

CABINET RESPONSE TO COUNCIL OVERVIEW BOARD

SURREY AIRPORTS POLICY (considered by Council Overview Board on 10 September 2015)

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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.
4. 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, notwithstanding the reservations expressed above.

RESPONSE:

I am pleased that the Overview Board is satisfied with the Council's current policy position on airports and I am happy to endorse the Board's recommendations.

The Council is about to agree a non-binding memorandum of understanding with Heathrow Airport Limited. This recognises surface access as a key area on which they will work together, especially on proposals for strategic and local transport network improvements. Additionally, we have recently written to Network Rail to highlight the importance of Southern Rail Access to Heathrow and the need for it to feature as a high priority within the current review of its rail investment programme.

I shall also write to the Secretary of State for Transport urging a quick and final decision on airport capacity and to emphasise that it is critical for any new runway proposal to fully address surface access issues.

In preparation for the work that will be needed to secure the best possible deal for Surrey once the Government's response to the Airports Commission is known, officers will continue to liaise with our boroughs and districts and other local authorities around Heathrow Airport and with Surrey and West Sussex local authorities around Gatwick Airport.

Peter Martin
Deputy Leader of the Council
27 October 2015

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