

**STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 2 SEPTEMBER
2002**

Present:- Councillor A C Streeter – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs M A Caton, Mrs J F Cheetham, A Dean,
R A Merrion, G Sell and P A Wilcock.

Officers in attendance: W Cockerell, B D Perkins and M T Purkiss.

SA8 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M L Foley, Mrs E J Godwin and R C Smith.

SA9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs J F Cheetham and A Dean declared their respective interests as members of NWEHPA.

SA10 THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE UK

Councillor Streeter said that the Advisory Panel should give a lead on what the Council intended to do in response to the Government's proposals for additional runways at Stansted Airport. The Director of Community Services added that it would be useful to identify the key points which needed to be made to the Government. He reminded Members that the Council had adopted a policy at its meeting on 12 February 2002 of strongly opposing a second runway at Stansted Airport and that if the need were proven any further increase in capacity should be directed to an off-shore site. This had been amplified by the Council's resolution which had been approved at the extraordinary Council meeting on 13 August 2002.

Following a full discussion it was agreed that the following key points needed to be considered in formulating the Council's response to the Government:

- The Council is fundamentally opposed to further runway development at Stansted Airport for planning, environmental, economic and quality of life reasons.
- It needed to be satisfied that the forecasts which were to be the basis of future Government policy were sufficiently robust, recognising the importance of demand management.
- If the prediction of a significant increase in demand was accepted, there was clearly a case for a new airport and the Government proposal at Cliffe was the proposal closest to Council policy. The alternative would be incremental development at existing airports, including Stansted. Government statements regarding Gatwick needed consideration.

- The significance of the hub airport concept for the national economy needed to be considered.
- There was a need to look at the national picture in terms of regional airport development and in particular current regional economic imbalances.
- The viability of proposals and the role of potential operators/developers needed to be considered.
- The issue of whether there was sufficient air space in the south east to accommodate additional capacity needed to be considered
- General issues of off-site infrastructure provision and meaningful environmental controls needed further consideration.

Councillor Mrs Cheetham referred to some apparent inconsistencies in Government statements including assumptions regarding use of existing runway capacity and the status of the London/Stansted/Cambridge sub region.

Councillor A Dean said that Stansted should remain an airport “in the countryside” and not “an airport for the countryside”. He added that a large airport in an area of low unemployment and a small number of homes would lead to empty homes in other parts of the country which would create further population imbalances.

Councillor Wilcock said that if low cost operators continued to grow, it would have an impact on the figures for air traffic movements. He said that, in relation to the economic argument, the continued use of low cost carriers would adversely impact on holiday resorts in the UK.

Councillor Streeter also referred to the impact on employment and said that if the airport expanded as suggested, it would be difficult for existing businesses to attract and retain employees.

Councillor Mrs Cheetham said that the loss of homes at Cliffe included many second and holiday homes. Councillor Streeter added that the impact of noise at Cliffe would be far less, as the noise contours were mainly over the sea. It was also suggested that there was some local support for an airport at Cliffe. Councillor A Dean said that he would be attending the exhibition at Cliffe on 5 October and would try to obtain copies of the relevant CD Roms for all Members of the Advisory Panel.

The Advisory Panel then considered the main arguments against major expansion at Stansted and felt that these should include:

- Employment
- Noise
- Rural Impact
- Listed buildings
- Communities
- Quality of the environment/heritage
- Shortage of water
- The need for diversion of the rivers Chelmer and Roding

In answer to questions regarding the next steps, the Director of Community Services suggested that the Government would make a statement in its White Paper on the location of runways early in the new year and could also indicate what environmental safeguards would be appropriate. He considered that the principle would be established at that time and the detail would flow from that decision. He said that the next steps now would be for officers to discuss the proposals and responses with Essex and Hertfordshire Councils and to develop links with other authorities and organisations. The issues would be discussed further with Group Leaders, who were coordinating the Council's work. The notes of this meeting would be circulated to all Members as soon as possible to keep all Members informed.

SA11

FUTURE MEETINGS

In view of the need to progress this matter as quickly as possible it was agreed that meetings would be held, if necessary, as follows:

- 17 September at 6.00 pm (Council Chamber, Saffron Walden)
- 2 October at 6.30 pm (Committee Room, Saffron Walden)
- 21 October at 6.30 pm (Committee Room, Saffron Walden)

At the meeting on 17 September the draft basis of the Council's response needed to be discussed. All Members were invited to attend the meeting. It was noted that an ordinary meeting of the Advisory Panel was set for 14 October 2002 at 7.30 pm at the Great Dunmow offices.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm.