

## **BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 18 January 2018 at 3.35pm.**

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#### **Present:**

##### **Organisation:**

Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Secretary  
Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)

Flying Schools  
London Borough of Bromley (LBB)  
Private Owners  
London Borough of Bromley Residents Federation (BRF)  
Surrey County Council  
Biggin Hill Residents Association  
Tatsfield Parish Council  
LBB  
BRF/Cudham & Downe Residents Association  
Chairman of Noise & Safety Sub-Committee (ex-officio)  
South London Business  
LBB (Officer)  
Private Owners

##### **Representative:**

Mr John Bowden  
Mr Nick Kemp  
Mr George Crowe  
Mr Will Curtis, Airport Managing Director (AMD)  
Mr Anoop Bamrah  
Councillor Julian Benington  
Mr Doug Field  
Dr Robert Hadley  
Councillor Cameron McIntosh  
Mr Peter Martin  
Councillor Ian Mitchell  
Councillor Peter Morgan  
Reverend John Musson  
Councillor Richard Parry  
Mr Deva Ponnosami  
Mr Nigel Riley  
Mr John Willis

#### **1. Welcome and Chairman's introductory remarks**

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting including Nigel Riley who was attending his first Airport Consultative Committee meeting.

#### **2. Membership**

- 2.01 Members noted that Peter Martin had been appointed to represent Biggin Hill Residents Association in place of Brian Wingate. On behalf of the Committee the Chairman welcomed Peter to the membership of the Committee.
- 2.02 John Bowden advised that Brian Wingate had served as a member of the Committee for over 20 years. He reported that he had received a telephone call from Brian who asked whether there would be any objection to him attending Consultative Committee meetings as an observer. The request was discussed and it was agreed that the request should be declined.

#### **3. Apologies for absence**

- 3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Martin Allen (Tandridge District Council), Councillor Roderick Hogarth (Sevenoaks District Council), Mrs Mary Manuel (LBB, Officer, substituted by Nigel Riley), Steve O'Connell (Greater London Authority (GLA)), Councillor Mrs Melanie Stevens (LBB), substituted by Councillor Julian Benington), Mr Peter Osborne (BRF/Leaves Green & Keston Vale Residents Association) and Mr Andrew Walters, Chairman, Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL).

#### **4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 4.01 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 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 although flight activity was down 2% in Western Europe in December, it was up 3% for the year and that Farnborough, Nice and Biggin Hill had contributed the most growth in activity in 2017. All top 20 airports had some growth compared to 2016.
- 6.03 In summarising this part of the report the AMD suggested that the recent increase in movements in the UK against a decline in Western Europe could be due to the decision to leave the European Union.
- 6.04 Biggin Hill movement summary - the Airport’s movement summary for the fourth quarter of 2017 was included in the report. It was noted that this quarter generally brings with it generally poorer flying conditions for the general aviation sector and that this year was no different. There had been a reduction of 2,239 flying club movements due to weather conditions and the need for Air Traffic Control (ATC) to contain overall traffic levels and workload. October was particularly badly affected in this way. On the other hand, privately operated light aircraft fared better with an increase of 654 flights over 2016 figures. The corporate/charter market continued to exceed 2016 figures and finished 19% up on the previous year. Total movements for the quarter were down 9% compared to the same quarter in 2016.
- 6.05 Total annual movements for 2017 were 49,457, a reduction of approximately 1.9%. Annual total movements were within the 5-year cap of 50,000 movements set out in the current Airport Noise Action Plan.
- 6.06 The following schedule that summarised the operational movements during the fourth 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
October	649	352	1,045	0	880	382	28	312	10	3,658
November	1,019	359	992	0	678	341	32	257	4	3,682
December	670	178	469	0	705	278	8	147	6	2,461
Total	2,338	889	2,506	0	2,263	1,001	68	716	20	9,801
Change	-1,910	-329	+654	0	+392	+132	-57	+143	+2	-973
Year to Date	15,189	5,650	11,865	0	9,677	3,892	507	3,186	165	49,457

6.07 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
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
Year to Date	19,227	7,047	10,197	0	7,778	3,614	606	2,635	107	51,390

6.08 UK aviation policy and Biggin Hill Airport (LBHA) – the Committee was informed that the introduction of LAMP 1 (London Airspace Management Programme) had been unsuccessful and it had been abandoned. LAMP 2 was now being addressed and plans necessarily remained fluid in the absence of meaningful Government direction. For instance, the additional Heathrow runway was not being taken into account because no final decision had been taken on it. It was

intended that LAMP 2 would produce 50% more airspace. Airports were being required to design the routes below 9,000 feet. 'Pipes' would be available for aircraft to use so that ATCs could be dispensed with. However, difficulties with the ideas had been identified such as the problems that would be involved with the use of the 'pipes' during thunderstorms and a pressure group was now asking for the redesign of the whole of the airspace. The AMD anticipated that it would be 8-10 years before any substantial changes are introduced. He referred to a consultation on the possibility of reopening Manston Airport.

- 6.09 It was still intended that the decommissioning of the Biggin Hill DVOR navigational beacon would take place in early 2019. The CAA was proposing that there should be a virtual beacon and stacking would continue to take place.
- 6.10 A new draft of the Government's Aviation Policy was awaited and it was hoped that business aviation would be treated as a distinct sector for the first time.
- 6.11 RAF Northolt - the report advised that, following a Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) study of safety at RAF Northolt, it was understood that it had written to the Ministry of Defence setting out its recommendations for change in respect of civil registered aircraft at Northolt. A copy of the letter had been obtained and it is understood that a Freedom of Information application had now been submitted for the supporting safety review report. Once received, the BHAL would decide how to proceed. The planned closure of RAF Northolt to civil traffic during 2018 for work to take place on the runway had been put on hold and it had been suggested that this may be due to the CAA recommendations referred to above.
- 6.12 Airport facilities – it was noted that the revised runway 03 GPS approach continued to go through the formal Airspace Change Proposal process and it was still anticipated that the revised approach would be introduced in April/May. No actual works would be carried out until approval was received.
- 6.13 The T2 hangar to the north of the main terminal was now open and in use. The office accommodation would be ready for occupation by end of the first quarter of 2018. The AMD anticipated that it would be fully subscribed by the end of the current calendar year.
- 6.14 Airport Hotel - a planning application for the proposed hotel was submitted in November but not registered by LBB for a period of some weeks. The AMD's report expressed concern that this could mean that the process could be further delayed due to the local elections to be held in May. During the consideration of planning issues (minute 9 below refers), Councillor Benington advised that it was very unlikely that consideration of the application would be affected by the election purdah.
- 6.15 Tenants and businesses at Biggin Hill – the report advised that Bombardier was now fully operational with some 135 staff engaged and further staff recruitment ongoing. Bombardier had expanded its operations into Hangar 446 (formerly JETS/Executive Aircraft Engineering) and was increasing manning levels further.
- 6.16 Many enquiries were being received from existing and new contacts about the possibility of expanding or locating to LBHA and much new accommodation was expected to be created in the coming 3 years. The AMD added that another manufacturer would be setting up a start-up operation at the Airport.
- 6.17 Farrells, the architectural and urban design consultants, was completing the Airport's long-term Master Plan to ensure best use of available space whilst taking into account level differences and safeguarded runway and electronic slopes.
- 6.18 Economic Development/LoCATE@BigginHill
- 6.19 College Update - the announcement of the London Aerospace and Technology College (LATC) bid was expected imminently. LBB had committed £1m to the LATC project and it was the Airport's view that this should be used on road improvements to make the site viable.
- 6.20 Infrastructure - various industry partner meetings had been held with Croydon and Sevenoaks councils to discuss shared interests and problems with road junctions/conditions. Those consistently identified are Salt Box Hill, Shire Lane and the lack of an M25 access. The AMD, in

answer to a question from John Musson said that the work to Shire Lane was not the sort which BHAL wanted LBB to use the £1m referred to above.

