

**BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT - AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
3 MARCH 2022 AT 1.30 PM (VIRTUAL)**

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Present: Mr Colin Flack OBE – Chairman

In attendance from Birmingham Airport Company:

Nick Barton	- Chief Executive
Andy Holding	- Corporate Responsibility Manager
Nikki Bains	- Head of Planning, Transport and Strategy
Tom Denton	- Head of Sustainability
Rosie Bishop	- Environment Specialist
Jon Davies	- Energy and Carbon Manager

In attendance from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:

Mr L Stevenson	- Representing the ACC Secretariat
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ABTA	- Mrs S Foxall
Balsall Common Village Residents Association	- Mr D Ellis
Balsall Parish Council	- Cllr K Tindall
Barston Parish Council	- Mr D Elliot
Berkswell Parish Council	- Cllr R Lloyd
Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council	- Cllr J Horton
Catherine de Barnes Residents Association	- Mr D Cuthbert
Chelmsley Wood Town Council	- Cllr S MacDonald
Consumers Association	- Mr T Baker
Coventry City Council	- Cllr K Miks
GBSLEP	- Mr Ed Watson
Hampton in Arden Parish Council	- Cllr D Sandells
Hampton in Arden Society	- Mrs J Hilton
Kingshurst Parish Council	- Cllr D Cole
Knowle Society	- Mrs E Baker
North Warwickshire Borough Council	- Cllr D Reilly
North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils	- Cllr R Habgood

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Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr M Crompton (substitute)
Shard End Communities	- Mrs M Ball
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr Mrs A Rolf
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Mrs B Hill
Staffordshire County Council	- Cllr M Deaville
Passengers Representative	- Mrs R Tyler
Warwick District Council	- Cllr G Illingworth
Wychwood Club	- Mr G Heaps

Apologies were received on behalf of: -

Birmingham Airport Company	- Stuart Haseley-Nejrup
Birmingham City Council	- Cllr M Ward
Birmingham City Council	- Cllr D Donaldson
Castle Bromwich Parish Council	- Cllr J Macdonald
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr K Carmichael
Sheldon Residents Association	- Mrs M Kennett
Warwickshire County Council	- Cllr M Watson

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed Members of the Committee and representatives from the Airport Company. Apologies were as noted by the Secretary and the Airport Company.

RESOLVED

That, the Chairman's welcome and recorded apologies be noted.

2. MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Following the Committee's AGM in December 2021, recent membership updates were now reported as follows for information:

- Cllr R Habgood - North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils.
- Mr T Baker – The Consumers Association.
- Cllr K Carmichael - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

RESOLVED

That, the recent membership updates be noted.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee (AGM), held virtually on 2 December 2021, was submitted.

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By way of update, the Airport Company (Andy Holding) advised the Committee that the vacancy for a third trustee on the Community Trust Fund (CTF) had now been filled by the appointment of Mrs Mo Ball who currently represented Shard End Communities on the Committee. The next CTF meeting would also be held in April 2022.

Separately, the Airport Company (Andy Holding) advised that, following a question at the last meeting pertaining to the potential publication of track data on the Airport's website; that was still being pursued with the intention to publish that data on the website in due course.

RESOLVED

That, the Minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a correct record and the Community Trust Fund membership update/matters arising, be noted.

4. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman provided his regular update to the Committee on current industry issues and his role of Chairman of UKACC's. Headline issues this time included two matters:

- The recent submission of the Committee's response to the DfT's Information Gathering Survey on ACC's. Findings and outcomes were expected in April 2022.
- The DfT was now engaging with UKACC's more frequently on emerging policies, which was refreshing and encouraging, going forwards.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman's update be received and noted.

5. PRE-SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE & MATTERS ARISING

The Committee was advised that, on this occasion, there were no pre-submitted questions.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

6. AIRPORT ACTIVITIES REPORT

The Airport Company (Nick Barton) - presented the new format of the Airport Activities report for the period October to December 2021. The report set out updates on the following matters:

- Passenger Statistics.
- ATM's
- Aviation Development.
- Key Stakeholder Engagement.
- Complaints Statistics.
- PRM Performance.
- Customer Satisfaction.
- Social Media.
- Security Wait Times.
- Immigration Performance.

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- Baggage Delivery Performance.
- Cleaning Performance.
- On-time Turnaround Performance.

General Updates

When introducing the report, Mr Barton drew the Committee's attention to a number of additional headline issues. In summary, they included:

- The effects and impact of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 on the business with its associated travel restrictions in some countries.
- Overall business recovery levels (including pre-Omicron); all in comparison with pre-pandemic trading levels.
- Passenger movements for February 2022 were reported as 423,000 (53% of normal business in comparison with February 2019) which was an encouraging sign of business recovery.
- The ongoing Ukraine crisis and what impact that might have on the wider aviation industry and business operating costs, especially for utilities.
- EU rules for aviation that had recently been introduced and the effects of those sanctions resulting in aircraft parts supply issues. 238 leased aircraft were also having their contracts cancelled and being recovered from Russian airspace.
- Anticipation that, despite the Ukraine crisis, there were strong signs of business recovery continuing across the summer months.
- The Airport was currently carrying 800 staff vacancies across the entire airport site at the current time and efforts were underway to fill those vacancies ahead of the increase in summer operations.
- Ground handling operations had seen some recent challenges in staff recruitment and retention, which had caused some customer service impact and baggage delays in recent days.
- The commitment to develop a new £20M Security Hall that would be operational by June 2024. Designs would be shared with the Committee in due course.
- The gradual relaxation of the requirement for the use of face coverings by airlines; the Airport Company; and other airport based services.

Discussion Points

Warwick District Council (Cllr G Illingworth) – highlighted that at the beginning of the pandemic, a number of airport security staff had been transferred to the inland border facility (located on Car Park 6) and asked if those staff had now returned. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) reminded the Committee of the detail behind that successful initiative to safeguard jobs and confirmed that those staff (approximately 60) were now beginning to be transferred back over.

Cllr Illingworth also highlighted that, owing to the effects of the pandemic, the Airport Company had not proceeded with the terminal expansion of the airport in accordance with the revised Master Plan. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised the Committee that the ambitions to grow passenger volumes (to 18M by 2033) still remained, although it was now considered that those numbers could be achieved within the existing terminal footprint with some operational changes (e.g. the new Security Hall) and some minimal existing building revisions. That new scenario would also help the Airport Company work towards its carbon neutral ambitions.

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Staffordshire County Council (Cllr M Deaville) – welcomed the signs of optimism for ongoing business recovery heading towards the summer months and asked if the Emirates A380 aircraft would be returning to Birmingham as part of future schedules. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised the Committee that nothing was confirmed at this stage for that aircraft type (Emirates were currently operating a Boeing 777), although the A380 operation at Birmingham would again be welcome in light of its passenger capacity. Mr Barton also highlighted the typical staffing resource needed for both aircraft types, in comparison, and the work being undertaken by both Emirates and the Airport Company to restart that part of the business given the importance of that route.

Passengers Representative and Vice-Chairman (Mrs R Tyler) – welcomed the contents of the business update and asked if Qatar Airways was also anticipated to return. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that the business was very keen to get that operator back and the airline, likewise. Presently, there were some ongoing fleet maintenance and new aircraft supply issues for that airline to resolve before those routes would restart.

Planning and Transportation Updates

The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) reported updates on the following headline issues:

- Castle Hills Farm – specifically, the recent demolition of all buildings on the site.
- Inland Border Facility (Car Park 6) – specifically, that current operations would cease by the end of the year and that site would return to airport operational use.
- HS2 – specifically, the service of the General Vesting Declaration Notices and associated timescales/implications.

There were no matters arising from either of the three planning and transportation updates.

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the Airport Activities Report for the period October to December 2021, be received and noted.

7. SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The Airport Company (Tom Denton) presented the Sustainability Report for the period October to December 2021. The report set out updates on the following matters:

- Sustainability Update.
- Noise Violations.
- Night Flying Policy.
- Engine Ground Running.
- Air Traffic.
- Aircraft Activity Complaints.
- Air Quality.
- Waste (Recycled).
- Energy.

In addition to the above, the Committee's attention was also drawn towards the Airspace Change to Runway 33 SID's; the L_{den} Noise Contours; and the Vortex Protection Scheme, all as detailed within the report.

Discussion Points

The Knowle Society (Mrs E Baker) – referred to the L_{den} noise contours and the associated Noise Action Plan and asked for clarification regarding the linkages to other policies and local information. The Airport Company (Tom Denton) explained that the noise contours that

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were produced would measure day, evening and night noise impacts; that data then informed the Noise Action Plan, being further supported by the overarching Night Flying Policy.

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the Sustainability Report for the period October to December 2021, be received and noted.

8. BALSALL COMMON NOISE & OVERFLIGHTS STUDY REPORT (2019)

The Airport Company (Rosie Bishop) advised the Committee of the outcomes of the Balsall Common Noise and Overflights Study.

By way of a background presentation, the Committee was advised that in May 2014, as part of the Airspace Change Process following the extension to the runway, changes had been made to flightpaths for aircraft departing from Runway 15. Those changes included a revision to the Standard Instrument Departure (SID) procedure (commonly referred to as the 'Northbound Turn') whereby aircraft departing from Runway 15 (but whose destinations required a northerly heading) made a left-hand turn, taking them over the north of the village of Balsall Common.

Following implementation, pro-active compliance monitoring of the revised SID by the Airport Company had identified that, while jet aircraft were flying close to the centreline of the revised Northbound Turn as intended, turbo-prop aircraft tended to follow either a track that took them further north of the Noise Preferential Route (NPR) or a track that took them further south of the NPR (and consequently closer to the northern part of Balsall Common).

Recognising that the situation was not satisfactory, in June 2016, the Airport Company appointed "procedure designers" to redesign the SID with the aim of bringing turbo-prop aircraft performance on the Northbound Turn in line with that of jet aircraft. The resulting re-designed Northbound Turn became operational on 23 May 2019.

In response to requests from the Committee at that time, the Airport Company also committed to undertake a study to investigate aircraft operations before and after the implementation of the re-designed Northbound Turn with a view to comparing noise levels and traffic patterns.

The Study was conducted over two 26-day periods - 4 to 29 April 2019 inclusive - i.e. before the implementation of the revised SID - and 12 September to 7 October 2019 inclusive, or after the revised SID had been brought into use. For both periods, the Study involved the use of the Airport's Portable Noise Monitor (PNM) to measure aircraft noise levels in the northern part of Balsall Common. The PNM had been deployed at a resident's garden in Wootton Green Lane, Balsall Common.

The conclusions from the Study showed that the revision to the (P6 SID) Northbound Turn had resulted in the expected improvement in track keeping, significantly reducing the number of overflights over Balsall Common. The noise climate at the location of the PNM (located to the north of Balsall Common) also showed an improvement.

Discussion Points

Berkswell Parish Council (Cllr R Lloyd) – highlighted that during the pandemic, overflights had reduced significantly in any event in that locality. Cllr Lloyd asked if any specific complaints had been received since the revision to the SID or would further time now be needed to measure public reaction to the impact of the summer season and a general expected increase in flights. The Airport Company (Andy Holding) advised that there had not been any specific increase in complaints triggered by the revision to the SID albeit current flights were still in fewer numbers and had yet to return to normal levels.

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Balsall Common Village Residents Association (Mr D Ellis) – highlighted that he was pleased to see that there had been a reduction in noise impact on the village as a direct result of the revision to the SID. Mr Ellis also noted that there had been little or no aircraft noise during the pandemic and, as a consequence, aircraft noise would be more noticeable again to those communities once flight numbers began to return to normal especially during the summer months.

Barston Parish Council (Mr D Elliot) – recalled the background to the historical complaints that triggered the Study (Riddings Hill). Mr Elliot observed the analysis of the noise data and the number of recorded events (5) during the Study period of over 95 dBA. In comparison, a previous study undertaken in Barston in 2013, had yielded 239 events of over 75 dBA. Mr Elliot requested if the same study could now be undertaken for Barston to compare Option 5 and Option 6. The Airport Company (Andy Holding) advised that it would not be possible as such a study would have needed to have happened some time ago and data collected at that time. Mr Elliot suggested that he would pursue this question in greater detail with the Airport Company outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the report and Study conclusions be received, noted and welcomed.

9. AIRPORT HEALTH FORUM – VERBAL UPDATE

The Airport Company (Andy Holding) gave a further update to the Committee on the current position pertaining to the Airport Health Forum. He advised that since the last ACC meeting, progress had been made to restart that work. It was anticipated that the Forum would meet on 25 March 2022, and future progress updates would be reported to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the verbal report be received and noted.

10. NET ZERO CARBON ROADMAP - VERBAL REPORT

The Airport Company (Jon Davies) gave a verbal update on the ongoing work being undertaken in progressing the Airport Company's Zero Carbon Roadmap. In summary:

- The Roadmap would be launched and published at some point in March 2022.
- A commitment to be a net zero carbon airport by 2033, by tackling direct and indirect carbon emissions via airport operations, buildings efficiency and influencing business partners.
- Development of an employee communications and engagement plan to promote best business practice.
- A built-in review period of 3 years.

