

Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

Agenda Item

Date: 11th April 2013

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Title: The Government's Aviation Policy - Update

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Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report updates the Panel on the Government's new Aviation Policy Framework (APF) and on progress made by the Davies Commission.

Recommendations

2. That the Panel notes the current situation.

Financial Implications

3. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The draft APF and the Commission's discussion papers have been subject to public consultation.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	The Government's new aviation policy will have a district-wide impact.
Workforce/Workplace	Officer and Member time in preparing the

	various consultation responses.
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The Aviation Policy Framework

6. The Government published the APF at the end of March. The APF is a high level strategy setting out the Government's overall objectives for aviation and how those objectives will be achieved. The APF replaces the 2003 Air Transport White Paper as the Government's aviation policy, alongside any future decisions made following the recommendations of the Davies Commission.
7. The APF also replaces earlier Government guidance on airport transport forums, airport surface access strategies and airport master plans.
8. The APF has the following main objectives:
 - i) to ensure that the UK remains one of the best connected countries in the world. This includes increasing links to emerging markets so that the UK can compete successfully for economic growth opportunities,
 - ii) to ensure that the aviation sector makes a significant and cost-effective contribution towards reducing global emissions,
 - iii) to limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise, and
 - iv) to encourage the aviation industry and local stakeholders to strengthen and streamline the way in which they work together.
9. The APF focusses on the benefits of aviation and its environmental impacts, but the Government has other high-level policy objectives for aviation which are being taken forward separately. These are protecting passengers' rights, competition and regulation policy, airspace, safety and security.

Fifth Freedom Rights

10. In the APF, the Government has announced that it will be extending "fifth freedom" rights to Gatwick, Stansted and Luton. These rights allow a foreign airline to carry passengers between these airports and another country as part of a service that begins in the airline's home country. Each grant would be subject to a case-by-case consideration looking at the state of the UK's bilateral aviation relationship with the country concerned. Potentially this is welcome news for Stansted's new owners, as it could make it easier to establish long-haul services to key destinations as part of growth as a regional airport.

Noise

11. The APF includes a chapter on noise and other local impacts. The Government promotes the “balanced approach” principle to aircraft noise management. This consists of identifying the particular problem and then assessing the cost-effectiveness of the various measures available to reduce noise through:
- reduction at source (quieter aircraft)
 - land-use planning and management
 - noise abatement operational procedures, and
 - operating restrictions, but only as a last resort.
12. The Government says that it will continue to ensure that noise exposure maps are produced for the designated airports on an annual basis down to a level of 57dB LAeq 16 hour. To improve the monitoring of night noise, the Government will also ensure that separate night noise contours for the 8 hour night period are also produced.
13. The Government will continue to treat the 57dB LAeq 16 hour contour as the marker for the onset of significant community annoyance. The Davies Commission has recognised that there is no firm consensus on how to measure noise impact and it will be carrying out further detailed work and public engagement on this issue.
14. The Government recognises that people do not experience noise in an averaged manner, and says that average noise contours should “*not be the only measure used when airports seek to explain how locations under flight paths are affected by aircraft noise*” (APF Paragraph 3.19). The Government encourages airport operators to develop alternative measures which better reflect how aircraft noise is experienced in different localities. These measures should be produced in consultation with consultative committees and local communities.
15. The Government also wishes to promote noise envelopes as a means of giving certainty both to local communities about levels of noise which can be expected in the future, and to airport operators on how they can use their airports. Noise envelopes could feature in any national aviation policy statement, and the Government also believes that they could be appropriate solutions for local noise problems at existing airports. In the case of the latter, the envelopes could be agreed between local communities and airport operators.

Future Policy Changes

16. The Government says that it will review and refresh its policies as required, but any major changes will be subject to public consultation. If the Government decides to support any new nationally significant infrastructure following the conclusions of the Davies Commission’s work, it is likely that a draft national aviation policy statement would be produced for consultation.

The Davies Commission

17. The Commission's aims remain twofold:

- i) to provide an interim report to the Government by the end of this year on what needs to be done to maintain the UK's global hub status, and its recommendations for improving the use of existing runway capacity in the next five years, and
- ii) to publish a final report by the summer of 2015 into longer term measures required to meet the UK's international connectivity needs.

18. So far, the Commission has published a guidance document on submitting evidence and proposals to the Commission, and discussion papers on aviation demand forecasting and aviation connectivity and the economy. Panel members have received summaries of all three documents. In consultation with the Panel Chairman, the Council sent its response to the demand forecasting paper on 7th March and will be responding to the connectivity paper by the 19th April deadline.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
None	None	None	None

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.