



Council Overview Board
joined by the
Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board

10 September 2015

Surrey County Council Airports Policy

Purpose of the report: Policy Development and Review

Surrey is located in close proximity to Gatwick and Heathrow airports. It is acknowledged that future airport capacity in the region would have an impact on Surrey's economic prosperity and environment. Following the recent publication of the Airports Commission report, it is timely for the scrutiny function to hear evidence from relevant witnesses with a view to advising the Council's political leadership on the future of the County's airport policy.

Background

In September 2012, the Government established the Airports Commission to examine the need for additional UK airport capacity.

In recognition of the significance of aviation to Surrey, including the environmental impacts, the Deputy Leader put a motion to full Council in July 2013, which is set out in the box on the next page.

Three well-attended Member seminars on airports have also been delivered, as follows:

1. 23 September 2013: Major issues associated with airport capacity expansion in the South East
2. 15 September 2014: Options for expanding Heathrow and Gatwick airports
3. 12 January 2015: Airport Commission on proposals to increase runway capacity at Heathrow and Gatwick Airports

The final report of the Commission was published on 1 July 2015 and prompted the Leader of the Council to announce that the position adopted by County Council in July 2013, remained the right position for Surrey.

This Council recognises the crucial role of the airports at Heathrow and Gatwick in supporting employment for Surrey residents, generating investment in the Surrey economy and in attracting and retaining major businesses to locate in the county.

Given the vital importance of these airports for the continued success of the Surrey economy, this Council opposes any proposals that would serve to reduce their capacity or the role of Heathrow as a hub airport.

This Council remains of the view that expansion at either airport would require the environmental and surface access issues involved to be satisfactorily addressed.

This Council calls on Government and the aviation industry to prioritise investment in road and rail connections to the airports to reduce congestion and overcrowding.

Scrutiny review of Surrey County Council Airport Policy

The Council Overview Board has invited the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board to undertake a joint review of the Council's airports policy.

As an overview and scrutiny function, the Board will not make any decisions. However, the purpose of the meeting will be to hear evidence from relevant witnesses with a view to making recommendations on the future of the Council's airport policy.

Supporting documents

The Council Overview Board will be hearing from Gatwick and Heathrow management and the meeting will be subject to the same constitutional rules regarding public speaking and petitions as any ordinary meeting of a scrutiny board.

Attached to this agenda at **Annex A** is the executive summary of the Airports Commission report. The full report is available here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440316/airports-commission-final-report.pdf

Annex B details a summary of Surrey County Council resolutions in response to proposals for airport expansion.

Annex C is the Surrey County Council consultation response to the Airports Commission report.

Recommendations

The Council Overview Board and Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board are asked to review the evidence presented by witnesses and consider whether they wish to make any recommendations.

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Sources/background papers:

Please see “supporting documents” section on page 2.

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