access to the London Terminal Area airspace and the correct approach was being discussed with BHAL's airspace consultant. The AMD reminded members that it was proposed that the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) Biggin Hill beacon would be removed in 2018. However, he doubted that this would occur because it would result in the loss of the protected area around it.
- 6.07 RAF Northolt - members were reminded that, in potentially preparing to go back to court over RAF Northolt, BHAL had commissioned expert analysis of the RAF Northolt obstacle environment. This work would identify the exact areas where it does not comply with civil standards. Since the CAA had never undertaken such work it is to be hoped that the CAA might look at the matter again once under threat of further action.
- 6.08 In the meantime, RAF Northolt intended to close in 2018 to spend some £50m of taxpayer's money upgrading its runway surface and installing Engineered Material Arrestor (EMAS) beds runway end safety areas. This would not, however, address the issue of safety at RAF Northolt since the obstacles would remain. The only practical way to mitigate the obstacles would be to shorten the runways. To do so, the need for EMAS beds (at a cost estimated at £25m) would be obviated since adequate Runway End Safety Areas would then become available.
- 6.09 BHAL application to vary Airport operating hours - the report informed members that the Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping System had been formally launched to the public on 12 April 2017. LBB had been invited to confirm that the four conditions in the Deed of Variation to the Airport lease had been fulfilled as per the process set out in the Deed. The AMD undertook to keep the Committee informed of developments.
- 6.10 The Committee received a demonstration of the Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping System.
- 6.11 In answer to questions members were advised that:
- there will be a link on the home page of the Airport's website;
 - the decibel levels are provided by monitors situated 1km from each end of the runway;
 - the system does provide information about the name and address of the complainant and that will be made clear on the front page;
 - light aviation operators will be provided with a 3-D sketch of the constraints which is currently being produced.
- 6.12 It was also noted that:
- according to Councillor Mitchell, people accessing the site using Internet Explorer and Firefox were having difficulties in using the system;
 - the system provided LBB with the opportunity to look at complaints and the responses as well as checking their validity;
 - the system will provide gate heights for aircraft;
 - it will be used to re-educate pilots as necessary;
 - limits will gradually be tightened to produce even more stringent noise limits;
 - the people that would be likely to have the most problems are pilots of visiting light aircraft.
- 6.13 Reverend Musson asked whether the existing methods of raising complaints/comments could still be used and the Committee was informed that they can still be made by telephone, letter, email, etc. Any raised by such methods would be entered into the system and the AMD responds to all complaints personally. Councillor Parry added that, in his experience, all issues raised have been dealt with professionally.
- 6.14 Airport facilities - the second period of consultation on the revised runway 03 GPS approach had ended and responses were being collated and processed. The output of this would be added to the pack that was to be sent to the CAA at the end of April. Following this the CAA would be assessing the proposal and, hopefully, approving the new procedure for implementation.

- 6.15 Councillor Jecks said that most of the proposed changes were sensible but that Tandridge Council would be objecting to the proposal for the flight path to follow the M25 and then turning left to pass over Woldingham which was illogical and which could be easily avoided. The AMD undertook to consider the objection and the suggestion made for Woldingham to be avoided.
- 6.16 Members heard that foundations were being laid and steel work constructed off site for the second aircraft parking hangar to the north of the main terminal area which was expected to open in late 2017/early 2018. The hangar would provide an additional 60k sq. ft. of hangar space and an area of 10k sq. ft. area for offices.
- 6.17 Design work on the proposed Airport hotel continued and a planning pre-application meeting had been requested. BHAL hoped to commence work on the building in late 2017. £15m to fund the above projects had been secured from HSBC.
- 6.18 Tenants and businesses at Biggin Hill - members were informed that it was understood that Bombardier intended to launch its new maintenance facility on 18 May 2017.
- 6.19 Since the agreement to vary the opening hours of the airport, over 100 new jobs had been created on the Airport estate and a further 200 new jobs would be forthcoming over the ensuing 5-year period. It was anticipated that more maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) operations would be joining the Airport in the medium term future. Regeneration and modernisation of older and less well-appointed operations at Biggin Hill was expected and to be welcomed since it would increase the economic benefit generated on the estate and permit the redevelopment of some of the older hangars.
- 6.20 As business aviation activity at the Airport grows, light aviation training would be likely to become more constrained. BHAL had, over the past year or more, encouraged training establishments based at Biggin Hill to seek alternative capacity at other nearby aerodromes with respect to circuit training operations especially.
- 6.21 Economic Development/LoCATE@BigginHill – this section was presented later in the meeting during the consideration of the planning items (minute 10 below) by Bethany Russell.
- 6.22 *College Update* - London South East Colleges had developed a proposal outlining the curriculum provision at the London Aerospace and Technology College and estimates for student intake. The full economic case was being drawn up and would be ready for submission to the GLA when the fund opens. BHAL met with senior officers from RAF Cranwell to promote the case for joined up delivery of the College and were due to begin a marketing campaign to attract interest in the courses, which are to commence at the Bromley campus in September 2017.
- 6.23 *Infrastructure* - BHAL is ready to engage with the ‘Which Way Westerham’ campaign which seeks to establish a plan for Westerham for submission to the Sevenoaks Local Plan. LoCATE is also meeting with Gatwick to discuss a shared interest in improved connectivity south of the airport (A25 to M23 corridor).
- 6.24 *London* - BHAL was developing a ‘Case for Growth’ paper in cooperation with the architectural firm, Farrells, in order to promote the business strategy of the Airport. This would be the main point of reference for surrounding local authorities and other stakeholders.
- 6.25 *Other* - BHAL had recently met with London Borough of Croydon to discuss its Local Plan synergy and shared interests, including optimising connectivity between boroughs in order to create an employment corridor between LoCATE and Croydon (around 11% of LoCATE employees were currently from the Croydon borough).
- 6.26 Progress of LoCATE - Bethany Russell reported that the next edition of the LoCATE brochure would be available for submission to the next meeting of the Consultative Committee.
- 6.27 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 pilots who failed to abide by published procedures;
 - there had been no significant safety reports or major incidents.
- 6.28 Environment – it was noted that a new Ground Noise Action Plan (GNAP) had now been agreed with LBB and incorporated into the Biggin Hill Airport Noise Action Plan (NAP). The GNAP dealt with screening, orientation of buildings and ground operations with respect to aircraft and vehicles and supplemented policies already set out in the NAP.

7. Government Consultation – National Policy Statement and UK Airspace Strategy

- 7.01 A briefing paper on the following Government documents was tabled:
- Draft Airports National policy Statement: New Runway Capacity and Infrastructure at Airports in the South-east of England and
 - Upgrading UK Airspace - Strategic Rationale.
- 7.02 The paper was presented by Andrew Walters and it invited members and member councils to:
- recommend that the Government require the Ministry of Defence to be more open about its plans for RAF Northolt because it was not clear why more taxpayers' money should be invested in an airport that the Airports Commission did not expect to grow and which already disrupted flights at Heathrow. If the intention of the Government was to develop Heathrow Airport, keeping RAF Northolt as an active airport was inconsistent with that objective.
 - note that the queue management upgrades have been implemented for inbound flights to Heathrow that will hasten the removal of much of the need for stack holding but request that any remaining requirements to stack should now take place much further to the south-east so that aircraft are not circling over developed areas in south-east London.
 - recommend that measures are introduced to take all areas inside the M25 to the south and east of London into the area of London controlled airspace from the ground up, so as to further enhance both security and safety and simplify this busy area of airspace. This area of airspace is much busier than it was when last reviewed many years ago and London had expanded outwards so more flights were taking place over more densely populated areas.
- 7.03 It was agreed that:
- a redacted version of the paper should be circulated to members to enable them to present it to council officers with a view to representations being made as outlined above; and
 - that a letter be sent to the Government. Andrew Walters undertook to draft a letter for the Chairman to approve and send on behalf of the Consultative Committee.

Action: Andrew Walters

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

- 8.01 The report of the Flight Evaluation Unit for the first quarter of 2017 was tabled together with a map that plotted the areas from which the comments had emanated. Councillor Parry, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, reported that 10 complaints had been received by the Airport of which only 6 related to it. None of these 6 movements involved movements that were in breach on the Airport's procedure regulations. Councillor Parry added that this low number was in contrast to the past when there had been many more complaints.
- 8.02 He particularly referred to complaints relating to:
- a helicopter flight that was not related to Biggin Hill Airport;

- the Police helicopter.

8.03 During the consideration of this item, it was noted that Doctor Hadley had been added to the membership of SANARB.

9. Planning issues

9.01 Bromley Local Plan - Mary Manuel reported that, due to the high volume that had been received, there had been a delay in reporting to members of the Council on the responses to the consultation on the Local Plan. The report would now be made in June with a view to the Plan being submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government in July. It was expected that the hearing before an inspector would be held in the autumn.

9.02 In answer to questions Mary Manuel advised that:

- the responses will be available to the public when they have been submitted to the inspector;
- LBB would have to consult on any further changes so would be very reluctant to make any further amendments so she saw no merit in there being a meeting with the LBB Executive prior to it being considered by the Council.

10. Community Relations

10.01 Press cuttings - the press cuttings for the last quarter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and the Chairman congratulated Andrew Walters on the presentation to him by British Business and General Aviation (BBGA) of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

10.02 Festival of Flight, 19/20 August 2017 - the Committee was informed that the Festival of flight this year would be combined with the Eastbourne Air Show which would ensure that the displays would be of good quality. Electronic ticketing was being introduced this year.

10.03 Reverend Musson asked about tickets for local people and the AMD replied that the arrangements were still under discussion to ensure that they go only to local residents. Colin Hitchens, the organiser, would be notifying the arrangements shortly. Brian Wingate asked that he be notified in order that the arrangements could be announced in the next edition of the Biggin Hill residents Association magazine. Dr Hadley suggested that the information could generally be spread using the local residents associations and the AMD undertook to make that suggestion to the organisers.

11. Any other business

11.01 St Georges Chapel - Reverend Musson reported that there would be a service at the Chapel on St George's Day, Sunday, 23 April, at 10.30am. This would be the last service before the Chapel closes for renovation.

12. Dates of next meetings

12.01 Members were reminded that had it been agreed that the next meetings would be held at the Airport at 3.30pm on the following dates:

- Thursday, 27 July 2017;
- Thursday, 19 October 2017;
- Thursday, 18 January 2018.

The meeting closed at 4.55pm.