

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COUNCIL OVERVIEW BOARD** held at 10.00 am on 10 September 2015 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 1 October 2015.

Elected Members:

Mr David Munro (Chairman)
Mr Eber A Kington (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Mark Brett-Warburton
Mr Bill Chapman
Mr Stephen Cooksey
Mr Bob Gardner
Mr Michael Gosling
Dr Zully Grant-Duff
Mr David Harmer
Mr Nick Harrison
Mr David Ivison
Mr Colin Kemp
Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos
Mrs Hazel Watson
Mr Keith Witham
* Mrs Margaret Hicks, Substituted by
* Mr Chris Norman
* Mr Michael Sydney

Ex officio Members:

Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Chairman of the County Council
Mr Nick Skellett CBE, Vice-Chairman of the County Council

22/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

- Apologies were received from Bill Chapman, Colin Kemp and Denise Saliagopoulos. Margaret Hicks and Michael Sydney attended as substitutes.
- Apologies were also noted from the Cabinet Member for Business Services, Denise Le Gal.
- It was also noted that Victoria Young, Natalie Bramhall and Peter Hickman had given their apologies as Members of the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board.

23/15 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 1 JULY 2015 [Item 2]

It was noted that there was an incomplete sentence on page 3, bullet point 5. This would be corrected before the Chairman signed the minutes.

With the above amendment, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

24/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

Mike Bennison noted to the Board that he had worked in the aviation industry for 25 years, with 20 working out of Heathrow. It was noted that this was not a pecuniary interest.

25/15 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions.

26/15 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD [Item 5]

Responses from Cabinet regarding Welfare Reform and the Chief Executive's Annual Report are attached as annexes 1 and 2.

Two responses had been received from Cabinet and were included at Item It was agreed that the Welfare Reform Task Group report would be circulated to all Surrey MPs.

27/15 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION [Item 6]

1. The Chairman welcomed Members of the Board and representatives from Heathrow and Gatwick Airport. He informed the Board that he recently visited East Sussex County Council to meet with scrutiny Members and Democratic Services as part of the Orbis joint Committee. He noted that as the partnership work between Surrey & East Sussex continues, it was timely to consider the joint scrutiny arrangements between the two authorities. The proposal for joint scrutiny was covered as part of Item 8.
2. The Scrutiny Board were informed that the meeting would focus on the review of the Surrey County Council Airport Policy. Following publication of the Davies report, it was timely for scrutiny to hear from Heathrow & Gatwick, who were both represented at the Board.
3. Members were reminded that as a scrutiny function, the Council Overview Board could not make a decision. Members were reminded that the purpose of the meeting was to hear evidence from the relevant parties with a view to potentially forming recommendations to the Cabinet on the future of the County's airport policy.
4. The Chairman assured all of the witnesses that they would receive a respectful, fair and unbiased hearing.

28/15 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 7]

Key points raised during the discussion:

The Board noted the Recommendations Tracker and Forward Work Programme.

- Members were reminded that they may wish to suggest items for scrutiny The Board were informed that the Agency Staff contract item would be considered at the November Council Overview Board.

29/15 ARRANGEMENTS FOR JOINT SCRUTINY OF ORBIS [Item 8]

Witnesses:

None.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Board noted the report and agreed the approach to joint scrutiny of Orbis

Recommendation:

- The Board agreed the approach to joint scrutiny, as set out in the report.
- The report is noted and the approach to joint scrutiny of Orbis be agreed.

Committee Next Steps:

- The next meeting of the Transformation Sub Group was scheduled for the 11 September 2015.

30/15 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL AIRPORTS POLICY [Item 9]

The Board received a presentation from Heathrow, which is attached as Annex A to these minutes. Following the presentation, Members were given the opportunity to ask questions to the witnesses.

Witnesses:

Nigel Milton, Director of External Affairs

Chris Joyce, Surface Assets Strategy Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Board queried the impact that noise would have if Heathrow were to expand. It was noted that noise levels had reduced to the quietest they had been since the 1970's and that a blueprint for noise reduction had recently been published by Heathrow. It was added that the Davies Airport Commission report had recommended that Heathrow could expand alongside a reduction in the number of people affected by noise. Officers confirmed that Heathrow had accepted that steps needed to be taken to reduce noise further.
2. There was a discussion around access needs, it was noted that for an additional runway to be feasible, wider issues such as local roads needed to be considered to help minimise destruction. There was also a strategy to improve connectivity by rail. It was planned that by 2030 there would be 36 more trains and 13,000 more seats per hour improving access to the airport.
3. It was explained that there were currently thirty bus routes to the airport which were funded through a public transport levy. In addition, because of travel discounts for staff, 25% now took the bus to work. In terms of local traffic, it was noted that a third of traffic to and from the airport was taxi movements. Despite growth at Heathrow, it was noted that there had not been a corresponding increase in traffic. The Airports Commission had recognised challenges on the road and acknowledged that infrastructure would continue to require improvements if airport capacity at Heathrow was to increase. It was noted that the Airport Commission had recognised that Heathrow expansion could take place within current air quality limits.

4. The Director of External Affairs, stated that there were many benefits associated with expanding Heathrow, such as the increased connectivity and range of destinations leading to increased trade opportunities throughout the county. Heathrow was working with a number of councils to ensure that plans were in line with local priorities and met resident need. It was noted that the airport was working with Surrey County Council (SCC) to reach a memorandum of understanding. There was an understanding from Heathrow that a number of issues such as transport, noise, air quality and public transport needed to be agreed with SCC to take into consideration any future impact.
5. Members discussed the importance of traffic flow surrounding Heathrow and parking facilities, the Board was advised that the expansion strategy included changing and optimising parking instead of expanding it. There would be an opportunity to look at park and ride locations outside of the Heathrow site as any plans for expansion developed. It was noted that the catalytic effect on parking and traffic had been looked at in depth and showed reductions in the number of staff driving to work by 50% since 1991.
6. The Board was informed that sustainable travel would continue to be invested in at Heathrow including a cycling scheme to improve access to the airport. Members raised concern of Heavy Goods Vehicle's (HGV's) using local roads to approach the airport. Members confirmed that this was a critical issue and queried whether parts of the proposals were to look at expansion of freight capacity.
7. Officers from Heathrow highlighted the importance of working closely with local authorities to develop plans. The Chairman commented on this, suggesting that Heathrow should take a lead on issues such as traffic reduction. It was confirmed that Heathrow would take the lead on promoting the strategy and would provide funding and expertise where necessary and possible.
8. It was agreed that improvements to public transport access to Heathrow would continue with the potential introduction of 24 hour Transport for London services. It was noted that the Department for Transport were currently engaging with Heathrow to consider congestion charging for routes leading directly to Heathrow. It was clarified that those passing through the area would not be affected by any potential congestion charge.
9. In terms of economic prosperity, Members heard that 40,000 additional jobs would be created at the airport, 30,000 in the surrounding District and Borough areas and 110,000 nationally, were expansion at Heathrow to go ahead.
10. Members queried what would happen with any archaeological artefacts found on site during the development. It was confirmed that they would be displayed at the airport as previous artefacts were currently. A Member suggested planting trees in a UK forest, to offset any destruction to the countryside. It was also noted that local homes within an affected radius of airport and flight path noise would be compensated with double glazing.

A presentation received from Gatwick, is attached as Annex B to these minutes. Following the presentation, Members were given the opportunity to ask questions to the witnesses.

Witnesses:

Alastair McDermid, Airports Commission Director

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Airports Commission Director introduced the report and informed the Board that the noise impact at both Heathrow and Gatwick would be reduced if either of their proposals for expansion was accepted.
2. The Airports Commission Director outlined the Gatwick rail strategy, which would give direct access from 170 stations across the Country to Gatwick airport. To manage traffic in the vicinity, Gatwick proposed to divert A23 traffic around the airport and provide further funding to improve local roads. During the question and answers section of the debate, Members queried how train regularity would be improved for residents living in more rural locations. The Airports Commission Director explained that there were plans to potentially increase trains from Surrey and Kent to two to three trains per hour, and electrification of rail was being investigated to increase the speed of journeys from rural areas to the major airports.
3. It was noted that Gatwick was known as the busiest single runway airport in the world and it was confirmed that expansion would ensure London would have two 'world class' airports. On the potential Gatwick expansion, the Airports Commission Director argued that transport links would be improved to reduce disruption for Surrey residents. The strategy to achieve this would involve more choice for transport and lower fares for residents and businesses.
4. Attention was drawn to the fact that it would take 5 years to get through the planning process and London airspace was set to be re-designed in the next 10-15 years. In response to concerns about noise, it was reported that this redesign would result in changes to noise implications.
5. Members questioned whether Heathrow gaining permission would restrict Gatwick from developing a further runway in the future. The Board was advised that the Airports Commission report had advised there was no scope for two new runways in London. Members also queried what local consultation had taken place and Gatwick officers explained that 6 months ago a programme of engagement had started, engaging local communities such as Parish Councils, which would continue as plans developed.
6. There was a discussion around supporting tourists to travel to Gatwick and it was noted that the Oyster card would soon be valid at the airport rail station. Members felt that irrespective of the second runway

debate, links needed to be improved towards and between Heathrow and Gatwick.

7. Members questioned the impact on the surrounding Green Belt land, if the Gatwick expansion were to go ahead. It was clarified that the Gatwick plans would take away some of the Green Belt, however, the majority would be used for green purposes.
8. There were questions regarding popular preference for Gatwick, and the Airports Commission Director explained that while the majority of businesses had come out in support of Heathrow, Gatwick did have the backing of the Federation of Small Businesses. The debate developed, with Members questioning whether Gatwick would still be a viable business if it did not win the case for the second runway. It was confirmed that with one runway, Gatwick would still remain a viable business.
9. Concern was expressed on the impact of the flooding risk from development and noise. It was noted that the area that would be most impacted by noise would be the North Side of Crawley.

The Scrutiny Board adjourned for lunch at 13.20.

Members reconvened at 13.50

Afternoon session:

Witnesses:

Peter Martin, Deputy Leader of the Council

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning

John Furey, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding

Sue Janota, Spatial Planning & Policy Manager

The Deputy Leader introduced the County Council's policy position on airports.

Key points he covered, included:

1. The importance of economic impact from both airports to the Council.
2. There were around 250 very large company headquarters in Surrey, and there remained questions about how many of those would remain in Surrey if the airports did not expand.
3. The Council's current policy position was stated in the agenda papers and it was reiterated that either Heathrow or Gatwick expansion had been formally endorsed by the Cabinet.
4. The Deputy Leader explained his view that rail links were vital, including direct links from Surrey to Heathrow Airport.

5. There were concerns about infrastructure that needed to be dealt with, such as ensuring the strategic road and rail network was developed, as well as air travel.
6. The Deputy Leader referred to the Council's response to the Airport Commission's report that was in the agenda papers, and confirmed that this position remained.

Following the Deputy Leader's introduction, Members were given the opportunity to ask questions to the witnesses.

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

1. Members were given confirmation that the position stated by the Council was not expected to change, however, the Deputy Leader explained that this did not mean it would never be reconsidered.
2. Members emphasised the importance of consultation with local councillors. It was felt that a comprehensive list of essential needs for Surrey would be helpful for residents.
3. The Deputy Leader confirmed that his personal view was that it would be beneficial to increase airport capacity in the south east of England
4. Members queried traffic congestion and freight movements, which had not been covered in detail in either airport's presentation. The Deputy Leader explained that freight traffic was much greater to and from Heathrow.
5. One of the concerns raised by Members was the risk to the County Council, if government did not put as much money into airport expansion and surrounding infrastructure as anticipated. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members confirmed that this would be an area of focus once the government's final decision had been made. Members also queried the cost effectiveness of airport expansion, including any additional costs as a result of paying for carbon emissions.
6. There was a discussion regarding the impact of devolution on plans for airport expansion. The Deputy Leader reported that devolution could potentially be very positive in this regard, as the more influence that Surrey would have the better outcomes it could secure.
7. It was clarified that the memorandum of understanding referenced during the presentations was a non-binding agreement setting out areas that needed to be addressed such as infrastructure and access.
8. The Deputy Leader confirmed that when a decision is made by government, the Council would work with whichever airport was successful to secure the best possible deal for Surrey.

Before opening the debate, the Chairman invited Local County Councillor for Ashford, Carol Coleman, to read a statement, which is at Annex C to these minutes.

A summary of the key points raised during the debate is below:

1. The Board expressed the Importance of economic impact from both airports to the Council. The Council's current policy position was stated in the agenda papers and it was reiterated that neither Heathrow nor Gatwick expansion had been formally endorsed by the Cabinet.
2. The Deputy Leader stated that rail links were vital, including direct links from Surrey to Heathrow Airport. He also referred to the Council's response to the Airport Commission's report that was in the agenda papers. However there were concerns about the infrastructure that needed to be mitigated, such as ensuring the strategic road and rail network was developed, as well as air travel.
3. It was questioned how Surrey's roads and rail lines would cope with expansion of either airport. Further work would be unquestionably needed to ensure the impacts on residents were fully mitigated. It was agreed that the increase of road noise should also be addressed while the outcome is discussed.
4. It was agreed that noise had been a problem throughout the surrounding divisions which could possibly lead to judicial review once the government report was published. The next stage of the project would be to receive a response from the Davies final report. It was expressed that the Economic prosperity of the County could be reduced if effects were not mitigated.
5. The non binding memorandum was discussed as it has been developed with Heathrow and will work together with Surrey County Council to gather a better understand of aspects the authority needs to address and mitigate.
6. It was stated that an airport expansion was a national opportunity. A second runway at Gatwick was still viable so it was questioned how the two airports work in conjunction until then. It was emphasised that all borough and district resident

views need to be considered and all documentation understandable to residents.

7. The Board agreed that the final decision needed to be made as soon as possible Members urged the Deputy Leader to formally pursue government to ensure the decision on airport capacity in the South East was made urgently.
8. Members expressed disappointment that surface access requirements had not been adequately addressed in the Davies Commission final report and asked that this be addressed in the recommendations.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

The recommendations were agreed in principle and then circulated for agreement. The following recommendations were formally endorsed at the meeting of the Council Overview Board on 1 October 2015:

1. Surrey County Council should urge government to make a quick and final decision on airport capacity in the South East.
2. The Council should be fully involved in the considerable work involved to refine any proposals after an 'in principle' decision on extra capacity is made. However, the council's financial exposure should be minimised as far as possible.
3. The Council should reiterate its regret (as expressed in their submission to the Airports Commission) that the commission did not explore the issues of surface access to any expanded airport in nearly enough detail, and recommends this should be given high priority.

The majority of Council Overview Board members agree that an extra runway, at one of the shortlisted locations recommended in the Airport Commission's report, should be provided as soon as practicable, not withstanding the reservations expressed above.

Committee Next Steps:

The Board would agreed the final recommendations at their meeting on 1 October 2015.

31/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 10]

1 October 2015.

Meeting ended at: 15.22pm

Chairman

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