

# Edinburgh Airport Noise Report Review Panel







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# 1. Foreword

- 1.1

Edinburgh Airport is a critical part of Scotland’s national infrastructure. It brings major economic and social benefits, helping to connect Scotland and its people to destinations around the world. Pre-COVID, the airport benefited from year-on-year growth, fuelled by a growing number of airlines and international routes which serve both inbound and outbound passengers.
- 1.2

Like airports around the UK and throughout the world, there remains the challenge of how you balance the benefits of aviation with its environmental impacts. For as long as people want to fly and aircraft are landing and taking off, one of those impacts will be noise, particularly for those living close to the airport or under one of its flight paths. However, the airport has important legal duties to minimise noise where possible and to engage with communities affected by aircraft noise.
- 1.3

In 2017, Edinburgh Airport established a noise advisory board (EANAB). Its purpose was to bring together people from the communities most impacted by aircraft noise, to provide a forum for the airport to engage on noise issues and to drive forward efforts to meet the airport’s legal responsibility to minimise, where possible, noise from its operations.
- 1.4

Put simply, EANAB is not seen to be working as well as it could or should. After four years of operation and, whilst not a unanimous view, many unfortunately see it as having failed in meeting its founding purpose and objectives. The panel received reports that there have been disagreements over the make-up of the Board, conflicts over its funding and the two-way flow of information. There has been evidence of unacceptable behaviours by a minority of members within meetings. Additionally, there was evidence that some EANAB members appeared to have adopted an adversarial relationship towards Edinburgh Airport.
- 1.5

While there have been clear challenges with EANAB’s purpose, structure, processes, and culture, we are clear; there continues to be a convincing case for the existence of such a Board. Indeed, post COVID, as the airport returns to growth and with the prospect of changes to airport flight paths ahead, there remains a compelling need for an effective and influential board which can guide the airport into taking the right decisions for the benefits of local communities. However, if EANAB is to survive then we believe it needs to change, not just in how it is constituted but in how it operates and the manner in which members work with one another.
- 1.6

It should be noted that, since the establishment of the review and launch of our consultation, we have heard encouraging reports of improvements within EANAB. This is very welcome. Our report and recommendations are intended to build on this positive progress and to encourage EANAB to go further in making changes for the long term.
- 1.7

We want to thank all our panel colleagues who gave up their time and expertise to deliver this review of EANAB and agree a report of our findings. The work of the review lasted for well over a year, involved many detailed discussions and required the careful consideration and analysis of much detailed evidence provided to us. As the co-chairs of the review, we were lucky to work with a panel of people who provided such thoughtful and considered input. We must also make special mention of Janice Hogarth who so assiduously arranged and minuted our meetings and whose organisational skills were invaluable throughout.
- 1.8

We also want to thank those stakeholders who engaged with us during the review process; those who gave their time to meet with us and discuss their concerns and ideas, those who responded to our consultation or who provided other written evidence. This material was vital in developing a set of recommendations and we valued their openness and candour.
- 1.9

It will now be for EANAB and Edinburgh Airport to consider which, if any, of our recommendations they wish to take forward. Ours is a purely advisory review and there is no compulsion or requirement on anybody to agree with us or implement our findings. However, we hope our detailed work as well as the open and inclusive way in which we have sought to carry out our review would encourage EANAB and Edinburgh Airport to consider our conclusions carefully.
- 1.10

We wish EABAB and Edinburgh Airport every success as it moves forward in addressing these issues and better protecting local communities from the impacts of noise.
- Robert Carr

Cllr Kevin Lang



# 2.

## Introduction

- 2.1

For those living near to Edinburgh Airport or below one of its flightpaths, the noise from arriving and departing aircraft can be a serious issue which can negatively impact their lives. This can manifest itself in different ways depending on a person’s circumstances, their tolerance for noise as well as the location and condition of their home.
- 2.2

Not everyone will feel affected in the same way, but Edinburgh Airport has been clear in the importance of acknowledging how people can and do experience significant disturbance due to their exposure to aircraft noise. There is also growing concern and evidence about the negative impacts from exposure to noise, including to health, and that those affected may not even be aware of such impacts. This is one of the reasons why the CAA publishes a report every six months, with an update on recent work and findings in the field of aircraft noise and health effects. It is important that those affected understand the noise – why it is happening, when, and what can be done to measure, manage, mitigate or even remove it.
- 2.3

