

**Committee:** Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 24 June 2009

**5**

**Title:** **Stansted Airport Consultative Committee  
– proposals from its new chairman for  
changes**

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Item for  
decision

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### Summary

- 1 This report seeks Members' views on emerging proposals for wide ranging changes to membership, structure, terms of reference and operation of the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee.

### Recommendations

Members consider what changes to STACC might make it more effective

### Background Papers

Discussion paper prepared by the Chairman of STACC

### Impact

Communication/Consultation	The purpose of STACC is to provide adequate facilities for consultation.
Community Safety	
Equalities	
Finance	Potential cost implications of the proposals
Human Rights	
Legal implications	
Sustainability	
Ward-specific impacts	
Workforce/Workplace	

### Situation

### Background

The Council is represented on the Consultative Committee, currently by Cllr Cheetham. Its terms of reference are appended. Its existence is a statutory requirement. Its purpose is to provide airport users, local authorities and other local representative organisations “adequate facilities for consultation” about any matter concerning the management or administration of Stansted which affects interests. The Committee has a sub committee to consider issues relating to the development of the airport and any other matters requiring attention as a matter of urgency or expediency. It also has a passenger service group (PSG) whose focus is self explanatory. The PSG comprises STACC members and other members directly appointed by Stansted Airport Ltd. Essex County Council provides the secretariat to the Committee. Local authority officers attend to advise their member representatives, but do not have a right to speak. The DfT attends formally as an observer but contributes to proceedings.

In addition to the formal arrangements, there is a Noise and Track Keeping Working Group (NTKWG) of a few STACC members and Stansted Airport staff. The NTKWG is represented on the national Aircraft Noise Monitoring Advisory Committee (ANMAC).

Stewart Ashurst has recently been appointed Chairman of the Committee, taking over from Maurice Le Fleming who served on the Committee in that role for many years

### **Issues highlighted by the new chairman**

In summary, the following issues have been raised:

- i. Local government interests are well represented on the Committee, others are less well represented;
- ii. A lack of clarity as to the purpose of the Committee;
- iii. The credibility, authority, standing of the Committee and its ability to influence others at a time when “its collective voice needs to be heard and is also expected to be heard.”
- iv. Lack of constructive engagement between the various representatives on the Committee
- v. The development of other liaison arrangements outside the framework of the Committee, such as the Transport Forum, the Flight Operations Committee, the Airlines Operating Committee and the Airlines Consultative Committee.

### **The Chairman’s ideas for discussion**

- i. Greater focus on a core role as defined in statute, namely the management and administration of the airport by the airport operator;
- ii. Two broad categories of subject matter:
  - a. the experience of those people and interests who use the airport such as passengers, airlines, freight operators, and retailers; and
  - b. environmental impacts of the airport’s operations, including climate change, surface access, waste and water;
- iii. Reduced emphasis on policy issues such as the future development of the airport;

- iv. Economic effects;
- v. Parity of representation between user representatives, local authorities and organisations representing the interests of persons concerned with the locality;
- vi. Representatives should bring expertise to the Committee rather than expecting to act as watchdogs;
- vii. Achieving constructive dialogue between parties.

### **The Chairman's proposals for change:**

- i. An evolutionary approach, with progress reviewed every two years;
- ii. Revised terms of reference as appended;
- iii. An increase in STACC members from 17 to a maximum of 25;
- iv. A revised list of bodies represented, as appended
- v. Three working groups of the Committee, respectively focusing on the user experience, environmental issues and corporate affairs;
- vi. The main committee to meet three times a year (rather than four times as at present);
- vii. A maximum four year term for Committee membership;
- viii. A more informal style to meetings;
- ix. Most business to be settled in Working Groups with a only one or exceptionally two matters subject of a recommendation to the main Committee;
- x. Independent expert advisers to the committee, subject to a further report on the options and costs;
- xi. Review of times and venues for the meetings including sessions in communities, subject to a further report on options and costs;
- xii. Options for admittance of the press and public to be considered in due course.

### **Comment**

Officers acknowledge that the arrival of a new chairman of the consultative committee is an appropriate point at which to stand back and take stock of the effectiveness of the committee. Members will have their own views on this, either as a participant, observer of committee meetings or community representative needing to raise issues with the airport operator and evaluating the extent to which issues can be resolved through the operation of the committee.

Officers' perception is that working groups such as the NTKWG and PSG and other groups with a greater focus through which Stansted Airport Ltd engages with users, local authorities, businesses and other interested parties outside the umbrella of the STACC are more effective than the committee itself. Consequently, there is merit in considering what changes might achieve improved performance. Officers would also welcome access to the NTKWG and its reports.

There is some concern about the potential cost implications, although scope exists to switch expenditure from refreshments to other support for the committee. The chairman has raised the principle of the bodies represented on the committee providing part funding, commensurate with their means to contribute, with Stansted Airport Ltd funding the balance. No notional budget has yet been produced, however.

In view of the change of ownership of the airport required by the Competition Commission, it is important to establish an effective Consultative Committee to engage with the airport operator. The Competition Commission is clearly expecting change of ownership to result in improvements for airport users.

Members' views are sought. Members are also asked to consider what officer support they feel that they might need.

## **Appendix**

### **Proposed Revised Terms of Reference for STACC**

- To consider matters primarily concerning the management and administration of the airport;
- To consider matters affecting the experience of airport users;
- To consider the impact of the airport on the environment;
- To consider the corporate affairs of the airport;
- To consider matters specifically referred by interests represented on the committee, by the management of the airport or by the government;
- To share ideas and consider best practice from other airports and organisations;
- To liaise with other airport consultative committees on matters of common interest;
- To make representations to the government or other organisations as appropriate;
- To take any action incidental to any of the above terms of reference including occasional co-options.

### **Proposed terms of reference of the User Experience Group**

- To consider matters affecting the experience of users of the airport and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to the Committee;
- To undertake visits for the purpose of better understanding the experience of airport users; and
- To share ideas and discuss best practice from other airports and organisations.

### **Proposed terms of Reference of the Environmental Issues Group**

- To consider the impact of the airport on the environment including matters affecting flight tracks, noise, air quality, conservation and discharge of water,

waste, surface transport, biodiversity, archaeology and climate change, and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to the committee;

- To share ideas and best practice from other airports and organisations;
- To monitor appropriate performance strands of corporate responsibility at the airport; and
- To oversee and liaise with the NTKWG.

### **Proposed Terms of Reference of the Corporate Affairs Group**

- To consider the corporate affairs of the airport (excluding commercially sensitive or security matters), including resource management, good governance, health and safety, engagement locally, community investment; government policy and matters of economic significance and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Committee;
- To consider matters referred from the government or other organisations of significance and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Committee;
- To share ideas and best practice from other airports and organisations; and
- To monitor appropriate performance strands of corporate responsibility at the airport.

### **Risk Analysis**

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
STACC's effectiveness is limited.	3	2	Consider changes to STACC's arrangements.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.