

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

**Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 22 April 2021 by videoconference.**

Meeting held with pre-booked public attendance of 8 persons to observe proceedings.

<b>Present:</b>	Tom Crowley (Chairman)
Jeff Alexander	Gatwick Diamond Business
Peter Barclay	Environmental and Amenity Groups
Chris Carter	Airlines UK
Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce
Helyn Clack (Vice-Chair)	Surrey County Council
Jonathan Drew	Chair, Gatwick Noise Management Executive Board
Carolyn Evans	Charlwood Parish Council
Malcolm Fillmore	Rusper Parish Council
Mike George	Horley Town Council
Stephen Hillier	Mid Sussex District Council
Angie Hills	ABTA
Gurinder S. Jhans	Crawley Borough Council
Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Liz Kitchen	Horsham District Council
Bob Lanzer	West Sussex County Council
Chris Larkman	Which? representative
Liz Lockwood	Tandridge District Council
Hugh McConnellogue	Gatwick Airline Operators Committee (AOC)
Katie Nurcombe	Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership
Caroline Salmon	Mole Valley District Council
Rupert Simmons	East Sussex County Council
Samantha Williams	Chair, Passenger Advisory Group

<b>In attendance:</b>	
Stewart Wingate	Chief Executive Officer, GAL
Tim Norwood	Director of Corporate Affairs, Planning and Sustainability, GAL
Andy Sinclair	Head of Airspace Strategy and Engagement, GAL
Alison Addy	Head of Community Engagement, GAL
Melanie Wrightson	Stakeholder Engagement Manager, GAL
Lee Howes	Airspace and Environmental Performance Manager
Richard Lennard	Economic Partnerships Manager, GAL
Mamta Mehta	Department for Transport
Gary Marshall	Department for Transport
Ian Green	Department for Transport
Robin Clarke	NATS
John Ellis	ANS
Paula Street	GATCOM Secretariat
Lisa Sampson	GATCOM Secretariat

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Alex Horwood (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council), Stephen Jones (London Chamber of Commerce and Industry), Michael Payne (Kent County Council), and Colin Stewart (BAR UK).

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

### **Minutes of the last meeting**

147. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021 and of the Special Meeting held on 25 February 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **Reports from Sub-Group and Other Meetings**

148. GATCOM received and considered reports summarising the key messages and recommendations arising from the meetings of the GATCOM Steering Group, Passenger Advisory Group (PAG), GAL's Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG), and the Gatwick Noise Management Executive Board (NEX), (copies attached to the signed minutes).

#### GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman's Report

149. The Chairman of GATCOM introduced his report and highlighted key points. GATCOM noted the Steering Group's deliberations and agreed that:

- 1) GAL's new END Noise Action Plan (NAP) progress status rating methodology is welcomed;
- 2) GATCOM supports NATMAG's suggestion to include a sub-division of the rating status for the NAP progress reporting of "ongoing" to offer two options to reflect either "ongoing on track" and "ongoing off track";
- 3) GATCOM endorses GAL's draft NAP Progress Report 2020; and
- 4) GAL's Conditions of Use document, which includes airport landing charges and differentials agreed each year with the airlines, to be reported to GATCOM on an annual basis to provide the opportunity to consider and review the effectiveness of the differential charging structure.

#### Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

150. The PAG Chair introduced her report and highlighted key points, including three main areas for concern:

- the absence of a dedicated full time GAL lead for overseeing special assistance service and facilities at the airport.
- the potential for increased queuing times for passengers at check-in, security, and at the border given the additional paperwork checks now required as a result of the pandemic.
- issues around the implementation of forecourt charging and the associated red route scheme.

151. GATCOM noted PAG's activities in the previous quarter and future focus, and agreed that:

- 5) GAL should liaise with partners to appropriately manage and mitigate potential delays and queuing issues at arrivals, check-in, and security to ensure the safety of passengers and the efficiency of operations as passenger numbers return;
- 6) GAL be encouraged to continue engagement with PAG on the forecourt charging scheme to seek continuous improvement to the passenger experience; and

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

- 7) PAG's role as critical friend to the airport and as the passenger advocate be supported, and GATCOM recognises PAG's contribution to ensuring a positive passenger experience at Gatwick during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

### Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group

152. The report from GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise was considered and the key messages noted as follows:

- NATMAG would continue during this period of low traffic but some reporting and administration would be reduced. This would include extending the noise complaints response time from 8 to 21 days.
- NATMAG would consider how to better educate and inform interested parties about the differential between the Department for Transport (DfT) noise abatement procedures and the minimum 8NM ILS joining point which is a safety feature.
- Following the implementation of the change on 25 February to the Route 4 standard instrument departures GAL will report to NATMAG on flight tracks compared with historic performance once sufficient track data is available - the low numbers of flights are a constraint.

### Noise Management Board (NMB) – Chair of NMB Executive Group (NEX)

153. The Chair of NEX highlighted key points from recent NMB meetings and thanked all parties involved in developing and agreeing the NMB workplan which required commitment and compromise by all, and work is now underway on implementing the workplan. It is an iterative programme of work and GATCOM acknowledged that due to COVID uncertainties, with many staff across the industry on furlough, this could have an impact on the timing of some activity. GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise highlighted the need to ensure there was no duplication of effort between the work of NATMAG and that of the NMB; the Chair of NEX will liaise with GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise.

154. The Chair of NEX paid tribute to Cllr Liz Kitchen who has come to the end of her time on the NMB representing West Sussex County Council, and gave thanks and appreciation for her dedication to and commitment in representing the views of communities and her work on the NMB and its Review Sub-Committee.

## **Gatwick's Growth Plans**

### Northern Runway Development Consent Order process

155. The Planning Inspectorate gave a [presentation](#) on the various stages of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process and opportunities for interested parties to engage in the process (copy attached to the signed minutes).

156. Key points to note and discussion questions raised by GATCOM include:

- The DCO regime is based on transparency - including from the applicant (in the case of the Northern Runway Project the applicant is GAL) in what they are applying for and transparency for all stakeholders to give a clear understanding and certainty of the various statutory timescales for each part of the process and at what stage in the process parties can get involved.
- The Pre-application Stage of the process is key. GAL needs to identify key consultees, engage with them early in the process, and to share information as early as possible to allow consultees to be informed of what the application is for, what the likely impacts will be, and to help statutory consultees, other organisations and interested parties to influence and inform the development of

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

the application. This is an important stage in the process as once an application is submitted to the Inspectorate it is extremely difficult to make a change or request a change.

- GAL leads on the pre-application part of the process and needs to ensure there is an understanding of the application, that it shares information with consultees, evolves the scheme design in response to feedback, has a full understanding of the impacts, undertakes survey and assessment work, and engages and consults a wide range of stakeholders.
- The Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC), which provides information on how to be involved in the consultation process, needs to be developed in liaison with local authorities to help devise a programme of communication and ways to optimise the ability for other parties to get involved. GAL has to have regard to responses received to the consultation on the draft SOCC. Following consultation, GAL needs to explain what changes to the scheme have been made and if comments are not taken on board then to explain why.
- GAL confirmed that discussions with the local authorities on a draft SOCC had resumed. GAL explained that the draft SOCC provided for the consultation to be a minimum of 8 weeks, which is greater than the prescribed 28 days period required. This was queried by a member who requested a 12-week consultation period for local authorities to consider this complex application. GAL referred to the 6 weeks period of consultation by the local authorities on their local plan consultation.
- The final SOCC is required to be advertised before the launch of the statutory consultation.
- PINS explained GATCOM does not have any prescribed status in the process. However, local authorities (County, Borough and District councils) have a prescribed and important role – see [Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 2](#). This provides another route for GATCOM to input comments and advice. In addition to their statutory functions local authorities are also the communities' champions.
- If interested parties feel the consultation has not been carried out adequately or there are flaws in the consultation process, they should in the first instance raise those concerns with the applicant. If those concerns still remain, parties may be directed to local authorities as they will be invited to submit an adequacy of consultation representation to confirm whether or not the applicant's consultation requirements have been satisfactorily met.
- The Acceptance Stage is when the applicant submits the application and the Inspectorate then has 28 days to decide whether the application is accepted. The Panel will then be appointed (comprising between 1-5 inspectors depending on the scale of the development) to examine the application.
- The Pre-Examination and Examination Stage part of the process is led by the Planning Inspectorate. Once the application has been accepted the applicant must notify parties that the relevant representation period is open, and this is another opportunity for interested parties to put their views forward to the Independent Panel of Inspectors by registering as an "Interested Party" to be kept informed of progress and opportunities to put forward views. Interested parties have rights and status in the process.
- Advice and guidance is available on the Planning Inspectorate [website](#). [Advice Note 8](#) gives an overview of the process and step by step guides for members of the public and interested parties.
- A Local Impact Report (LIR) is a document to be submitted to the Examination and is required to be a balanced and objective document. Local authorities will often be involved in the detail of how any planning requirements will be taken forward.

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

- GAL's baseline forecast throughput of 61 mppa (million passengers per annum) from which the DCO application would be seeking consent to grow to 74 mppa was queried. It was questioned what work needed to be undertaken to ensure that the baseline level of 61 mppa was correct or whether it should be set at a lower level so that a greater proportion of Gatwick's growth could be included in the scope of the DCO, and whether the Inspectorate could potentially set a cap on Gatwick's growth below the baseline level of 61 mppa. The Inspectorate confirmed that this was a complex matter but would be an important focus of the examination process. The Inspectorate advised that detailed questions of this nature can be raised with the Inspectorate directly via email to [gatwickairport@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:gatwickairport@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

### Growth at Gatwick Airport

157. GATCOM received the [Secretariat's paper](#) setting out a "Statement of Facts" on Government aviation policy and the planning processes that relate to growth at Gatwick through making best use of the main runway and through the use of the Northern Runway (copy attached to the signed minutes).

158. The discussion evoked many strong views across GATCOM's membership about whether this was a matter for the Committee to address with Government, with some members wishing to see the Government put in place an alternative mechanism to ensure all growth at Gatwick was scrutinised and consented, whereas on the other hand some members explained GAL already had consent to use its facilities, believed GAL was adhering to Government policy and followed all necessary planning legislation and should therefore not be singled out from other airports. Issues highlighted included whether consideration should be given to reducing the DCO baseline to 2018 levels, whether maximum growth should be capped and at what level, the effect on infrastructure and local highways, and the need to aid sustainable recovery as well as preserve and protect the important role of Gatwick being at the heart of driving the region's economy. The importance of the Section 106 agreement was also recognised.

159. The DfT representative confirmed that:

- GAL was following Government policy on airports making best use of existing runways and facilities.
- GAL was not in breach of any policy.
- There are other UK airports that do not have any caps on passenger numbers or air traffic movements.
- GAL has been very open about its growth plans and commended their openness and goodwill to work with stakeholders and its neighbours.

160. GATCOM resolved that:

- 1) The "Statement of Facts" as set out in the Secretariat's report are agreed;
- 2) The questions posed by the environmental and amenity groups' representative and the answers have been considered and it is agreed that:
  - a) GATCOM will write to the Secretary of State for Transport to build on the Committee's response to the Aviation Green Paper to reflect the concerns of members about how the impacts arising from incremental growth at Gatwick can be managed, mitigated and monitored. A copy of the draft letter will be circulated to all member organisations to ensure it strikes the right balance of the views expressed;
  - b) The importance of the Section 106 agreement capturing the impacts of forecast growth will be reiterated to the parties to the agreement and that

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

the Chair and Secretariat continue discussions with GAL, Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council about the need to address the concerns of GATCOM in the review of the agreement;

- c) GATCOM's Indicative Work Programme be amended to include as part of its objectives the need to seek to influence the Section 106 agreement;
- d) GAL reports back to a future meeting on issues of common concern arising from its engagement with local authorities on the results of the technical work assessments being undertaken as part of the DCO pre-application process so that all parties have a clear understanding of the environmental, economic and social impacts and benefits of airport growth; and
- e) The draft Heads of Terms of the new Section 106 agreement are shared with GATCOM at the earliest possible time as part of the DCO process.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

161. The Chief Executive Officer's commentary on activity and performance at the airport over the previous quarter was received (copy attached to the signed minutes). Mr Wingate highlighted key updates and information, including:

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to significantly affect Gatwick's traffic and passenger numbers. In the first quarter of the year only 150,000 passengers travelled through Gatwick. The South Terminal remains closed with all flights operating out of the North Terminal and a reduced time window for operating aircraft departures.
- easyJet, Gatwick's largest carrier, remains committed to Gatwick and is expecting activity to increase as travel restrictions ease. BA is continuing its long-haul operation through the summer and winter season, but its short-haul services will continue through Heathrow at the current time. TUI also intends to operate a full schedule later in the year, depending on easing of travel restrictions, and Norwegian is continuing to serve the Scandinavian capital cities. The former CEO of Norwegian is leading a consortium to create a new airline, Norse Atlantic, which intends to operate transatlantic flights to and from Gatwick later in the year.
- In 2020 passenger numbers fell by 78% compared with the previous year and GAL announced a loss of £465m in 2020. It has, in partnership with its airlines, undertaken a strategic review of the capital programme and has deferred £280m of projects from 2020 and 2021 to future years. In terms of financial resilience, GAL secured a £350m loan in April 2020 to maintain liquidity but in view of the ongoing impact of the pandemic GAL has now accessed £275m of the Bank of England's Covid Corporate Financing Facility grant. In addition to this, to help repay the short term loans GAL has recently secured two new bonds with total value of £270m with repayment terms of 5 years and 9 years respectively.
- The Gatwick Station Redevelopment project, part funded by GAL, continues to make good progress.
- The Section 106 Agreement annual monitoring process has commenced and the outcome will be reported to GATCOM in due course. The Decade of Change 2020 Progress Report is due to be published this quarter.
- GAL remains fully committed to its community engagement strategy and continues to engage with communities, including through its "In Touch" e-news service and recommencement of its "Learn Live" education programme.
- GAL continues to actively engage with regional economic partnerships, business groups and local authorities, and is working in collaboration to plan initiatives and drive forward economic recovery to support local people and businesses to help bounce back from the pandemic.

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

162. GATCOM noted and welcomed GAL's good work on the Decade of Change report, its continued commitment to corporate responsibility targets despite the difficulties faced, and its work on the local economy.

### **Recovery of Operations & Global Travel Taskforce**

163. GAL [presented](#) an update on its work and engagement with the Government's Global Travel Taskforce (GTT), (copy attached to the signed minutes). Key points highlighted included:

- The GTT published its [report](#) to Government on 9 April 2021 which sets out 14 recommendations for the safe return of international travel centred around a risk-based approach, readiness for restart, consumer clarity and confidence, and the transition to future travel (including travel certification and global standards).
- GAL's priorities are readiness for 17 May, the early identification of countries in each category of the travel corridors list, digitisation of paperwork and re-opening of e-gates, ensuring sufficient resources for border checks and removing the requirement to check 100% of passengers, testing on arrival (preferring lateral flow tests to PCR due to ease of use and cost, as well as reducing the cost of PCR tests). GAL is seeking guidance on the arrangements for those fully vaccinated or with travel certification.
- Establishing a joint UK Government and industry working group to ensure border readiness is an important operational requirement for GAL in order to avoid large queues at the border when international travel resumes. GAL has a number of ideas to forward to Government to ensure the border check process remains efficient and as seamless as possible for passengers.
- The Government's wish to introduce a passenger COVID-19 charter by 17 May setting out some of the consumer rights is key in building passenger confidence; GAL will notify GATCOM's PAG on this.

164. GATCOM highlighted that the cost of PCR tests is high, is prohibitive for families seeking to travel, and it supports GAL raising this issue. Also of concern was the potential for travel certification/passports leading to discrimination issues for those wishing to travel. Airlines support the need for the digitalisation of paperwork to ease potential for queuing at check-in and at the border. The need for testing for passengers arriving from Green List countries was questioned. It was also noted that the UK has a very advanced vaccination programme compared to other countries which could hinder recovery of international travel.

### **DfT Consultation: Night Flight Restrictions**

165. The Secretariat's report (copy attached to the signed minutes) was received and GATCOM acknowledged the wide range of views across its membership.

166. GATCOM agreed to defer its consideration of the suggested draft GATCOM response to the consultation until the report on the industry's commissioned study by York Aviation into the role of, and societal and economic benefits derived from, night flights was available (due early May). There is a scarcity of research on this aspect and the committee's industry and business interests would be better placed to contribute and comment on GATCOM's suggested draft response once the outcome from the research study was known. Members were encouraged to email their current comments on the draft to the Secretariat.

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES – TO BE CONFIRMED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF GATCOM ON 15 JULY 2021**

167. In order to provide a fair and balanced response to the DfT on this important issue GATCOM agreed that:

- 1) An extension of time to respond to the consultation be sought from the DfT; **[N.B. An extension has subsequently been granted to GATCOM until 30 June 2021]**
- 2) A special Meeting of GATCOM to consider the Committee's response to the consultation be arranged to take place on the same day as the next meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group.

### **GATCOM Indicative Work Programme 2021/22**

168. GATCOM received the draft indicative work programme 2021/22 (copy attached to the signed minutes). The work programme is viewed as a living document to provide flexibility for the Committee to consider matters in a changing environment. The timescales against the objectives are indicative in acknowledgement that GAL and industry partners are operating in challenging and uncertain times with much reduced resource. The focus will be on recovery and "Build Back Better" is a theme to be considered across all topic areas.

169. GATCOM discussed the work programme and the following additional topics were agreed for inclusion:

- The downturn in international trade and its impact on Gatwick's supply chain particularly in respect of the hardest hit sectors, including hospitality, catering, and other services which support the passenger experience.
- Objective 4 should also include consideration of growth in green innovation and technology, and consider how Gatwick and the aviation sector can be used as a catalyst to become a UK centre for innovation into green technologies.

### **Dates of next meetings of GATCOM and its sub-groups**

170. Members noted the next meetings of GATCOM and its sub-groups are due to take place as follows:

- **NEW DATE** - Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 14:00 - Special Meeting of GATCOM – Response to DfT Night Flights Consultation
- **REVISED DATE** - Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 15:15 – GATCOM Steering Group
- Thursday 17 June 2021 at 13:30 – Passenger Advisory Group

171. GATCOM noted the next meeting of GAL's Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) on Thursday 13 May at 10:00, and the next meeting of the Noise Management Board Executive Board (NEX) on 15 June 2021.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 16:58.