

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at  
7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN  
on 28 NOVEMBER 2002**

Present:- Councillor A J Ketteridge – Chairman.  
Councillors E C Abrahams, Mrs C A Bayley, W F Bowker,  
Mrs C A Cant, Mrs M A Caton, R P Chambers,  
Mrs J F Cheetham, R A E Clifford, R J Copping, Mrs D Cornell,  
A Dean, Mrs C M Dean, R C Dean, Mrs C D Down, Mrs S Flack,  
M A Gayler, Mrs E J Godwin, R D Green, D W Gregory,  
D M Jones, P G F Lewis, Mrs C M Little, Mrs J I Loughlin,  
Mrs J E Menell, R A Merrion, D M Miller, D J Morson,  
R J O'Neill, Mrs S V Schneider, R W L Stone, Mrs E Tealby-  
Watson, A R Thawley and R B Tyler.

Officers in attendance:- Mrs E C Forbes, Mrs M Cox, J B Dickson,  
A Forrow, B D Perkins and M J Perry.

**C55 MRS MARY PORTER**

The Chairman informed the Council of the recent death of Mary Porter. She had been a member of the Council between 1991 and 1999 and had been an avid campaigner on environmental issues. After leaving the Council she had continued her interest in such matters and had been actively involved in the campaign against the expansion of the airport.

Members stood in silent tribute in her memory.

**C56 APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R J Copping, M A Hibbs, A R Row, G Sell and A C Streeter.

Members were advised that Councillor Row had recently been in hospital and asked that a letter be sent wishing him a speedy recovery.

Councillors W F Bowker, Mrs J F Cheetham, A Dean, Mrs C M Dean, Mrs C D Down, M L Foley, M A Gayler, Mrs E J Godwin, M A Hibbs, D M Jones, P G F Lewis, Mrs C M Little, Mrs J I Loughlin, Mrs J E Menell, R A Merrion, G Sell, A C Streeter, W F Bowker and D Jones declared interests as members of the 'Stop Stansted Expansion' (SSE) Organisation.

Councillor D W Gregory declared an interest as an employee of Stansted Airportcarz.

**C57 RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT**

Councillor Mrs Cheetham, the Chairman of the Environment and Transport Committee informed the Council of the outcome of the special meeting of that Committee held two days earlier. The Council had now reached the stage of responding to the Government's consultation paper. The response was in two

parts. The first dealt with general matters that should be taken into account in order to formulate the National Airports Policy. The second part dealt with the fundamental reasons why there should be no further runways at Stansted. This had been endorsed by 89% of Uttlesford residents and by numerous persons and bodies from outside the district. The response had been approved by the Environment and Transport Committee, subject to some very minor amendments, and demonstrated that both the Council and the community were opposed to further runway developments.

Councillor Chambers, the Leader of the Council, said that this was the most important issue that had ever been considered by the District Council and would have significant implications for all of Essex and the South-East of England. Since the decision to develop the airport in 1985, the district had been blighted by the black cloud of the airport. At that time the Inspector had stated that he could conceive of no circumstances that would justify an additional runway at the airport. But the recent consultation paper had put forward the possibility of three additional runways, increasing the capacity of the airport to 129 million passengers per annum (mppa) which would be double the size of Heathrow and be the largest airport in the world. This, combined with the new houses proposed for the south-east, would turn this district into a suburb of London, an unimaginable scenario.

There were clear reasons why the extra runways should not go ahead and the proposals would be contrary to the UK strategy for sustainable development. It would lead to urbanisation and environmental destruction, loss of buildings, trees and protected lanes and an unacceptable level of noise and air pollution.

He thanked officers for producing a clear and concise response. He also thanked members of the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel for their hard work in formulating the report, and in particular the residents of Uttlesford for replying to the Referendum and producing such a resounding vote. He concluded by saying that this Council would fight the Government on this issue. He then moved, and it was seconded by Councillor A Dean, that the draft response as recommended by the Environment and Transport Committee be approved and further consequential action be agreed.

Councillor A Dean said that this had been a red letter day for the Council. The results of the referendum had been delivered to 10 Downing Street. This had been a demonstration of local democracy. The past four months had been extremely busy and he thanked officers and Members for all the work they had undertaken. He particularly mentioned the public campaign and the excellent work of 'Stop Stansted Expansion'. Matters would not end here; there were still a number of months to go. This would give the opportunity to develop the arguments and to work further on the campaign. It was important to build links with others and to develop a proper sustainable solution. He mentioned there had been a request from 'Stop Stansted Expansion' for financial support for their campaign in the region of £50,000. He hoped this would be given serious consideration as it was important that all parties worked together to defeat the further expansion of the airport once and for all.

The Chief Executive then updated the Council on the statement made in the House of Commons by Alastair Darling, earlier in the day. The Government had decided not to appeal against the judgement of the judicial review that the

consultation process had been 'irrational and unfair' because it left out the possibility of expansion at Gatwick. A further paper, to include the Gatwick option, would be published in the New Year. There would then be an extra four months of consultation. All responses received, together with the previous responses would be considered together and the White Paper was not expected to be published until late next year.

The Council took the view that there should be a new and comprehensive review of all the options and not just a supplementary consultation to include Gatwick. Councillor Chambers agreed that a proposal to this effect be added to his motion.

Councillor Tyler congratulated all those who had been involved in the organisation of the demonstration earlier in the day. Councillor Mrs Flack, in her role as County Councillor, had attended the County Council meeting earlier in the day that had considered its response to the Government consultation paper. The County had been united in its opposition to expansion at the airport and also development at Cliffe. She stressed that the campaign would only be successful if all bodies worked together.

Councillor Thawley said it should be made clear that the reference to studies into an estuarial/off-shore site were not referring to any proposals at Cliffe. The Council agreed to make an amendment to paragraph 22 of page 4 of the response, to insert after the words 'off-shore site' the words 'which does not include Cliffe'.

Councillor Mrs Cheetham mentioned that the Regional Planning Panel had endorsed the Council's decision for no more runways at Stansted airport. Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils had helped considerably with the campaign and this united response was very important. The Council's PR consultants thought that the greatest strength of the campaign was that everybody had pulled together.

She then mentioned the questionnaire on airport policy that had been biased towards the south-east. She hoped that with in further consultation there would be only one questionnaire on airport policy for the whole of the UK. It was agreed to include this request within the Motion.

A number of Members stressed the value of the 'Stop Stansted Expansion' Group and hoped that a contribution from this Council would be forthcoming.

Councillor O'Neill supported the response. Following on from the result of the judicial review, it was unlikely that the White Paper would be produced until the end of next year. There was a need to pace the campaign to ensure that all parties were ready to come back fighting at the right time. It was important that the Government was pressed for a full new consultation on all the options.

The Chairman concluded by thanking everyone who had been involved in the campaign and in producing the Council's response.

The Motion was then put to the vote and it was unanimously

## RESOLVED that

- 1 the circulated report, as amended at the Extraordinary meeting of the Environment and Transport Committee on 26 November 2002, and at this meeting, be approved as the Council's response to the Government's consultation.
- 2 A summary report be prepared for wide public circulation,
- 3 The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Leaders and the Director of Resources, be authorised to continue the Council's campaign against further runways at Stansted Airport and press Government for a sustainable solution to air transport in the south-east and in particular to;
  - (a) work closely with all other local authorities and organisations,
  - (b) work together with SSE and provide funds where appropriate with regard to specific projects and activities, subject to confirmation of their constitution and relevant financial information.
  - (c) Keep up the anti-runway community and national campaign through press and media coverage and other activities,
  - (d) Continue to use external advice where appropriate,
  - (e) Invite Alastair Darling, John Prescott and the Transport Select Sub-Committee to visit the Stansted Airport area,
  - (f) Lobby Government ministers, MPs and other influential people and organisations.
- 4 Councillors continue in their community leadership role the fight for the future of the quality of life in Uttlesford of which this campaign was part.
- 5 The Government be urged, in the light of the Secretary of State's statement, to carry out a new and comprehensive further consultation on all options for further capacity in the UK, including Gatwick, as a supplementary consultation simply including Gatwick, as an additional further option, as apparently envisaged by the Government, would not meet the requirements of fairness, rationality and comprehensiveness.
- 6 The Government issues just one, unbiased questionnaire on national air policy for the whole of the UK and not separate regional questionnaires.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm.