

Dear Sirs,

Request: I would like to express support for a Scrutiny Review as outlined in the attached papers.

Please circulate this submission to Committee Members.

Due process was not followed in this application process.

Background and detail:

I attended the Uttlesford District Council Planning Committee meeting on 14 November 2018 regarding the application to increase commercial flights and passengers at Stansted airport. I was present for the whole meeting. I spoke against the application on behalf of the High Easter Parish Council. The Parish Council had earlier submitted detailed comments and questions.

In our statement, to Committee, we concentrated on the main issue for ourselves (namely noise pollution). Our previous written comments covered additional issues.

47 Parish and Town Councils formally objected to this proposal. Not a single one was in support. i.e. there was effectively unanimous objection. Many of these statements quoted the balance between the environmental and social disadvantages, balanced against the economic advantages, but nonetheless came down on the side of objecting.

As you will be aware, the voting of the members of the UDC Planning Committee was split 5 and 5, with the application being approved as a result of the Chair's, Alan Mill's, casting vote. Noteworthy was that all 5 Conservative members (including the Chair) voted to approve.

During the debate among the Councillors of the Planning Committee, those members who were not Conservative, had all clearly read the Application (in all its significant length) and the Officers Report. They asked detailed and persuasive questions seeking clarity and debating the consequences of this application. They highlighted many basic flaws in the Application and the Officers Report. Noteworthy was that from the Conservatives there was no debate or questioning other than the most basic. One Conservative (Cllr Hicks) never said a single word during the whole day (1000 to 1800). It was not at all clear that the Conservative members had read and digested the Application and the Officers Report. Only towards the end did three of the Conservative members give short statements as to why they would vote in approval.

I can only have one explanation for this: **The Conservatives were under "instruction" from "someone" to support the application. Is this true?** There were no declaration of interests to this effect. **It does not "smell" right.** How can **all** the Parishes and Towns of the District object, and yet their detailed concerns not even be acknowledged or better, analysed, by the Conservative Planning Committee members? Have they no concern for the opinions of their towns and villages?

As an example of insufficient consideration, High Easter Parish Council feels that the proposal fails to take into account emerging government guidance in CAP 1498 which seeks to represent the views of the often smaller communities whose lives are blighted by aircraft noise beyond the historic standard contours. MAGS in responding to this question in its 258-page statement on the written response of the statutory consultees, argues that it is not relevant as CAP 1498 refers to airspace change and not annual passenger limits which is the subject of its proposal. MAGS goes on to argue there is no change to the permitted number of flights where CAP 1498 would apply. The Parish Council disagrees with MAGS on what constitutes an increase in flight, but there was no opportunity for this discussion to take place to explore this further.

I felt physically sick for 24 hours after the meeting. I had to sit in the Saffron Walden Carpark for an hour before driving home, since I was concerned for my driving safety. Later, analysing my anger, I realized that I had simply been wasting my time. Not only me, but everyone involved in the consultation process. **The Conservative Councillors never gave any impression that they were taking the meeting seriously. The whole application had been approved in advance.**

Responsibility: It is the responsibility of District Councillors to serve their District, not their Party. I completely fail to understand how the views of all Parishes and Towns are totally ignored without even the most basic acknowledgement of their submission. **This is an absolute disgrace!**

Scope and ToR of Scrutiny Review:

- Please add to 4. "Engagements with Parish Councils ...": "Manner in which comments on the consultation were resolved."
- Please delete the exclusion "The conduct of any Planning Committee meeting". This should be in scope, because it as a "behavioural issue of importance".

For these reasons I respectfully urge an investigation.

Declaration of interest: I am a member of the public living in High Easter in Uttlesford District. I am a Parish Councillor of High Easter, but writing personally.

I had applied for a speaking slot at this Scrutiny Committee Meeting, but was unsuccessful since all the slots were taken. (I was late due to illness).

Many thanks

With Kind Regards

Neil (Reeve)

