

**BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT - AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2024 AT 1.30 PM**

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MINUTES

Present: Mr Colin Flack OBE – Chairman

In attendance from Birmingham Airport Company:

Nick Barton	-	Chief Executive
Andy Holding	-	Corporate Responsibility Manager
Tom Denton	-	Head of Sustainability
Rosie George	-	Sustainability Manager
Sam Parkes	-	Sustainability Assistant
Nikki Bains	-	Head of Planning, Transport & Strategy
Matt Wilshaw-Rhead	-	BAATL Safety & Compliance Manager

In attendance from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:

Mr L Stevenson	-	Representing the ACC Secretariat
Balsall Parish Council	-	Cllr K Tindall
Barston Parish Council	-	Mr D Elliott
Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council	-	Cllr M Kay
Castle Bromwich Parish Council		Cllr J Macdonald
Catherine de Barnes Residents Association	-	Mr D Cuthbert
Chelmsley Wood Town Council	-	Cllr S MacDonald
Consumers Association	-	Mr T Baker
Fordbridge Town Council	-	Cllr D Cole
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 Area Committee of Parish Councils	-	Cllr R Habgood
Sheldon Residents Association	-	Mrs M Kennett
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	-	Cllr D Cole

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Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Officer)	- Amanda Clover
Tile Cross Residents Neighbourhood Forum	- Mr P Kelsey
Passengers Representative & Vice-Chair	- Mrs R Tyler
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr P Kaur
Warwick District Council	- Cllr K Aizlewood
West Midlands Combined Authority	- Mr P Edwards
Wychwood Club	- Mr G Heaps

Apologies were received on behalf of: -

Berkswell Parish Council	- Cllr R Lloyd
Birmingham City Council	- Cllr T Huxtable
North Warwickshire Borough Council	- Cllr S Smith
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr P Hughes
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	- Cllr A Rolf
Wolverhampton City Council	- Cllr M Jaspal

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. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 7 March 2024, were submitted.

The Chairman highlighted pre-submitted "Question 2" – the complainant had been invited to submit their concerns in greater detail for consideration at this meeting. No further response had been received. Additionally, there had been a question on the Night Flying [program] which had not been answered in the context of the meeting other than the Night Flying [program] was integral to it. This point was noted.

RESOLVED

That, the Minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman advised that, owing to the forthcoming UK Parliamentary General Election, there would be no regular update to the Committee on current industry issues and his role as Chairman of UKACC's on this occasion.

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RESOLVED

That, the agenda item be noted.

4. AIRPORT ACTIVITIES REPORT

The Airport Company (Nick Barton) - presented the Airport Activities report for the period January to March 2024. 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.
- Baggage Delivery Performance.
- Cleaning Performance.
- On-time Turnaround Performance.

General Updates

Mr Barton gave a detailed update on passenger queues that were evident at certain times of the day. A £60M investment to provide a new passenger security facility (Standard 3) had met the statutory deadline of 1 June 2024, and was nearing physical completion. However, due to a temporary restriction from the Department for Transport, the Airport was currently not able to use the new machinery to its intended design standard. Mr Barton explained the measures that had been put in place to manage the effect of that and added that the Airport Company regretted any inconvenience to affected passengers.

The Committee was advised that there were no staff shortages and extra staff were being drafted in to provide additional support. Passengers were being asked to limit liquids within cabin baggage to 100ml bottles and pre-security compliance checks were being introduced to aid passenger throughput. As a result of news reports and social media, some passengers had also been arriving several hours in advance of their flights which had added to the queuing pressures.

As part of this item, the Airport Company (Nikki Bains) also gave an update on planning, transport & strategy matters, which included:

- Surface Access - the forthcoming introduction of a new bus service (97a) aimed specifically at airport employees.
- EV Charging – a proposal to increase EV charging points in Car Park 6.
- R15 Approach Lights – renewal works.
- HS2 – on-site survey work progression and enabling works.

Discussion Points

Chelmsley Wood Town Council (Cllr S MacDonald) – highlighted that she had arrived via the Maglev people mover into the Airport Terminal (today), and it was extremely crowded. Some confusion was also evident regarding the use of lifts and passenger routing during this peak

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period. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised the Committee of the capacity of the lifts and their intended use to ensure optimum passenger movements to the security hall during peak periods.

Catherine de Barnes Residents Association (Mr D Cuthbert) – highlighted that queuing was less evident downstairs when the former escalators were in use. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that prior to the construction of the new security hall, passengers would queue upstairs; and queues were typically lengthy at peak times. Details of the throughput capacity of the new lifts was also explained to the Committee to demonstrate that they would adequately cope with current and future passenger numbers.

Barston Parish Council (Mr D Elliott) – asked if the Airport Company was able to advise of the reason why the Department for Transport had introduced the temporary restrictions. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that the restrictions were not in response to a security threat, more so attributable to necessary technical upgrades and additional testing of the new security scanners.

The Chairman – advised that he had received a statement from the Department for Transport which confirmed the above reasons behind the introduction of the temporary restrictions.

Hampton in Arden Parish Council (Cllr D Sandells) – highlighted the routing of passengers from the Terminal Building via the Maglev people mover and his own recent experience where he had been told to use a bus to return to the railway station from the Airport. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that the people mover was not being suspended to manage people flow and, on that specific occasion, the people mover may have been subject to maintenance (or post-maintenance testing). Cllr Sandells also highlighted his perception that the lift design was flawed (i.e. first in, last out), which would affect the queuing position of passengers when exiting the lifts at the security hall. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised of the design standard of the lifts and gave assurances to the Committee that the new lifts met that standard. The former escalators did not feature in the new design as, in a 12-month period, there had been 51 serious accidents.

Balsall Parish Council (Cllr K Tindall) – highlighted the current reputational damage to the Airport. From his own experience in April 2024, the new security facility (that was still undergoing testing) had worked very well. More recently, his customer experience was poor. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that 120 additional landside staff had been recruited to aid pre-security passenger compliance. Cllr Tindall also echoed the concerns highlighted by Cllr Sandells regarding lift occupancy (first in, last out), leading to passengers losing their place in the queue in some instances.

Consumers Association (Mr T Baker) – highlighted that schools finished on 19 July 2024, and asked if there was a sense of urgency from the Department for Transport to remove the temporary restrictions given the greater number of passengers during the peak holiday period. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that no indication had been received.

Catherine de Barnes Residents Association (Mr D Cuthbert) – asked if any other Airport's operated the same security equipment and if any similar problems had been experienced. The Airport Company (Nick Barton) advised that the temporary restriction was limited to UK airports. A thousand of the same type of security scanner was in use around the world and had been used very successfully for up to 7 years (without the temporary restriction on liquids).

Balsall Parish Council (Cllr K Tindall) – advised that there was currently not enough passenger seating, post security screening, in the security hall (e.g. if shoes needed to be removed). This concern was noted by the Airport Company. The value of proactive communication to passengers regarding the temporary restrictions was also highlighted.

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Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Fordbridge Town Council and Kingshurst Parish Council (Cllr D Cole) – sought further details as to the routing of the new 97a bus service. The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) advised that the service would run on the existing 97 bus route and an extended timetable, with the route also being extended to serve the NEC site too.

Hampton in Arden Society (Mrs J Hilton) – asked if the new 97a bus service would also serve [south] Solihull. The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) advised that confirmation would be provided outside of the meeting although it was anticipated that the routing of the service would cover south Solihull.

Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council (Cllr M Kay) – asked what specification the new EV charging points in Car Park 6 would be. The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) advised that they were specified as fast chargers. Additional welfare facilities would also be provided as part of the upgrades.

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the Airport Activities Report for the period January to March 2024, be received and noted.

5. SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (INCLUDING COMMUNITY NOISE REPORT)

The Airport Company (Tom Denton and Rosie George presented the Sustainability Report for the period January to March 2024. The report set out updates on the following matters:

- Sustainability Update (including the Community Noise Report).
- Night Flying Policy.
- Engine Ground Running.
- Wake Vortex Strikes.
- Air Quality.
- Waste (Recycled).
- Energy.

Community Noise Report

The Committee was presented with the Community Noise Report which incorporated track keeping, complaints (including complaints by area), airline noise performance, runway usage and departures performance (noise violations), arrivals performance (continuous descent approaches) and helicopter statistics for Quarter 1/2024. Night flying and ground noise data sections were under development.

Discussion Points

Castle Bromwich Parish Council (Cllr J Macdonald) – highlighted the contents of the report which detailed that the Environment Agency were conducting environmental permit reviews for commercial airports in England. The Airport Company (Rosie George) advised that the reason for the review was that Airports were a known source of PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) due to PFAS's historic presence in fire-fighting foam, which had been used at various points in time across the site, for training purposes at the fire training ground. The Airport Company stopped using foams containing PFAS from 2013 onwards, however, historic usage could mean PFAS presence today (a forever chemical).

Warwick District Council (Cllr K Aizlewood) – highlighted pollution originating from traffic and asked if more passengers were using cars to travel to the Airport and what number were choosing to use the train rather than driving. Additionally, did the Airport see any significant

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opportunities to improve that with HS2. The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) advised on the Airport Company's modal split targets and their ambitions to exceed them.

Tile Cross Residents Neighbourhood Forum (Mr P Kelsey) – asked for clarification on what was deemed to be the maximum acceptable noise levels. The Airport Company (Rosie George) advised that there are two violation level limits: a daytime limit of 90dB(A), operational between 0600-2329 hours and a more stringent night-time limit of 81dB(A) (reduced from 83dB(A) from 1st April 2024). The launch of WebTrak, a web-based flight-tracking platform that enables the user to view aircraft operations at Birmingham Airport was highlighted. This platform provides general information about flights, including their tracks, altitudes, origin/destinations, operating airlines and aircraft types. The Airport Company (Andy Holding) also highlighted the CAA's website which detailed aircraft noise. In summary, it advised that there was no maximum environmental limit on noise from an airline's aircraft.

Hampton in Arden Parish Council (Cllr D Sandells) – sought confirmation that the structural capacity of the Airport's multi-storey car parks was built to a standard that they could safely accommodate the weight of electric vehicles. The Airport Company (Tom Denton) advised that they could, and no retrospective work regarding structural loading capacity was required.

North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils (Cllr R Habgood) – asked for the link to WebTrak to be provided with the Minutes to this meeting <https://webtrak.emsbk.com/bhx1>

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the Sustainability Report for the period January to March 2024, be received and noted.

6. NIGHT FLYING POLICY REVIEW UPDATE – VERBAL REPORT

The Vice-Chairman and Passengers Representative (Mrs R Tyler) updated the Committee on the recent work of the Working Group. Positive meetings had since taken place on 28 March, 15 May and 13 June 2024.

The Group presented proposals to amend each of the main elements of the existing Night Flying Policy. The Airport Company had undertaken further data analysis to assess their potential impact and discussions had focussed on developing a set of proposals to be considered by the ACC at an extraordinary meeting to be called at some point during July 2024.

Mrs Tyler also offered her thanks to all those that had contributed to (and facilitated) the Working Group meetings thus far. It had also been agreed that the Working Group would remain established and would undertake a policy monitoring role going forwards.

Discussion Points

The Chairman – highlighted the complexities of the current review and the level of detail that had been provided by the Airport Company and considered by the Working Group. The Chairman also reminded Members that there had been a commitment by the Airport Company to present the new policy to the ACC prior to it being submitted to Solihull MBC for determination. An extraordinary meeting of the ACC would be called in July 2024.

Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council (Cllr M Kay) – highlighted the major road works that had been undertaken along Catherine de Barnes Lane and expressed concerns at the loss of established trees and shrubbery which had acted to help screen noise. It had been alleged by National Highways (to residents) that the Airport Company would not permit their replacement. As a result, the village of Bickenhill now suffered greater levels of noise intrusion. The Airport Company (Nikki Bains) advised that this was incorrect and undertook to raise this outside of the meeting with National Highways in consultation with Cllr Kay.

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Hampton in Arden Parish Council (Cllr D Sandells) – echoed the thanks given to the Working Group and their review work undertaken. Cllr Sandells highlighted that the new policy, as suggested, had both “pros and cons” and future consideration would need to be given on how to acknowledge that from the community information perspective.

The Chairman – reaffirmed the importance of clear and understandable future communications and the fact that ACC Members themselves would also have a role in talking to their wider communities about a topic that is extraordinarily complex.

Catherine de Barnes Residents Association (Mr D Cuthbert) – highlighted that there would be between a 20% to 30% increase in ATM’s during the next Night Noise Policy period. This emphasised the importance of clear and timely community information.

RESOLVED

- (i) That, the update on the recent work of the Working Group, be received and noted;
- (ii) That, the Committee record their appreciation to those that have contributed to the Working Group to date; and
- (iii) That, the Committee agree to an extraordinary meeting being held in July 2024 (date TBC).

7. HEALTH FORUM UPDATE – VERBAL REPORT

The Vice-Chairman and Passengers Representative (Mrs R Tyler) updated the Committee on the recent work of the Health Forum:

5th March 2024 - the meeting had focussed on the Employment, Education and Social Capital pathway. Solihull MBC brought the Group up to date with a series of new initiatives in the areas of Social Value and CSR and the Group agreed opportunities for co-operation between Solihull MBC and the Airport Company.

5th June 2024 – the meeting focussed on Air Quality and received an update from Solihull MBC on its recent Air Quality Strategy consultation and from the Airport Company on the development of its emissions inventory, which will be a valuable source of data for all parties going forward. It was also agreed that a draft Action Plan for the Group be developed for agreement at the next meeting on 3rd September 2024.

It was also noted that North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils (Cllr R Habgood) had joined the Forum.

The Airport Company (Andy Holding) also spoke in support of the work of the Forum, highlighting that there was much apparent common ground between Solihull MBC’s existing workstreams and the Airport Company’s ambitions in the areas of Social Value and CSR. At the present date, there was still no representation from Birmingham City Council on the Forum.

Further updates would be presented at future ACC meetings.

Discussion Points

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Officer) (Amanda Clover) – again, welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the future work of the Forum.

RESOLVED

- (i) That, the update on the recent work of the Health Forum, be received and noted; and

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- (ii) That, North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils (Cllr R Habgood) be included in the Membership of the Forum.

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

A number of pre-submitted questions were considered as follows:

Catherine de Barnes Residents Association

Question 1 – “Re turnaround time performance target at 50% - a realistic target?”

Answer – “OTT is a measure that includes areas within BAL’s control (such as airport facilities), but many that are not - such as departure slots, delays from European ATC etc. We capture and monitor the reason for all delays. We recognise that the 50% target is low, but even this creates a stretch in the summer months. An unattainable higher target would not drive the right behaviours. Taking a sample of recent performance, 70% of delays are attributable to enroute ATC, late arrival of aircraft, aircraft defects or rerouting. That said, we recognise that we have a significant part to play; a recent example showed Assisted Travel delays contributing 8% to the total, with airport facilities, including security, contributing a further 7.8%.” We are currently reviewing measures and targets, but in the meantime will continue to work with colleagues and partners to improve overall performance.”

Question 2 – “Energy usage page 27 — why is diesel generators usage (fuel) up by nearly 50%?”

Answer – “Diesel generators are run on the airfield during periods of low visibility, where in the event of a generator issue, mains electricity acts as back up and will switch instantly. If the generator were to require back from the mains electricity, it would take a few seconds to get up to speed and start generating electricity so there would be a moment with no airfield lighting. The increase is due to weather conditions resulting in more periods of low visibility. The Airfield generators have run for nearly 900 hours this year when compared to last year’s 400/500 hours.”

Question 3 – “Page 27 Business miles up 50% but co2 down 36% - is this correct?”

Answer - “This is correct, and a result of significantly more business miles being completed using EVs when compared to last year.”

Question 4 – “Re track diagram figure 16 - this diagram is very busy - should there be two diagrams, one for arrivals the other for departures and should they show the NPR limit?”

Answer – “The NPR’s are shown on the image, but obscured by the mass of tracks - which are three months’ worth of movements and there to provide an illustrative comparison between where complaints are originating and where aircraft are flying. Noise Preferential routes are shown more clearly at Figure 10.”

Question 5 – “The ATMs for the period are 17178 - the aircraft noise performance rank chart represents 15209 movements - a 2000 difference? Can the difference be explained?”

Answer – “The chart represents only the largest twenty airlines by movement. The other 2,000 movements are by operators outside the top 20. This explanation will be added into the accompanying text in subsequent reports to make this clearer.”

Question 6 – “Continuous Descent Approach (CDA) diagram - the performance is quite different for both runways - can that be explained? -and what action is taken by the Airport Co to try and improve the performance?”

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Answer - “Patterns of arriving aircraft vary depending on a number of factors, including airline, airline base, weather and safety restrictions. We tend to find that higher rates of CDA compliance coincide with higher ATM figures. With this, as Runway 33 saw higher ATM figures than Runway 15 in January, February and March, and consequently had comparatively better CDA performance. We continue to commit to Operation Pathfinder as a forum to promote noise initiatives such as that of CDA operations with our airlines. Through this forum we are developing relationships with individual airlines to discuss their own CDA performance and share tailored data to drive improvements. In our Noise Action Plan we have committed to investigating the feasibility of a 3.2° glide slope, which, if implemented, will help bolster CDA performance.”

Question 7 – “There have been no nighttime noise violations in 2 years - are records kept as to what the actual departure noise levels are for a particular month or quarter of the current year - how are violations actually picked up? (Also applies to daytime too).”

Answer – “Records are kept of all actual departure noise levels but are not presented here owing to the huge amount of data this would involve. Violations are identified by the ANOMS system which automatically flags noise events above the thresholds for further investigation by BAL staff. The reason there have been no night noise violations recorded in the past two years is because none have occurred – although it is worth noting that a daytime violation did occur in January, as recorded in the Community Noise Report.”

RESOLVED

That, the contents of the pre-submitted questions and answers given be received and noted.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Airport Company (Matt Wilshaw-Rhead) – made an offer to the nominated bodies represented on the Committee; if there were ever any (e.g.) future airspace change consultations that individual groups needed assistance in formulating a response, then this was something that Mr Wilshaw-Rhead would be happy to provide support with.

This offer was well received by the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the matter considered as “any other business” be received and noted.

10. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Airport Company highlighted the following remaining dates as the 2024 calendar of meetings. All meetings would take place within Diamond House and commence at 13.30hrs.

- Extraordinary Meeting – additional date in July 2024 – date TBC.
- Thursday 5 September 2024.
- Thursday 5 December 2024.

RESOLVED

That, the remaining calendar of meetings for 2024 be agreed and noted.