

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 19 October 2017 at 3.30pm.

Present:

Organisation:

Chairman
Secretary
Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)

Tandridge District Council
Flying Schools
Private Owners
London Borough of Bromley Residents Federation (BRF)
Surrey County Council
Tatsfield Parish Council
BRF/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association
Chairman of Noise & Safety Sub-Committee (ex-officio)
London Borough of Bromley (LBB)
Private Owners
Biggin Hill Residents Association

Representative:

Mr J. Bowden
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 A. Bamrah
Mr D. Field
Dr R. Hadley
Councillor C. McIntosh
Councillor I. Mitchell
Mr P. Osborne
Councillor R. Parry
Councillor Mrs M. Stevens
Mr J. Willis
Mr B. Wingate

* substitute

1. Welcome and Chairman's introductory remarks

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and, particularly, Councillor McIntosh who was attending his first Airport Consultative Committee meeting.

2. Membership

2.01 Members noted that Councillor David Hodge had stood down as the representative of Surrey County Council and was replaced by Councillor Cameron McIntosh.

3. Apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Nick Kemp (Deputy Chairman), Councillor Martin Allen (Tandridge District Council, substituted by Councillor Keith Jecks), Councillor Roderick Hogarth (Sevenoaks District Council), Councillors Peter Morgan and Richard Scoates (LBB), Steve O'Connell (Greater London Authority (GLA)), Deva Ponnosami (South London Business) and Mrs M. Manuel (LBB, Officer).

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 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 across Europe - with the assistance of graphs and a diagram the report updated the Committee on aviation activity in Europe. It was noted that the report advised that although business aviation departures in September were up 2.9% on the previous year's, they were still 4.4% behind the pre-crisis peak reached in September 2008.
- 6.03 Biggin Hill movement summary - the Airport's movement summary for the third quarter of 2017 was included in the report. It was noted that total movements for the quarter were down 7.5% compared to the same quarter in 2016. This was almost entirely caused by a reduction in flying club activity brought about by Air Traffic Control having to limit the numbers of training flights to ensure safety margins. The AMD added the Airport was fast becoming one that was too complicated for beginner pilots to use.
- 6.04 The remaining part of the general aviation market, the private owner category, grew by 11.2% following the trend set over the previous two quarters. The Air Taxi/Charter and Corporate Jet sector continued to grow with the Air Taxi showing the biggest gain at nearly 20%. The large rise in military movements was caused by the annual Festival of Flight operating over two days compared to the previous year's one day event and also to the fact that in the 2016 the Festival of Flight had been in June. In addition, Biggin Hill had been used by aircraft participating in the Eastbourne Air Show. Helicopter movements appeared to have levelled out with only an increase of 13 movements in the quarter.
- 6.05 The following schedule that summarised the operational movements during the third quarter of 2017 was included in the report:

	Club Circuit	Club Other	Private Owner	ATM Schld.	ATM Charter	Corp. Jet	Twin Corp.	Helis.	Military	Total
July	1,664	548	1,449	0	1,048	446	33	309	6	5,503
August	1,571	632	1,375	0	840	243	65	233	89	5,048
September	1,016	400	1,230	0	1,063	341	51	291	6	4,398
Total	4,251	1,580	4,054	0	2,951	1,030	149	833	101	14,949
Change	-1,297	-958	+453	0	+491	+64	-46	+13	+68	-1,212
Year to Date	12,851	4,761	9,359	0	7,414	2,891	439	2,470	145	39,656

- 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
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
Year to Date	14,979	5,829	8,345	0	5,907	2,745	481	2,062	89	40,616

- 6.06 UK aviation policy and Biggin Hill Airport (LBHA) - work had resumed on the LAMP 2 (London Airspace Management Programme) which planned to increase London airspace capacity by 80%. Biggin Hill Airport was taking part in that consultation and would submit its future requirements for access to airspace later in October. It would be arguing, amongst other things, for aircraft to be able to ascend quicker. Lobbying continued with a view to ensuring that business aviation would be properly recognised in the Government Aviation Policy document.
- 6.07 The AMD explained that it was proposed to have "letterboxes" around London in which aircraft would be inserted. However he anticipated that this solution could be disrupted during thunderstorms. Aircraft would be asked to slow down when they could not be accommodated at the destination airport in order to save fuel.

- 6.08 National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) were moving towards the decommissioning of the Biggin Hill DVOR navigational beacon in early 2019. Whilst NATS are still keen on achieving this date the CAA was delaying publication of a policy allowing London airports to overlay the existing DVOR based arrivals and departures with GPS derived equivalents. However, it was believed that this policy would be published early next year and that this may offer a fast track solution that would permit overlays to be used as a temporary measure whilst the LAMP 2 airspace redesign is completed.
- 6.09 RAF Northolt - the report advised that BHAL had received no response to its letter to the CAA which had enclosed SLC/Davidsons report setting out the safety issues at RAF Northolt. The AMD advised, however, that he had subsequently received an oral response advising that the substantive one would be received shortly. The Chairman added that he had not yet received a response to the letter he had sent to the Prime Minister on behalf of this Committee a year ago.
- 6.10 It was still expected that RAF Northolt would close for 9 months next year in order for its runway to be resurfaced and an engineered materials arrestor system (EMAS) installed. During that period, a significant upturn in Biggin Hill business jet movements was expected.
- 6.11 Airport facilities - the revised runway 03 GPS approach proposal continued to move through the formal Airspace Change Proposal process. The CAA had made an initial review of the application and raised some questions which were being addressed. The Instrument Flight Procedures department at the CAA was currently overloaded because, it was understood, of the Gatwick Judicial Review process and would not be looking at the final design until the end of October. The AMD advised that it was probable that the revised procedure would not be introduced before March 2018.
- 6.12 The T2 hangar to the north of the main terminal remained on schedule to open in December 2017. Some of the new ramp area was already in use. The AMD reminded members that the Airport's main focus relating to building developments was to site them in such a way as to reduce noise emanating from the Airport.
- 6.13 The new hotel has been the subject of public open day viewing. Comments received would be considered. A full planning application was imminent.
- 6.14 The Airport had recently accepted the surrender of the Executive Aircraft Engineering lease on hangar 446. Terms had been agreed with an existing Biggin Hill Airport tenant, also an aircraft engineering firm, for the occupation of the hangar.
- 6.15 Work was currently under way to price various taxiway improvements and to add suitable lighting.
- 6.16 Tenants and businesses at Biggin Hill – the report advised that Bombardier was now fully operational with some 100 staff engaged and further staff recruitment continuing. The Airport was in talks with Bombardier regarding future growth.
- 6.17 In answer to a question about the problems being experienced by Bombardier and its arrangement with BAE following the challenge by the Boeing aircraft company, the AMD responded that the Bombardier business operation was completely separate from its manufacturing arm.
- 6.18 At the last meeting it was reported that many airport businesses were considering expanding their premises and increasing their staffing. Since that meeting, there had been a number of additional companies that had requested more facilities and BHAL was considering how best to address these enquiries.
- 6.19 Economic Development/LoCATE@BigginHill - this part of the report was presented by Bethany Russell.
- 6.20 *College Update* - following the success at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage, London South East Colleges (LSEC) had now submitted a final bid for £9m of the £114m Skills for Londoners Capital Fund. This included a wide employer stakeholder consultation. The Airport was grateful for so much support from tenant companies, local businesses and industry partners.

- 6.21 LSEC and the Biggin Hill London Aerospace & Technology College (LATC) had significant presence at Festival of Flight, with a 15sqm marquee, which generated a lot of interest from local young people. The two year Aerospace and Aviation Engineering course had since launched and there were 10 students on the course at Bromley campus. They had visited the Airport and a lot of positive press had been generated around the course ahead of the LATC decision in November. The Airport hoped to keep up the positive momentum so as to build a strong message to the GLA and get a favourable decision. Bethany Russell commented that it had been possible to raise the profile of the proposals at the event referred to in paragraph 6.23 below.
- 6.22 *Infrastructure* - LoCATE had an exhibitor stand at this year's London Infrastructure Summit 2017, a key strategic meeting of London First's stakeholders to lobby for increased connectivity and investment in South East London. The new LoCATE brochure had been handed out and many positive conversations had with people in London planning circles..
- 6.23 LoCATE - The *Case for Growth* brochure was launched on the day of the Consultative Committee meeting with the Aviation Minister Lord Callanan and other key influencers attending. A positive message of sustainable growth and job creation, alongside minimal environmental impact had been put forward. Members of the Committee that had attended the event commented on how positive it had been. Bethany Russell advised that she would provide a copy of the LoCATE brochure to any member who asked, at the end of the meeting, to receive it.
- 6.24 Health & Safety/security - the report advised that, as previously reported, the Board of BHAL, taking note of matters arising from the Safety Management System, had decided to limit the number of training circuits that take place at the Airport. Flying training organisations had been asked to fly their training circuits at other local aerodromes. Currently, as a result, the Airport now permits only one aircraft to undertake circuit training in the visual circuit at any one time. This appeared to have reduced circuit training by a small margin, but more may need to be done since air traffic controller workload was still unacceptably high on occasions.
- 6.25 Following new European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) regulations, a new market had emerged. Private pilots were now permitted to advertise their services on websites such as SkyUber and Wingly and to invite members of the public to 'share the cost' of their flight, or to propose a flight themselves. This had inevitably resulted in some private pilots establishing themselves as quasi-public transport operators, unlicensed and without the requisite expertise to safely conduct such operations. BHAL views this as hazardous and undesirable from a security perspective. The Safety and Noise Review Board (SANARB) had considered the matter and the Airport would be publishing its policy on the matter shortly. It would be likely to prohibit such flights from using the Airport and to ban any Biggin Hill Airport users from using those websites. He asked that any person who sees any such adverts or has information about such activities to contact him.
- 6.26 Environment – it was noted that the Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping System continued to assist in the development of improved pilot behaviour. As previously reported, this was considered to be an 18 month process as the new procedures bed in and flight crew become accustomed to the increased precision required. The AMD added that he was already encouraged by the improved behaviour by pilots and their compliance with noise abatement requirements.

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 2017 was tabled together with a map that plotted the areas from which the comments had emanated. Richard Parry, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, reported that 95 comments had been received by the Airport, 90 of which related to Biggin Hill movements.

- 7.02 54 of the complaints had been submitted by 9 people and 9 came from one address. None of these complaints involved contraventions of the Airport's regulations. John Willis had raised two complaints and Councillor Mitchell, one. One person had agreed to have a noise monitor situated at his/her property and to date it had only identified noise equivalent to the noise of the car parking close by. One pilot had been the from using the Airport.
- 7.03 Councillor Parry advised that many of the issues raised related to allegations that aircraft were outside the appropriate flight paths rather than problems of noise. The majority of these did not involve contraventions of the regulations and were, consequently, invalid. If the noise monitoring and track keeping system identifies any departures from the regulation flight paths, the airport would take appropriate action.
- 7.04 8 complaints had arisen from the Festival of Flight, one of which related to the F-16 fighter. The complainant subsequently said that the complaint would not have been raised had it been known that it was this particular aircraft that was involved! Some complaints related to the Spitfire aircraft and the owner has been asked and agreed to vary its routes. One of the complaints relating to the Spitfire was as a result of instructions issued to the pilot because a damaged British Airways aircraft needed to return to Heathrow Airport.
- 7.05 There were 8 genuine complaints, one of which involved a helicopter. All complaints had been dealt with in a business-like and fair manner.
- 7.06 A question was asked about the complaint that emanated from the Isle of Sheppey and the Committee noted that this related to a movement that had no connection with Biggin Hill Airport.
- 7.07 Councillor Parry suggested that only complaints that are submitted within 7 days of the incident about which the complaint is made should be considered. It was also suggested that there should be a standard letter saying that any deviations from tracks are automatically picked up by the noise monitoring and tracking system and would be taken to the SANARB. The Committee agreed to these suggestions.
- 7.08 A member asked about vexatious complaints and was informed that, at present, the policy was to deal with all complaints. The Noise and Safety Committee would be considering the issue at the next meeting and it is probable that no such action would be taken until May 2018. The Chairman suggested that vexatious complaints could be separated out from other complaints in the report to this Committee. Councillor Parry undertook to ask for this to be done.

8. Noise contours

- 8.01 Arising from the preceding item, a report from Bickerdike Allen Partners LLP summarising the noise contours and movements in the early morning and late evenings during the third quarter of the year had been tabled and was noted. Also included with the document was a table setting out comparative noise levels.

9. Planning issues

- 9.01 Bromley Local Plan – in the absence of Mary Manuel, she had emailed update information about the Local Plan and a copy was tabled. It was noted that the Plan had been submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in early August and that a planning inspector had been appointed to examine it. A copy of the documents submitted by the Council and those issued by the inspector would be available on the Bromley Council website with details of any public hearings, the date of which was not yet known. An updated timetable for the Local Plan had been approved and was available on the Council's website.

10. Community Relations

- 10.01 Press cuttings - the press cuttings for the last quarter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.
- 10.02 The Committee was pleased to note that the Festival of Flight and the Nick Davison Memorial Flying Scholarship had both received good publicity.
- 10.02 it was also noted that the report about the Festival of flight at Newcastle County Down had been included!

11. Any other business

- 11.01 The AMD reported that he received each month a list of movements which tracked over Tandridge and that pilots have now had sufficient time to get used to the new flight paths. The Airport would shortly be introducing automatic fines.

12. Dates of meetings in 2018

- 12.01 The Committee agreed that meetings would be held at 3.30pm at the Airport on the following dates:
 - Thursday, 18 January 2018 (includes Annual General Meeting);
 - Thursday, 19 April 2018;
 - Thursday, 19 July 2018;
 - Thursday, 18 October 2018.

The meeting closed at 4.25pm.