Aviation noise is a complex issue – from its causes to the range of mitigations; from health impact; from its regulation to its measurement; from its management to the measurement of performance. If the airport is to be managed in a sustainable way for the benefit of all then there must be a level of clear understanding to facilitate the debate.
- 2.4

The complexity of noise can make it difficult for a lay person to contribute to have a voice in any debate around the noise generated by flights from Edinburgh Airport. This is one of the reasons why the Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board (EANAB) was established by Edinburgh Airport in 2017. This followed consultation with communities surrounding the airport and aimed to give those communities a stronger voice. EANAB was intended to provide a conduit for Edinburgh Airport to engage with the community at large on noise and noise management, to listen to community concerns and to respond appropriately. The aim was to develop a better understanding of what is possible by way of minimising the noise impact from the airport’s operations.
- 2.5

The remit of EANAB is outlined in the Introduction paragraph of the Terms of Reference.

*“The Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board (the Board) has been established to create and maintain an impartial pathway for the Community at large to engage with Edinburgh Airport Limited (EAL) in the understanding and resolution of issues relating to aircraft noise associated with Edinburgh Airport (EDI), with the primary aim of minimising the noise impact on affected or potentially affected communities”*





- 2.6

The EANAB Terms of Reference go on to outline the Aims, Objectives and Composition, Meetings and Reporting for the Board. This is all available on the EANAB website.
- 2.7

EANAB was the first of its kind in Scotland but followed the establishment of similar bodies at Heathrow and Gatwick. Following the consultation, the decision was made to make up EANAB entirely of representatives of community councils with an independent chair. Other groups and members were admitted following the group’s establishment.
- 2.8

EANAB is funded by Edinburgh Airport, which has paid for meeting space, secretarial resource and for projects and experts to scrutinise work. The mechanism for the management of this fund was laid out in an agreed Memorandum of Understanding.

- 2.9

The EANAB Chair was also appointed to the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee (EACC) with the aim of linking the two bodies. This was important given the EACC’s responsibilities and requirements to consider noise issues from the airport.
- 2.10

In 2020 and with three years working experience of EANAB, Edinburgh Airport invited an independent panel to review the effectiveness of the EANAB in achieving its remit and to submit recommendations for change. The panel comprised:

• Robert Carr, Chair of EACC.

• Janice Hogarth, Secretary of EACC.

• Councillor Kevin Lang, member of EACC and local councillor on the City of Edinburgh Council.

• Lindsay Cole, chair of EANAB

• Bruce Finlayson, EANAB

• Pippa Plevin, EANAB

• Ray Godfree, EANAB

• Gordon Robertson, Edinburgh Airport

- 2.11

The panel commenced its work in July 2020 and agreed the following remit:

*“To review the effectiveness of the arrangements and practices currently in place through the Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board (EANAB) for Edinburgh Airport Limited (EAL) to engage with affected communities on minimising noise issues/impacts arising from its operations, and to produce a Report to EANAB and EAL with recommendations for change.*

*“In doing so, the EANRP would:*

*– consider the existing parameters for the operation of EANAB, including the Code of Conduct, Terms of Reference, and Memorandum of Understanding in place with EAL.*

*– seek to understand different views on the effectiveness of current practices through direct engagement with members of EANAB, representatives of EAL, and other stakeholders from communities impacted by noise.*

*– examine the latest national guidance and examples of good practice being seen at other airports which have led to the minimisation of the impacts of noise.”*

2.12

Over the course of more than a year, the panel gathered evidence on EANAB and its performance as well as wider comment on Edinburgh Airport’s engagement on aviation noise. This report describes how it did that, its analysis, and subsequent recommendations.

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# 3. Approach and Methodology

3.1	The panel was clear from the outset that it wanted to gather as many views as possible, not just from those with a detailed working knowledge of EANAB but from anyone who had an interest in how Edinburgh Airport manages noise issues. The panel was also cognisant of the Gunning Principles of consultation.	3.2	The panel met digitally as often as necessary to plan, implement and analyse. Meetings were chaired by Robert Carr and Kevin Lang on an alternating basis. Once approved, minutes of panel meetings were provided directly to EANAB and published on the EACC website.	3.3	Central to the approach of the review was that it should be done in conjunction with EANAB. It was for this reason that particular efforts were made to keep EANAB members informed as to the progress of the review and to hold individual one-to-one meetings with EANAB members to develop a deep understanding of the issues the Board had encountered since it was established.	3.4	<div>The panel sought evidence by:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The panel chairs and secretary interviewing current and past EANAB members. It should be noted that some of the information received through these interviews was, at the request of the individuals concerned, kept to those carrying out the interviews and not shared with the whole panel.</li><li>• The panel chairs and secretary interviewing Edinburgh Airport staff, both current and former, who had experience of engaging directly with EANAB.</li><li>• Issuing an online survey which was open to all but was targeted at community councils, local authorities, Members of the UK and Scottish Parliament, local councillors, parent teacher associations and other relevant stakeholders. The survey was promoted through airport social media channels.</li><li>• Accepting written submissions from current and past EANAB members and Edinburgh Airport.</li><li>• Seeking clarification from Edinburgh Airport on a variety of questions and in response to issues raised by evidence which had been received.</li></ul></div>	3.5	The information gathering phase lasted from January to March 2021. The panel received 93 submissions via the survey, made up of 27 community council responses, 17 from existing and former members of EANAB, and 49 from other interested parties and members of the public. There were also 24 interviews carried out with serving and former EANAB members as well as certain airport staff.	3.6	The review also referred to the existing governance documents, which include the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct. Both of these are referenced in the Memorandum of Understanding which describes the expectations of the relationship between Edinburgh Airport and the Board and all of which are accessed through the EANAB Website.”	3.7	<div>To ensure an efficient analysis of all the evidence received, the panel split the submissions into groups:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Councils, Community Councillors, and other Elected Members.</li><li>• Interviews with members of EANAB and EAL.</li><li>• All others survey responses from individuals.</li></ul></div> <div>Reports were written on each, presented back to the group and discussed.</div>	3.8	<div>The panel found it useful to group responses into themes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purpose: What is EANAB for?</li><li>• Structure: Who should be represented on it?</li><li>• Process: How can it deliver on its purpose?</li><li>• Culture: How does it operate for the benefit of all?</li></ul></div>	3.9	It is the panel’s belief that issues around these themes are clearly at the root of EANAB’s issues and changes under each will be beneficial for EANAB, Edinburgh Airport and local communities. The panel discussed each heading in turn, using a document which grouped the survey feedback under those headings. From those meetings, draft conclusions were taken.	3.10	The next four sections of this report group the panel’s findings from each of the four themes. There is also a separate section dealing with views on Edinburgh Airport. Each section also provides the specific recommendations from the panel relating to that theme.
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## 4. Purpose: What is EANAB for?

- 4.1 The panel found that, despite a stated remit, there was neither a collective understanding of that remit nor a consensus around the true purpose of EANAB or what it could realistically achieve. It is clear that this is a serious source of frustration for many EANAB members, Edinburgh Airport and the wider communities. A lack of common aims or goals also holds EANAB back from succeeding.
- 4.2 The lack of such a consensus has meant EANAB has had no strategic planning: no annual workplan or clear sense of priorities, no consensus on what success would look like or a clear report of results. The panel received reports that, regrettably, this has driven a degree of infighting and conflict within EANAB itself and is a likely contributing factor to the current difficulties of the Board.
- 4.3 It is clear to the review panel that EANAB has not advanced its remit as much as it might have expected over the four years of its existence. While there has been some progress made with new noise contour maps which identified underestimates of noise in the maps presented to the public as evidence for the 2018-23 Noise Action Plan and the 2016 ACP, there has been limited progress in addressing the need to inform the community at large of the measures that Edinburgh Airport is undertaking to minimise the impact of noise from their operations. However, with 62 community councils falling within the EANAB 'catchment', the challenges of sustaining effective two-way communications and engagement with such a large group is considerable.
- 4.4 Similarly, it was clear that the idea of EANAB providing a "conduit" between the airport and communities affected by noise was not working. A clear finding of the survey was that most respondents outside of EANAB indicated little or no awareness of EANAB or its purpose. Even communities directly represented on EANAB seemed unaware of its existence, an issue for community councils as much as EANAB.





- 4.5

Given the complexity of aviation noise, it is also important that there is an element of education of communities on noise and creating a much clearer understanding of what EANAB does. This is separate from the wider issue of advising on the technical aspects of noise management.
- 4.6

In the evidence received, there was a consensus that aviation noise had not reduced during the tenure of EANAB. There is a serious question over how noise can be reduced from an airport that was, at least pre-COVID, growing year on year with such expansion supported through UK and Scottish government policy. Nevertheless, the ineffectiveness of EANAB, a lack of funding, a perceived lack of interest by Edinburgh Airport, as well as infighting within EANAB were also seen to be holding EANAB back from making an effective difference.
- 4.7

Some members saw the role and purpose of EANAB as holding the airports ‘feet to the fire’ in what could be viewed as an adversarial manner. Others were keen to take a more constructive role, working with the airport to try and make incremental, if albeit limited improvements.
- 4.8

Whatever EANAB’s role and purpose, it must be stressed that the legal responsibility for managing and minimising noise at Edinburgh Airport rests with the airport operator in line with the common law and the relevant Scottish and UK legislation. Whilst EANAB can advise and make recommendations, it must be remembered that this legal responsibility sits with the airport.

- 4.9

In order to improve the purpose of EANAB, the review panel recommends:

• a shorter, simpler overall objective “to provide advice to Edinburgh Airport on how best to minimise the impact of noise from its operations”.

• that, as an advisory board, EANAB should focus its advice to the airport on two areas: who is being impacted by noise and why; and how best to mitigate those impacts on local communities.

• EANAB have a central role in any airspace change procedures.

• EANAB should have a clear understanding of the impact of noise on communities, i.e., knowing what percentage of people in each area say they are disturbed by noise from the airport, and proactively reaches out to communities on a regular basis to understand concerns and local priorities for management of noise.

• EANAB be the key non-regulatory stakeholder body responsible for oversight of the creation of and delivery of the airport’s Noise Action Plan (NAP).

• EANAB must be fully integral to the management of noise issues at the airport and be a recognised body which influences decisions at Edinburgh Airport.

• EANAB be clear also as to what it is not. The Terms of Reference should be re-written to clarify the responsibilities of Edinburgh Airport and the Board, taking into account the fact that operational responsibilities and legal liability for noise management lies with the operator of the airport and that it is for the Board to provide advice as an impartial pathway in the understanding and resolution of issues relating to aircraft noise.
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# 5. Structure: Who should be represented on EANAB?

5.1 It was clear that most respondents believed the EANAB membership, in being based almost entirely around community councils, was too narrow. There was a view that EANAB would benefit from a wider pool from local councillors, MSPs and MPs, independent experts in addition to the valuable input made from community council representatives and other relevant stakeholders.

5.2 It was acknowledged that, whilst bringing key skills, EANAB members are lay people when it comes to aviation noise and volunteers with limited time and resources. There was a broad agreement on the need to consider the required skills set for the Board and for membership to reflect these requirements.

5.3 There is also a balance to be struck in terms of Board size and composition. It is recognised that no single model will be perfect. Offering Board membership to all those with a view or an interest could make the Board so large as to hinder meetings and good decision making. Equally, a Board which is too small risks being too narrow in its discussions and could exclude those with significant interest.

5.4 The operation and practice of EANAB's sub-groups did come in for praise. Many felt these smaller groups which focused in on specific issues or subject areas had allowed for matter to be considered in greater depth and in a more focused way and had helped to deliver results. Indeed, most of the detailed work of the Board is carried forward by these various subgroups.

5.5 In considering structure, it was also clear that a majority of respondents did not believe the relationship between EANAB and Edinburgh Airport was working. This was for a number of reasons, including a perceived indifference from Edinburgh Airport towards noise issues and the work of EANAB, the ineffectiveness of EANAB itself and the underfunding of the Board. It is the view of the panel that structural changes to the working of the board will likely lead to significant improvements.

5.6 **In order to improve the structure of EANAB, the review panel recommends:**

- **That EANAB recognises how its current task can be better facilitated through a layered structure and from a greater diversity of individuals from beyond community councils who work, either on the main Board itself or from its sub-groups.**

- That EANAB consider the option of a smaller 'executive strategic board' of no more than 12 individuals to create a more manageable structure, deliver more effective discussion and provide the basis for more effective decision making, made up of
  - One community representative from each of the three geographical areas; Edinburgh, West Lothian, and Fife. Such individuals should have a duty to act in the interests of their community at large. These members would retain a direct voice for those communities affected most by aircraft noise.
  - One democratic representative (whether MPs, MSPs or local councillors) from each of the three areas listed above. These members would also provide an important link but have additional authority from their position as individuals who have elected from within these communities.
  - One representative of Edinburgh Airport to ensure the airport operator and the body legally responsible for the management of noise is present and involved.
- One representative of National Air Traffic Services, to ensure the main body responsible for the routing of aircraft to and from the airport is present and involved.
- One independent chair, chosen for a defined period of office, to ensure the creation of focused agendas and the effective running of meeting discussions.
- Up to three other individuals chosen to provide additional expertise from one or more of the following areas:
  - a) An understanding of aviation, including aircraft type, runway use, operations on landing and departure, flight route planning, the aviation market/industry including issues of growth, contracting including penalties and regulation
  - b) An understanding of aviation noise, its regulation, effect of noise on health, education and other impacts such as property valuation, noise mitigation, noise action planning.
  - c) Planning and Environmental Health.
  - d) Governance, secretarial, chair and office bearers, dispute resolution, complaint handling.



- e) Engagement, consultation and communication, including PR, social media, citizens’ assemblies, engagement and consultation processes.
- f) Scientific method including analysing data and statistics.

Sources of such expertise could include the Civil Aviation Authority and the Scottish Government or those with professional expertise via noise consultancies.

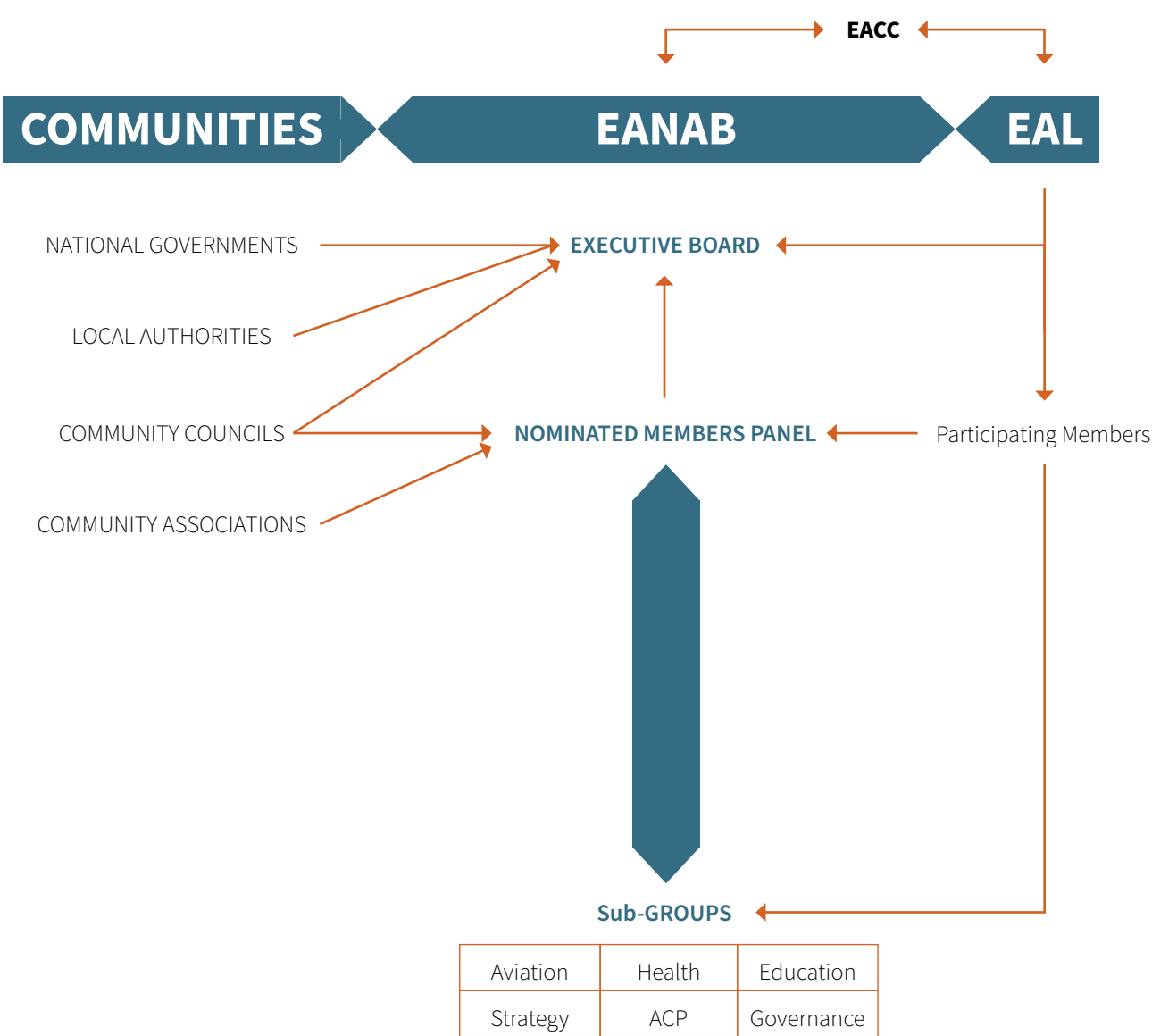
It should be noted that this suggested structure was supported by a majority of members of the review panel. One individual favoured a larger executive board with clearer responsibilities for the progress of the remit tied to compliance with the existing Terms of Reference, based around existing community council membership and supplemented by advisory members with expertise as provided for in the existing Terms of Reference.

The panel recognised that a broader range of structures for the Board could have been presented. However, given the time available and the need to present a clear recommendation for consideration, the majority of the panel agreed this model should be offered as a potential solution.

- That EANAB draw up a process for the advertising and recruitment of the people listed in the executive board, a process which could be assisted by the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee.
- That the executive board is supplemented by the continued operation of specialist sub-groups which can include but are not limited to the members of the main Board and each of which should have a clearly defined remit.

- That, to maximise community participation in the work of EANAB, there should be a ‘community member panel’, which would be open to all community councils and other local groups which have an interest in how the airport manages noise issues and wishes to be a member. This would be a key discussion group and have a central role in feeding the views of communities into the main executive board. The main board should also be accountable to the community panel in terms of its work, agreed priorities and decisions.
- That the role description of the chair of EANAB be clearly set out and include responsibility for managing the progress of the Board towards meeting its remit and annual objectives, to draw up and manage an annual calendar of quarterly meetings and provide for a quarterly communication of progress to communities.
- That the role descriptions of any other agreed office holders and sub-group chairs also be clearly defined.
- That the chair of EANAB continues to be a member of the EACC.
- That EANAB agree a new system of induction and training for members, including the necessary material which covers a minimum level of information regarding noise management options, the legal framework within which the aviation industry operates and the health impacts of noise on a population. Induction and training should also cover matters relevant to being an effective Board member or Sub-group member including behaviours which comply with the EANAB values and Code of Conduct.

Our suggested structure for EANAB with mapped relationships to the airport, communities and stakeholders



## 6. Process: How can EANAB deliver on its purpose?

- 6.1 From the evidence we heard, there was a clear view that EANAB had been hampered by a lack of clearly defined processes, an absence of structured work plans, and a weakness in the annual reporting of progress against outcomes and objectives. The Board's Terms of Reference include a requirement for an annual plan of work directed at the remit but it was felt this had failed to be delivered on a consistent basis. Equally, a lack of annual work plans from Edinburgh Airport on noise management had limited EANAB's planning.
- 6.2 The consensus of respondents was that there was limited or no knowledge of the situations and structures which were working at other airports. Suggestions of good practice to learn from elsewhere included noise related charging set at effective levels, night curfews, use of slot changes for noise, flight path usage for noise and flight profile design for noise.
- 6.3 Almost all respondents believed EANAB was insufficiently resourced and this lack of funding had inhibited its work. Some felt the need for EANAB to approach Edinburgh Airport on an ad hoc basis for funding specific areas of work showed the Board was subservient to the airport. Others felt the lack of an annual budget showed how the airport was failing to treat EANAB with respect.
- 6.4 Within the present Memorandum of Understanding, there is provision for funding of projects but not a requirement for an annual budgeting cycle. That process has proven to be unsatisfactory and a more structured process could make a significant difference, both to the work of the Board and in creating a stronger relationship with Edinburgh Airport.
- 6.5 In terms of the need for funding, members cited proper secretarial support, including for minute taking; an annual fund to be spent as it deems appropriate; a pool of independent and impartial experts to be drawn on in relation to aviation noise including operational procedure issues; and an independent communication resource to help improve and increase EANAB's external engagement.
- 6.6 There has been deep concern at a lack of any consistent approach in how EANAB members report to and from the community councils which they represent. Equally, there are no agreed processes for the consistent provision of information to communities about the actions of EANAB and from communities to EANAB and Edinburgh Airport.





- 6.7 Several ideas were put to the panel for how the issue of communication could be improved. Some suggested that EANAB meet with and present to community councils and provide regular newsletter bulletins to these groups. Similarly, the Board could arrange public meetings or make more contact through mailings, social media, utilizing Teams or Zoom. At the core of this was the need for a broader raising of EANAB's profile, its activities, and priorities.
- 6.8 However, strong views were presented to the panel on the need for the airport to undertake its own proactive engagement and communications with communities on noise and this exercise could not just be left to EANAB. Suggestions included more information on the airport website, articles, newsletters in local newspapers, more consultations and annual noise maps and analysis.
- 6.9 Some respondents voiced concern that that requirements within EANAB's Terms of Reference have not been followed e.g., the holding of an annual general meeting; annual appointments of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

- 6.10 There was also a wider issue of the processes which are in place for consultation, engagement, and the effective exchange of information with and from Edinburgh Airport. Put simply, too many existing members of EANAB did not feel like valued partners of the airport in trying to address noise issues. There were concerns over a withholding of information and a failure to provide data on a timely basis. This ran to the very core of what kind of relationship can and should exist between EANAB and Edinburgh Airport.
- 6.11 **In order to improve the processes within EANAB, the review panel recommends:**
- **that EANAB and Edinburgh Airport work to its current requirements in agreeing an annual workplan focused on a small number of specific and deliverable projects which are themselves rooted in clear, intended outcomes.**
  - **that such a work plan could be based on or, at the very least, link to Edinburgh Airport's agreed Noise Action Plan and annual airport work plans in delivering the NAP.**

- that the EANAB annual report, setting out clearly its activities and success in delivering against its agreed outcomes, should form a standing item annually at the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee and provide the main focus of communication of progress to the community at large.
- that EANAB should be consistent in holding office bearer elections, if such positions exist in the new structure and as required in terms of its MoU.
- that Board members should be appointed for a defined term, with the option of reappointment. However, it may be best to keep fresh perspectives by way of term limits.
- that EANAB agree a consistent process whereby its members, whether from the main executive group or sub-group, communicate information and views to and from Edinburgh Airport, to and from communities and the general public.

- that EANAB be adequately resourced with funding for proper compensation / remuneration for the chair and secretary and meeting space. There should also be an annual fund to be agreed between EANAB and Edinburgh Airport and spent at the discretion of the executive board to cover such areas as communication facilities, independent information gathering and validation, and educational or training processes for board members.
- that an overhaul should be made of the EANAB website to provide clearer information and to provide a route for questions to be raised to the Board. Whilst recognising the challenges associated with managing open online forums, consideration should also be given to how social media could be used better as a conduit for communications with the wider public.

# 7. Culture: How does EANAB operate for the benefit of all?

The review panel members were troubled to hear repeated reports of unacceptable behaviour from a minority of EANAB members towards their board colleagues and to airport staff. This had grown over the lifetime of EANAB, had left many members feeling deeply uncomfortable with some questioning whether they even wished to continue in the group.

- 7.1

We also heard from airport staff, some of whom had held relatively junior positions, who felt disrespected and whose direct experience of EANAB had significantly impacted their well-being. This represents a serious issue given Edinburgh Airport’s duty of care towards its employees.
- 7.2

Given some recent rancour and disagreement and, despite some recent improvements, some feared relationships had broken down irretrievably and aired concerns about splits in the membership. The hostile environment was also seen as a critical barrier to further recruitment of members.
- 7.3

Since the launch of the panel review, we have heard some welcome reports of improvements in terms of the dynamic within EANAB and the relations within meetings. However, there were still concerns expressed about a feeling that some EANAB members were working to individual agendas which overrode or even conflicted with EANAB’s overall purpose. Some were also seen as taking a purposefully adversarial approach to Edinburgh Airport
- 7.4

which had impacted on the ability to work collaboratively or with a shared set of objectives. It should be noted that some questioned the current EANAB chair’s impartiality in terms of the airport and underlined the need for the role holder to be fair, firm but independent in their handling of Board business.
- 7.5

We heard how all these issues had been further hampered by a lack of documented procedures for the handling and resolution of complaints, grievances and behaviour issues in a fair, effective, efficient, and timely manner. There was a lack of clarity over who could be contacted if the behaviours of such members fell beneath the standards expected.
- 7.6

There was also concern about a perceived lack of proper training and induction for new members. This was not just in relation to the subject matter which would be discussed at Board meetings but included training on values, bias, and unconscious behaviours.

- 7.7

In order to improve the culture within EANAB, the review panel recommends:
- The existing Code of Conduct at Appendix B of the MoU be retained and embedded into the culture of EANAB to ensure a consistent set of ‘rules’ are in place for the running and management of the Board.
  - That conscious and unconscious behaviours and bias that leave EANAB members and attendees feeling unwelcome, undermined and undervalued are considered unacceptable, and should be addressed properly. A “values gatekeeper” who can hear concerns on a confidential basis, and act on these should be considered.

- That Edinburgh Airport representatives should be seen as partners by EANAB and not excluded from EANAB meetings.
  - That the members of EANAB and attendees should know who in the “host” body they can raise concerns and complaints with when the Code is breached by a representative from that body.
  - That EANAB should have a documented process for the fair, efficient, effective, and timely resolution, (including by mediation or by an independent and impartial decision-maker, as is appropriate in the circumstances) of grievances, complaints, and performance issues.



## 8. Issues relating to the approach of Edinburgh Airport

8.1 During our review, we heard repeated concerns around the perceived lack of commitment from Edinburgh Airport to EANAB and its success. It was noted that the attendance of airport representatives at EANAB meetings had been inconsistent; its timely responses to reasonable requests had been inadequate; there was a general perceived resistance to providing information; it provided no proper engagement ahead of changes or plan; and it gave inadequate feedback or reasoning for decisions when EANAB proposals were rejected.

8.2 The word ‘spin’ was also mentioned, a feeling that the Board was used simply for external PR purposes. Some members simply did not trust the information provided by the airport because this had been viewed as incomplete or inaccurate, whether by accident or by design.

8.3 In order to provide a fundamental improvement in the relationship, trust and engagement between Edinburgh Airport and EANAB, the review panel recommends that:

- Edinburgh Airport commit to proper and effective consultation and engagement with EANAB in relation to
  - how airspace change will impact on noise,
  - how ongoing operations impact on noise, and
  - the Noise Action Plan for Edinburgh Airport.
- This improved sense of engagement should follow best practice:
  - EAL formulating a draft evidence-based proposal.
  - EAL communicating the draft evidence-based proposal to EANAB with adequate information to enable EANAB to assess the draft evidence-based proposal so it can engage meaningfully.



- EANAB asking questions of EAL, making its own enquiries, and gathering its own evidence, including from independent experts, and receiving any additional information.
- EANAB proving its comments to EAL.
- EAL investigating the issues raised in EANAB’s comments.
- EAL providing EANAB with its responses to EANAB’s comments, with adequate reasons as to what it accepts and what it doesn’t.
- EAL having an open and constructive dialogue with EANAB relative to any issues which remain controversial.
- Edinburgh Airport should commit to providing EANAB with information on an agreed frequency about the factors that influence noise impacts including:
  - routes and destination choice;
  - aircraft type;
  - airline procedures (for landing standard rules apply and for departures there are Noise Abatement Departure Procedures)
  - meteorological factors such as wind, jet stream, wind, and weather.
- Edinburgh Airport should commit to providing EANAB with information on an agreed frequency about the following:
  - contact information for airlines operating from Edinburgh Airport;
  - route networks by airline;
  - historic comparisons of route networks flown;
  - regular depiction of how accurately aircraft are flying on the flightpaths;
  - league tables of airline operational performance;
  - runway utilisation;
  - data on operations outside of normal operating hours and penalties;
  - relevant changes made to airline Standard Operational Procedures;
  - existing constraints on airline operations; and other operational changes
- EANAB and Edinburgh Airport should consider jointly holding public meetings, roundtable discussions, and “Citizens Assemblies” and use other forms of social media and communication (as the specialists recommend) to draw public attention to the importance of airport noise, its impacts and possible mitigation. This will need to be properly budgeted for on an annual basis.



## 9. Next steps

- 9.1 The Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Panel was established to review the effectiveness of EANAB and to make recommendations for change. This is a purely advisory report and it is for EANAB and Edinburgh Airport to decide which of our suggestions, if any, are to be taken forward.
- 9.2 At the beginning of this report, we said there was a convincing and compelling case for continuing with a noise board at Edinburgh Airport. We have now presented a broad range of recommendations to make the Board fit for purpose and more effective in the years ahead. We recognise these suggestions will likely provoke further debate and, in some cases, be challenging to implement. Given the history of EANAB and the difficulties which led to the creation of this review, we recognise the likely need for additional external support if and when the Board is reformed.
- 9.3 In order to assist in the implementation of reforms, we recommend that an independent facilitator be appointed by EANAB and Edinburgh Airport to help in the transition towards its new structure and revised ways of working.