Discussion Points

Berkswell Parish Council (Cllr R Lloyd) – referred to the current production of hydrogen and the future use of “green” hydrogen; asking if there was any future prospect of using it as a replacement to natural gas. The Airport Company (Jon Davies) explained that only 1% of hydrogen production currently was deemed “green” hydrogen; the rest being from fossil fuels. The Committee was advised of a small scale study ongoing by Keele University to examine the feasibility of using a 20% hydrogen mix on their campus. Realistically, the Airport Company would work towards e.g. electric heat pumps powered by solar power on the airport estate as a cleaner alternative to natural gas.

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Hampton in Arden Parish Council (Cllr D Sandells) – highlighted the removal of LED lighting and/or other existing end of life equipment (taking account of the embedded carbon in that equipment) and asked if life-cycle assessments were undertaken or whether assumptions were being based on the provision of new equipment alone (i.e. was a “net” carbon saving being calculated in those circumstances). The Airport Company (Jon Davies) advised that the Airport had a notable amount of aging infrastructure that was now beyond end of life. Life cycle carbon impacts of any new products/replacement kit would form part of the Roadmap going forwards.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Cllr A Rolf) – highlighted similar ambitions for the local authority and asked how ambitions from amongst other organisations and bodies would be linked together to share information and potentially improve everyone’s carbon efficiencies. The Airport Company (Jon Davies) advised that some communication links already existed and a key part of the Roadmap included ongoing and strengthened partner collaboration (e.g. the Airport Company was already part of the Solihull Sustainability Commissioning Group).

RESOLVED

- (i) That, the contents of the verbal report be received and noted; and
- (ii) That, the Committee welcomes further updates at future meetings.

11. FORMAT FOR FUTURE MEETINGS - VERBAL REPORT

The Chairman and the Airport Company (Andy Holding) invited the Committee to consider how it might wish to hold future meetings of the Committee. Prior to the pandemic, all ACC meetings, including that of the Committee’s Steering Group, had been held physically in Diamond House. Since mid-2020, all meetings had since been held virtually.

It was highlighted that there was some benefit in continuing to hold the Committee’s Steering Group virtually. Normally, those meetings were shorter in duration and had a smaller number of regular attendees. Virtual meeting arrangements for that Group also gave added flexibility to react to any urgent matters arising.

Similarly, fully virtual meetings also lent themselves well to dedicated Working Groups appointed by the Committee on an ad-hoc basis.

Insofar as the ACC itself, the consensus was that the Committee should resume to physical meetings (as soon as the new meeting facility became available) and to keep the situation under review. Members were of the view that one of the strengths of the Committee was well embedded working relationships and physical meetings allowed for those relationships to be forged and maintained to a greater extent than with virtual meetings, especially amongst new Members of the Committee and new Airport Company staff.

The Committee also discussed the feasibility of holding ACC meetings as a hybrid arrangement but accepted that there were equal benefits and dis-benefits with that format.

RESOLVED

- (i) That, the Committee endorse the intention for the Steering Group (and any ad-hoc Working Groups) to continue to meet virtually;
- (ii) That, future ACC meetings to resume as physical meetings as soon as the new meeting facility becomes available; and
- (iii) That, the above resolutions be kept under review.

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12. COMPLAINT – OVERFLIGHTS (KNOWLE)

The Airport Company (Andy Holding) advised the Committee of the Airport Company's Complaints Policy and the historical background to a particular case pertaining to historical and ongoing complaints from a resident of Knowle regarding aircraft activity. The Committee was fully appraised of the historical background and action taken to date; and was then requested to review the processes followed for this particular matter to ensure transparency and reasonableness.

Following that appraisal and review, the Committee reaffirmed the narrative within the report that it was no longer beneficial and a meaningful use of Airport Company resources to undertake further investigations into ongoing and future matters raised by the complainant as there was no likelihood of any resolution being achieved.

RESOLVED

- (i) That, the contents and background to the report be noted;
and
- (ii) That, the Airport Company be supported in the application of its Complaints Policy in this instance and that no further investigations be undertaken for this particular complainant.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business on this occasion.

RESOLVED

That the agenda item noted.

14. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be Thursday 09 June 2022 at 13.30hrs. The venue and format of the meeting would be confirmed nearer the time.

RESOLVED

That the date of the next meeting be noted.