- 6.21 LBHA had signed up to Carbon Trust programme and was undertaking to draw up an environmental policy to further improve its carbon footprint. The possibility of providing electric vehicle charging points at the Airport as part of this initiative was being looked into.
- 6.22 LoCATE – as mentioned in the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 (paragraph 6.23 refers), the *Case for Growth* brochure had been launched. An interactive map and website had been produced which can be viewed at [www.locateatbigginhill.com](http://www.locateatbigginhill.com)
- 6.23 Health & Safety/security - the report advised that there had been no significant security breaches or occurrences since the last report.
- 6.24 However, there had been three notable aircraft incidents in the last quarter, all involving light aircraft. The first two cases involved significant structural parts being lost from aircraft whilst airborne due to either engineering or pilot error or a combination of both. In the third incident, a failure on the part of the crew to lower the landing gear before landing was followed by a double prop strike. In all three cases the aircraft landed safely and there was no damage to persons or property on the ground. Nevertheless, BHAL was concerned about the apparent developing trend in this type of incident and was investigating to ascertain whether or not there were common causal factors.
- 6.25 The report advised that information from the Airport Safety Management System suggested that light aviation represented more than its statistical share of risk at the Airport. A risk score analysis for the period from 1 January 2017 to 12 January 2018 was attached to the report. BHAL was reducing the risk by restricting some elements of light aircraft activity such as circuit training. It was suggested that the risk might be substantially reduced by removing pilots/operators that do not operate with adequate margins of safety and solid pre-flight preparation.
- 6.26 It was also believed that the introduction of Subpart G to European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) regulations had led to a significant deterioration in maintenance standards in light aviation generally because there was no longer any CAA inspection of aircraft at each annual inspection. Those exhibiting behaviour considered by the Safety and Noise Review Board (SANARB) to represent a risk to safety were being asked to remove their aircraft and to operate from an alternative aerodrome.
- 6.27 Anoop Bamrah suggested that the incidents referred to above were not a fault of the maintenance companies involved and he subsequently advised that his company was one of the oldest maintenance companies on the airfield. It only did Subpart F and G work and it was all done in accordance with CAA requirements. They are audited twice a year. The AMD responded that it was not strictly true that maintenance companies were not at fault in respect to these incidents. He agreed that operators at LBHA generally do comply with regulations. Previously, the CAA inspectors used to check the work before aircraft panels were replaced. Anoop Bamrah agreed and said that his company uses the same auditing standards as the Airport and all its engineers are qualified.
- 6.28 At the last meeting it was reported that some light aircraft operators were operating as quasi-public transport carriers. A ban on cost sharing quasi-commercial flight operations had now been introduced by BHAL and Sky Uber had recently ceased trading.
- 6.29 Environment - it was noted that the Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping System (NMTKS) continued to assist the Airport in developing improved pilot behaviour. At the discretion of the SANARB, penalty charges of £50 would be issued to serial offenders breaching the Biggin Hill and Tatsfield zone.
- 6.30 Light aviation landing fees in respect of circuits would increase from 1 April 2018 in order to further discourage circuit training. This would lead to a further decrease in local noise nuisance, especially in areas under the visual circuit pattern.

## **7. Noise contours**

7.01 Attached to the AMD's report were the noise contours for the quarter which had been produced by Bickerdike Allen Partners LLP using the NMTKS. It summarised the noise contours and movements in the early morning and late evenings during the fourth quarter. It was noted that the actual noise created was well within the forecast footprints and agreed and permitted limits.

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

8.01 The report of the Flight Evaluation Unit for the fourth quarter of 2017 was tabled together with a map that plotted the areas from which the comments had emanated. Also tabled was a paper setting out the breakdown of complaints for the quarter. It was noted that there had been a total of 83 complaints of which 5 were valid and that 72 of the complaints that were not valid had been submitted were from three people.

8.02 Richard Parry, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, reported that:

- one of the valid complaints related to the police helicopter;
- a LBHA based pilot reported himself as he believed that he had deviated from the track. But he had, in fact, not deviated from it;
- a resident had taken up the opportunity to have the noise monitor at his property. Noise levels were well within the designated noise limit;
- all complaints had been well addressed and the responses had been courteous;
- no complaints are dealt with which are made more than 7 days after the event about which the complaint relates;
- a helicopter operator had been asked not to use the same route on all occasions and ATC had been asked to design different routes to be used.

8.03 In answer to a question from the Chairman, Richard Parry advised that the Sub-Committee only upheld complaints which related to breaches of noise restrictions. Tracking deviations were picked up automatically by the NMTKS.

8.04 Doug Field referred to complaints asked about the use of helicopters to and from Chevening House. The AMD replied that it was now used by three Government ministers who may use it to fly to Northolt Airport.

## **9. Planning issues**

9.01 Bromley Local Plan - Nigel Riley reported that the draft Local Plan was being examined by an inspector at the independent examination stage. He added that it was unknown when the outcome would be made available.

9.02 Draft London Plan - the Committee was informed that the draft London Plan was out for consultation. So far as the Biggin Hill Development Centre was concerned, there was very little change proposed. LBB was currently preparing a response which would be considered by members of the Council on 25 January 2018.

9.03 Airport Hotel - referring to paragraph 6.14 above, it was noted that the public consultation on the hotel application had now closed. The officers' report on the application was being prepared for submission to members. In answer to a question from Richard Parry, the Committee was informed that that the report would be considered by LBB's Planning Committee as soon as possible after it was completed. Nigel Riley was unable to be specific about the exact date at which it would be considered.

## **10. Community Relations**

- 10.01 Press cuttings - the press cuttings for the last quarter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The chairman commented that the reports were generally very positive about the Airport.

## **11. Any other business**

- 11.01 Deva Pannoosami asked about the current status of Bernie Ecclestone's land holdings at the Airport. The AMD responded that he did not know what the plans for the land were. He added that the barracks need repair works carried out and that the Airport would like to have use of the land holdings.

## **12. Dates of next meetings**

- 12.01 The Committee was reminded that meetings would be held at 3.30pm at the Airport on the following dates:
- Thursday, 19 April 2018;
  - Thursday, 19 July 2018;
  - Thursday, 18 October 2018.
- 12.02 The Chairman presented his apologies as he would not be able to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm.