

**STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.00PM on 10 JANUARY
2013**

Present: Councillors K Artus, J Cheetham, A Dean, M Lemon, K Mackman, J Rich and J Rose.

Also present: Councillor H Rolfe.

Officers in attendance: R Dobson (Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services) and J Pine (Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer).

SAP15

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jones.

*Councillor Cheetham declared her interest as a member of NWEHHPA.
Councillor Dean declared his interest as a member of SSE.*

PRESENTATION BY PENNY STEPHENS OF INFLITE THE JET CENTRE

Penny Stephens gave a presentation. She spoke about the role of her company, Inflight, which was based at Stansted Airport Northside.

Mrs Stephens said Inflight was a Fixed Base Operation (FBO), encompassing VIP passenger arrival and departure facilities and comprehensive aircraft maintenance. The business comprised mainly corporate clients with approximately 10% passengers travelling for leisure, although the value of the leisure market was often overlooked in general commercial aviation. Regarding the contribution of business aviation to the local economy, Mrs Stephens said Inflight was one of five FBOs at Stansted. Of the Airport's 5,000 business flights per annum, Inflight handled 2,800 carrying 22,000 passengers. The business employed 400 people and between 60 and 100 contractors were brought in on the aircraft maintenance side as this tended to be seasonal work. Mrs Stephens then spoke about Inflight's competition, which in terms of cost were facilities based at Farnborough and Luton. She said that what Stansted lacked was a VIP passenger terminal capable of taking large numbers of passengers. The largest local facility capable of providing a high quality service was Farnborough. Inflight could deal with 200 people in the newly refurbished and extended Jet Centre, with improved crew support facilities. She felt investment in Northside at Stansted would improve the Airport's competitiveness in terms of FBOs. Mrs Stephens said Inflight continued to grow even in the current hard times, and wished to do so in Stansted. She believed there was still room for further growth.

Mrs Stephens it was important for her business to promote the Airport as "London Stansted" and she felt the Airport's publicity material should be

refined so that it counteracted a perception that Luton was nearer to London than Stansted.

Mrs Stephens said the high design standard to which the Airport had been built should mean future increases in passenger numbers should not be a problem, but that Inflight's future growth beyond the capacity of the existing runway would depend on the location of a second runway being nearer to Northside than was proposed in the Generation 2 planning application. There was a good relationship between Inflight and London Stansted, but it was more expensive to operate from Stansted than from Luton and without investment in developing Northside, Inflight could not continue to grow.

Mrs Stephens spoke briefly about common misconceptions regarding aircraft emissions.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Stephens for what was an interesting and informative presentation. She said the Council wanted to see the Airport grow sensibly, within its permission to 35mppa. She agreed Northside needed clearing up, and said that in the Local Plan the Council considered that part of the Northside area should be developed as a business park to meet general district needs for office and industrial development.

Mrs Stephens said sympathetic development was a factor in locating VIP passenger handling services. Accordingly she stressed that care should be taken in ensuring any new industrial units did not compromise the appearance of the area.

Councillor Rose asked a question regarding the impact on Stansted if Marshalls of Cambridge were to relocate there.

Mrs Stephens said Marshalls currently benefitted from the same facilities at Cambridge as at Stansted.

Councillor Dean asked about the impact on the company of change of ownership of London Stansted.

Mrs Stephens said it was preferable to deal with known quantities, although she anticipated the new owners would keep the same management team at Stansted for some time, and she hoped the change of ownership would lead to a decision to invest on Northside.

Councillor Cheetham said she understood that Mrs Stephens felt high landing fees were curtailing some of her business.

Mrs Stephens said this was correct and that she had lodged objections in her response to the DfT consultation. She felt there was significant business from the United States which would come to Stansted if it were not so expensive.

Councillor Rolfe asked Mrs Stephens to identify areas in which she felt Uttlesford could act as a partner or promoter for business.

Mrs Stephens said it would be helpful to persuade London Stansted that business aviation could generate significantly increased revenue for the Airport through better advertising, particularly with regard to the proximity to the M11. The infrastructure around the airport roads needed to be better.

Councillor Rolfe asked what reasonable steps the Council could take to help business and promote the local economy.

Mrs Stephens said she was not sure what the Council could do, but it had done a good job in ensuring the Airport was a very pleasant environment. This would be an important factor as she had already said in relation to VIP passenger services.

Councillor Artus asked what STACC could do to assist.

Mrs Stephens said her answer would be the same. Most of the help Inflight needed was from London Stansted itself. It was important to promote the Airport first and to get planes to agree to fly to Stansted rather than Luton. She took issue with the Airport's promotional material and the prohibition on drop-off / pick-up outside the main terminal.

Councillor Rose referred to other types of airport business such as carrying livestock.

Mrs Stephens explained that the FBOs on Northside were permitted to fly in horses, and she had during the last few months been developing her business so that passengers could fly in their pets. Such a service represented a huge market which would attract new airport traffic. She commented on the bureaucratic and lengthy process required to obtain the necessary permissions for animal handling facilities, although planning permission had not been required.

Councillor Cheetham asked about the priorities of the Airport in terms of VIP business as compared to services offered by Easyjet.

Mrs Stephens said this type of business could be very significant to the Airport and that broadening the services would help to attract an American carrier.

Councillor Mackman asked about the experience of Inflight in providing a VIP terminal for passengers travelling to the Olympics.

Mrs Stephens said Inflight's new VIP terminal had been fully operational since November, but had been partially operational since June in order to accept business connected with the Olympics. Inflight had handled some Olympics traffic, but despite Foreign Office assurances on Stansted handling the majority of VIP arrivals some of the business had gone to Heathrow.

Councillor Cheetham thanked Mrs Stephens again. She said it was good for the Council to understand more aspects of the Airport.

Mrs Stephens said Inflight could contribute much more to the local community in terms of business for local restaurants, hotels and companies which might be attracted to the vicinity. She felt this aspect was an undervalued resource but appreciated the sympathetic opinion of councillors and invited Members to visit Inflight.

The Chairman said this would be very helpful and asked officers to make arrangements for visiting Inflight.

SAP16 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2012 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the amendment of the attendance list to include Councillor Dean whose name had been incorrectly omitted.

SAP17 **MATTERS ARISING**

(i) **Minute SAP12 – Consultation on DfT’s Aviation Policy Framework**

Councillor Dean asked for an update on the timetable. The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said he would give an update later in the meeting but that the only indication received about the date when the Aviation Policy Framework was to be issued was in ‘the Spring’.

(ii) **Minute SAP11 – South East Local Economic Partnership**

The Chairman asked for a reminder to be sent to the South East Local Economic Partnership as no reply to the Panel’s letter had been received.

SAP18 **DAVIES AIRPORT COMMISSION UPDATE**

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer referred Members to the report. The report set out a recap of the Commission’s aim to recommend options for maintaining the UK’s status as an international hub for aviation.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer drew attention to the summary of selected proposals for various airports and highlighted the proposals of the Policy Exchange and Centre Forum, and the proposal submitted by Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL). The criteria document submitted by HAL regarding assessing UK hub options was also highlighted.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said that the next stage would see a number of outline proposals being worked up. Since his report was written, Beckett Rankine had put forward proposals for a 4 to 6

runway airport at Goodwin Sands in Kent. It was likely that this proposal would be promoted fairly strongly as the scheme promoters saw many reasons to favour of that location instead of a new airport in the Thames Estuary.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer referred to the Institute of Directors' report entitled Flying to the Future which made a large number of recommendations.

The Panel then considered proposals to expand Luton Airport, as set out in the planning supporting statement. The proposals included passenger transport capacity improvements; and an increase in passenger numbers from about 11 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 18 mppa in 2031, which represented an increase of 70%. Noise mitigation measures had been proposed for a phased progressive lowering of daytime noise limit. The existing limit of 94 dB(A) would be reduced to 85 dB(A) from 2013, with subsequent reductions to 80dB(A) from 2020. In practice, it was likely that aircraft operating from Luton were probably already within the 85dBA limit, so it remained to be seen how significant a proposal this was. There was no proposal to extend runway length.

Members discussed the identity of bidders for Stansted Airport, and noted that a decision was expected very soon. There could be an impact on how the Airport was run. Members considered an Australian operator could be beneficial from the environmental aspect, and noted also that Manchester Airport had a very good reputation in this regard.

Returning to the non-technical summary for the planning application for Luton Airport, the Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said that, in general, environmental impacts of the proposed expansion were described as small or very small. Judging the environmental impact on Luton Hoo would draw comparisons with Stansted Airport's impact on Hatfield Forest. The document admitted that there would be an increase in aircraft movements but said the noise would not be significant. However there would in fact be a 40% increase in movements over Luton Hoo. It remained to be seen whether the application would be called in, as the airport operator had a concession with London Luton Airport Limited, which was wholly owned by Luton Borough Council.

Councillor Dean suggested that Members meet as soon as possible with Nick Barton once the new owner was announced.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said he had included in the papers a scoping report by the London Assembly for its investigation into airport capacity in London. The investigation would be completed for submission to the Davies Commission in May. As two of the options had clear implications for Stansted, the Council had submitted comments and had sent a copy to SAGSIG which was giving technical advice to the Assembly.

Members noted that, according to the DfT's November 2011 passenger forecasts, Stansted had sufficient spare capacity up to 2030. Councillor Cheetham reminded members that Mrs Stephens had commended the Council for ensuring Stansted remained a pleasant countryside airport.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said he had been monitoring transcripts of the witness appearances before the Parliamentary Transport Select Committee and whilst most witnesses had said what would be expected of them, the following statements should be noted as being of interest:

- One session involved the four managing directors of Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton. Each promoted growth at their own airport, Nick Barton referring to the 17mppa unused capacity at Stansted, and also mentioning the 'Stansted in 30' campaign. Steward Wingate saw Gatwick competing with Heathrow, but Colin Matthews did not see any future in a second hub or a joint hub arrangement. Both Nick Barton and Glyn Jones saw their airports continuing to serve the European point-to-point market.
- At another session Willie Walsh on behalf of the IAG consortium (British Airways (BA) and Iberia) was sceptical that the Government had the ability to make difficult decisions on airport capacity, and felt nothing would be done at Heathrow before 2050. He said that BA were planning for no growth in capacity in the UK airports that they operated to, though there could be changes to the structure of some flights, such as use of more wide-bodied jets. The implication was that growth could occur at Madrid, one of the other European hubs.
- Michael O'Leary had indicated that he felt the Davies Commission would be a waste of time. He supported extra runways at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted so that excess capacity would drive down airport charges.
- The environmental lobby felt there was sufficient UK capacity already, with demand management tools such as variable APD.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said Members could read transcripts of the Transport Select Committee on the Government website.

Councillor Cheetham said Luton and Stansted were indicating "point to point" growth continuing, but all these low cost carriers needed regular turns around in order to make their business plans work. This then encroached on the night flight time. She asked whether Sir Howard Davies would invite other bodies to give evidence.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said nothing had yet been heard on procedural guidance but he understood the Commission would invite selected witnesses. Clearly it was necessary to keep monitoring which proposals were put before the Commission for consideration, and

STAAP should look out for topic papers – the first, on passenger demand, was expected later this month.

Members agreed officers would maintain a watching brief and that a meeting would be arranged at member level on the proposals to be submitted should the Council be invited to give evidence.

Councillor Cheetham requested that a meeting of the four authorities be arranged to ensure all sang from the same hymn sheet.

Members discussed the different perspectives of the four authorities and expressed concern that there needed to be a unified approach if possible. Whilst there had been unanimity in opposition to Stansted Generation 2, the Commission would be looking at a wider range of proposals about which the four authorities might have differing views

Councillor Rich asked about London Stansted's sale of housing around the Airport, questioning how vigorously sales were being pushed.

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control said progress was dependent now on the sale of the Airport but that a lengthy delay was foreseeable. Members asked that the question of property disposal should be included with a list of questions to put to the new owners.

The Chairman reiterated the need to meet with the other four authorities before meeting with the new airport owners. She said the Commission might conclude that Stansted should be used to its full capacity with one runway, which could be substantially more than 35mppa. The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said an operating capacity of 70-75% was generally thought to be ideal, as this permitted some resilience allowing for schedule recovery after disruption.

Councillor Rich said it would be important to question the airport owners on working practices.

Councillor Artus said more information was needed to be able to respond in a specific way, as opposed to producing a generic response.

The Panel noted that SASIG would be likely to submit a response to the Commission; although by its nature it was a broad church, which meant its submission could be less specifically helpful to this authority.

The Panel discussed the passenger dropping off arrangements at Stansted. Passengers, local people and also – as stated during the earlier presentation, businesses such as Inflight – regarded the arrangements as irritating. Members felt the local discount scheme was not well publicised and forms were difficult to find online. Councillor Rich said the drop-off fees were annoying for local people who felt they were being charged a token for risking a potentially hefty fine if they exceeded the waiting time. The airport should be a transport hub and its owners should not discourage locals from using it.

Councillor Cheetham said Nick Barton was to give an update on the discount scheme in January (??), but that it was likely the airport operator would see the parking scheme as justified since it contributed to placing the airport in a good financial position for sale. It was also noted that the Airport stated that drop off fees and parking fines would be used to counteract environmental impact, especially from "Kiss and Fly" car movements. Councillor Mackman suggested lobbying the new owners.

The Director of Public Services said the CAA had stated it was minded to determine that Stansted should continue to be subject to economic controls because it had a monopoly position in its market segment, which tied in with Mrs Stephens' comments on passenger and landing charges.

The Panel agreed that a list of issues should be prepared to discuss with the new owners.

Councillor Artus said there were many issues caused by the parking and drop off arrangements, not just charges, particularly the numbers of cars waiting around the area.

Councillor Rich said in response to its business argument, the Airport paid a large subsidy to West Anglia for various services, including not stopping at more than two stations between London, so effectively it was limiting the service. In terms of a business argument this was not right as people were entitled to benefit from a transport hub.

Councillor Cheetham agreed this was a significant problem. Whilst there had to be a balance, the Council had not signed up to the "Stansted in 30" campaign as it needed to be sure that any improvements to the Stansted Express would not be to the detriment of local commuters.

Councillor Rich said this was indeed a problem, especially during commuter times if a train was cancelled and the Airport's contract prevented a Stansted Express being stopped at other stations.

The Panel noted that the expiry of the short term rail franchise in 2014 would give rise to an opportunity to approach any future operator to discuss discounts for local commuters. Councillor Cheetham asked that Members send any questions to her or to the Assistant Director Planning and Building Control.

SAP19

OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Artus reported on recent STACC meetings. He said a track-keeping trial was being carried out in which NPRs were being redesigned to make use of advanced navigation techniques now available. After considerable time finally a programme had been developed by the CAA which they had stated would start this January, but this date had now been set back until April 2013 when the new

standard would be published. STACC as well as the Council were consultees in this process.

Councillor Cheetham suggested that the forthcoming South Area Forum on 5 March could represent an opportunity to publicise this trial to the area of the district which would be affected.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.