STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7pm on 23 NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillor K Artus (Chairman)
Councillors J Davey, T Farthing, T Goddard, J Lodge, E Oliver and H Ryles.

Officers in attendance: J Pine (Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer), A Rees (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) and A Taylor (Assistant Director Planning and Building Control).

Also present: Duncan Smith and Neil Robinson (Manchester Airports Group - MAG)

SP1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Foley and Marcus Watts (Principal Environmental Health Officer).

Councillor Artus declared non-pecuniary interests as a member of the following groups; SACC, IEG and NTKWG.

SP2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2014

The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SP3 PRESENTATION FROM MAG ON RNP1 (RF) TRIAL AT STANSTED AIRPORT

Mr Smith began the presentation on the RNP1 (RF) trial which was taking place at Stansted Airport. The trial was flown by aircraft equipped to use modern GPS navigation techniques to improve track-keeping accuracy. RNP1 referred to Required Navigational Performance with an accuracy of within 1 nautical mile, RF referring to Radius to Fix, enabling more accuracy in tight turns.

He began by outlining the aim of the trial which was to reduce departure variation across two of the Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) at Stansted Airport (Clacton 22 and Detling 04). He produced a map which highlighted the departure tracks of aircraft which had flown the Clacton 22 SID using traditional ground based navigational techniques. These tracks displayed a three kilometre wide variation (1.5 kilometres about the SID centreline), leading to a number of flights flying directly over Hatfield Heath.

Mr Smith then produced a map which showed the track-keeping performance of aircraft which had taken part in the trial. He said the variation was greatly reduced (to around 500m) and meant that almost no flights went directly over Hatfield Heath.

Mr Robinson said the trial had proven to work and MAG wanted to make the procedures a permanent arrangement. A consultation on the proposals had started on 1 September 2015 and was due to finish on 27 November 2015. Although the consultation was not yet over, most responses from the public had been positive.

Once the consultation has finished a formal report with a proposal to adopt the RNP (RF) procedures on the two trialled SIDs would be presented to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Councillor Artus thanked Mr Smith and Mr Robinson for their presentation.

In response to a question by Councillor Lodge as to why Ryanair had not taken part in the trial, Mr Smith said Boeing had not been as quick as other aircraft manufacturers to implement the required technology. As Ryanair used Boeing aircraft they had not yet been able to overcome the regulatory hurdle to comply with the procedures, although Ryanair were keen to adhere to RNP1 (RF) techniques.

Councillor Ryles then asked what the disadvantages of RNP1 (RF) procedures were. Mr Smith explained that if the procedures were to become permanent, the number of people who were overflown would be reduced from 5,000 to 700. However, those 700 would experience more overflying. He noted that many of these people lived in Great and Little Hallingbury, which were closer to the runway end before the turn on the Clacton 22 SID where most of the divergence away from the SID centreline occurred. The SIDs surrounding Stansted Airport were set out by statute which was around 25 years old and, furthermore, navigation still used ground based techniques. Aircraft had been able to use GPS technology for a while but it was only now that airspace navigation was beginning to catch up, which was why RNP1 (RF) procedures were now possible.

In response to a question by Councillor Artus, Mr Smith informed the Panel that East Herts Council had contacted MAG about RNP1 (RF) procedures being implemented across the remaining four SIDs at Stansted Airport. MAG were keen to do this, but first needed to ensure the trials on the Clacton 22 and Detling 04 SIDs became permanent.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer referred to Minute SAP11 of the last Panel meeting. He said that NATS' proposal switch departures from the Dover/Detling to the Clacton SIDs would mean that more flights would use the Clacton 22 SID. If the trial RNP1 (RF) procedures became permanent much of the impact of this switch could be mitigated. He then explained that he received a number of calls from people who were planning to move into the district who asked how overflying would impact them. RNP1 (RF) procedures provided a lot more certainty about departure routes which helped people who were considering moving into the area make an informed decision about the impact of aircraft noise.

In response to a question by Councillor Oliver, Mr Smith said he was hopeful the RNP1 (RF) trial for the two SIDs would become permanent by mid-2016.

The process for the remaining four SIDs would be quicker so plans would most likely be in place by the end of 2016. Mr Robinson added that any comments about the RNP1 (RF) procedures being adopted on the remaining four SIDs could be included in the Council's comments in response to the consultation.

RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet that the Council should

a) Support the proposed change to airspace as;
   i) It would result in fewer people being directly overflown by aircraft.
   ii) It would give more certainty about the paths that departing aircraft take.

b) Support RNP1 (RF) procedures being adopted on the four other SIDs at Stansted Airport as soon as possible.

SP4 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Artus introduced a report by Professor Hooper about noise metrics. He explained that noise levels were mapped through contouring, which provided information about the average level of noise throughout a given time period. This noise metric did not however, always reflect people's day to day experiences and as a result the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee (SACC) had commissioned Professor Hooper to examine the benefits of using other noise metrics.

Mr Robinson added that noise contouring was required by the Government. He concurred with Councillor Artus that noise contouring did not necessarily reflect the experiences of residents, but nevertheless did have some use. Any metric used would have to be in addition to noise contouring. Professor Hooper had suggested using the number above metric which predicted the number of instances over a period which residents would experience noise levels above a certain level. This approach was not widely used, but where it had been used feedback had been positive. It still needed to be decided what the decibel level would be. Ordinarily it was either 60 or 70 decibels.

In response to a question by Councillor Ryles, Mr Robinson explained that the number above metric was semi-predictive and used information about the aircraft to estimate the number of instances where the noise level would be exceeded.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer asked a question on behalf of Councillor Foley, which was as follows: There had been an increasing number of complaints from residents about overflying of Thaxted and he would like an explanation as to why it is necessary for the route to go directly over the town. He had been in contact with a number of pilots and captains who had indicated that with modern navigational procedures it would be possible for the route to detour slightly away from the town and thereby reducing the impact on Thaxted residents.

Mr Smith, in response, said at the moment it was not possible to avoid Thaxted as it was currently too close to the runway to be avoided and allow for a smooth descent. Commonly, aircraft lined up on an approach at a distance of six miles at 2,000ft on a 3º glidescope. Thaxted was only five miles from the runway. However, GPS technology continued to improve so it was possible that in the future Thaxted could be avoided.

Councillor Artus informed Members that the Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group's (SASIG) secretariat had identified seven potential topics for discussion. He asked the Panel to examine the list and contact the Assistant Director Planning and Building Control if they felt one of the topics should be a priority.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm.