

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 14 October 2021 by videoconference.

Meeting held with pre-booked public attendance of 4 persons to observe proceedings.

Present:	Tom Crowley (Chairman)
Jeff Alexander	Gatwick Diamond Business
Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce
Cllr. Helyn Clack (Vice-Chair)	Surrey County Council
Fran Downton	Tourism South East
Jonathan Drew	Chair, Gatwick Noise Management Executive Board
Cllr. Carolyn Evans	Charlwood Parish Council
Cllr. Mike George	Horley Town Council
Cllr. Stephen Hillier	Mid Sussex District Council
Angie Hills	ABTA
Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Cllr. Liz Kitchen	Horsham District Council
Chris Larkman	Which? representative
Cllr. Liz Lockwood	Tandridge District Council
Cllr. Caroline Salmon	Mole Valley District Council
Cllr. Rupert Simmons	East Sussex County Council
Richard Streatfeild	Environmental and Amenity Groups
Cllr. Steve Waight	West Sussex County Council
Samantha Williams	Chair, Passenger Advisory Group

In attendance:	
Stewart Wingate	Chief Executive Officer, GAL
Tim Norwood	Director of Corporate Affairs, Planning & Sustainability, GAL
Andy Sinclair	Head of Noise & Airspace Strategy, GAL
Alison Addy	Head of External Engagement & Policy, GAL
Melanie Wrightson	Stakeholder Engagement Manager, GAL
Michelle Stanton	Business Change Manager, GAL
Stephen King	Head of Airline Relations, GAL
Richard Lennard	Economic Partnerships Manager, GAL
Ian Greene	Department for Transport
Clem Smith	Head of Economy & Planning, Crawley Borough Council
Paula Street	GATCOM Secretariat
Lisa Sampson	GATCOM Secretariat

Apologies for absence were received from:

46. Apologies were received from Cllr. Richard Biggs (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council), Chris Carter (Airlines UK), Cllr. Margot McArthur (Kent County Council), Colin Stewart (BAR UK), Anthony Middleton (Coast to Capital Economic Partnership).

Minutes of the last meeting

47. Resolved:

- a) That the minutes of the meeting of GATCOM held on 15 July 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman; and
- b) That the minutes of the Special Meeting of GATCOM held on 24 August 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Reports from Sub-Group and Other Meetings

48. 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

49. The Chairman of GATCOM introduced his report (copy attached to the signed minutes) and highlighted key points.

50. It was agreed that:

(1) GATCOM asks the Liaison Group of UK Airport Consultative Committees (UKACCs) to collectively look at the implications of the demise of ICCAN and the transfer of functions to the CAA and DfT, to take forward views and concerns with the DfT and the CAA and to report back to GATCOM and other airport consultative committees;

(2) the outcome of NATMAG's assessment of the draft END Noise Action Plan (NAP) 2019-2024 Mid-Term Progress Report be endorsed and that:

(a) GAL's commitment to ensure that the next iteration of the END NAP from 2024 onwards includes SMART targets against which progress performance can be measured be supported;

(b) GAL be asked to take forward the suggestions set out in paragraph 2.4 of the Secretariat's report at Appendix 1; and

(c) the approach to the END NAP annual reporting set out in paragraph 2.5 of the Secretariat's report be endorsed.

(3) GAL be asked to give an update on the FASI-South airspace change project at the GATCOM meeting in January 2022.

Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

51. The Chair of PAG introduced her report (copy attached to the signed minutes) and highlighted key points.

52. It was agreed that:

(1) GATCOM develops an understanding of the implications of the Government's waiver of the 80:20 runway slot rule on Gatwick's operation; and

(2) the work of PAG and its engagement with GAL as the 'critical friend' and support its role as advocate on behalf of passengers be noted.

Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) Summary Report

53. GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise introduced his report (copy attached to the signed minutes) and highlighted the key points. GATCOM noted NATMAG's activities over the quarter and the key messages to GATCOM.

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

54. The Chair of NEX introduced his report (copy attached to the signed minutes) and highlighted the key points. GATCOM noted that addressing the night noise climate continues to be a top priority for communities represented on the NMB. GATCOM also noted the NEX Chair's thanks to GAL for its work on and funding of the studies into the fair and equitable distribution of flightpaths, the ILS joining point at night, and the land use planning project which will feed-in to FASI-South airspace change project.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

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

- The airport handled c. 569,000 passengers in the first 6 months of 2021 (which is equal to 3 days volume during August and 8-10 days volume in January in normal times). Lower passenger volumes due to Covid-19 resulted in a £244.6m loss for the first 6 months of 2021 in addition to the full year loss reported for 2020. Mitigating actions have been taken including a strategic review of the capital investment programme; GAL has a strong liquidity position, is well placed for recovery in 2021/22, and is planning £70m capital expenditure for improvements in the coming years.
- Over 1m passengers travelled through the airport in both August and September 2021, equivalent to 20% of normal levels. GAL welcomes the easing of Covid restrictions on international travel and has called on the Government to end day 2 testing on entering the UK for double vaccinated travellers and to remove the waiver of the 80:20 slot rule for the summer 2022 season to aid recovery.
- Jet Blue has begun regular flights between New York (JFK) and Gatwick, increasing to daily in 2022. Airlines are keen to return to regular services from the airport.
- The annual monitoring of legal obligations contained in the Section 106 agreement has been undertaken and the independent verification process was completed in August. All actions audited are on track.
- The Section 106 agreement expires at end of December 2021 and GAL is negotiating a roll forward of the agreement whilst the Northern Runway DCO project goes through the statutory planning process.
- Four more engineering apprentices have been recruited at the airport, bringing the total to 16; five are due to qualify in summer 2022 and all have been offered roles within the business.

56. GATCOM noted GAL's lobbying of Government on the remaining travel restrictions. The Committee also noted that the continued restrictions affected the youth travel sector thus preventing international school trips to many destinations.

Implications of 80:20 Slots Waiver for GAL

57. GAL provided an overview of the implications of the 80:20 slots regime. Key information was highlighted, including:

- The Government's waiver of the 80:20 slot rule as it stands protects the interests of incumbent airlines who can continue to protect their future slots, even if they have little or no intention of flying those slots any time soon. The current waiver remains in place until at least end of March 2022.
- The waiver has for the third consecutive season allowed a situation whereby a large number of slots at Gatwick are not being used as any incoming airlines are,

understandably, unable or unwilling to invest the resources and set up costs to establish the necessary infrastructure (i.e. a 'base') at the airport for only a limited period, without having the right to retain those slots for the following seasons.

- GAL is responding to the Government consultation to ease the waiver from April 2022 and return to the 80:20 rule, especially between regions with no or light-touch travel restrictions. A robust 'justified non-use of slots' regime will provide protection against any changes in travel restrictions. Ending the waiver means airlines can either hand back series of slots or commit to using them.

58. GATCOM noted the important implications of the current slot rule waiver for GAL and the airport's passengers. It was agreed that GATCOM continue to monitor the implications of this issue.

Northern Runway DCO – Consultation and next steps

59. GAL presented an update on the Northern Runway Development Consent Order (DCO) consultation, an overview of the project and the next steps. Key points to note are:

- GATCOM's and local authorities' calls for a longer consultation period than GAL's originally proposed nine weeks consultation have been taken into account; the consultation launched on 9 September has a consultation period of 12 weeks. The deadline for submissions is 11:59pm on 1 December 2021.
- All consultation documents are available on GAL's website. Information on the consultation is also available via a virtual exhibition tool on the website as well as at deposit locations and from a Mobile Project Office which is visiting various towns across the region. Interested persons can also book a telephone call with an expert if they have further or technical questions on the consultation.
- Responses to the consultation are encouraged from all interested individuals, organisations and other parties either via the consultation website, by completing a hard copy form, sending an email, by phone, or via a freepost address. GATCOM members were encouraged to help disseminate information about the consultation across their own networks and social media channels to encourage the widest possible response.
- After the consultation closes GAL will consider all the feedback received and will then finalise its application to the Planning Inspectorate. In the meantime, GAL will continue to engage with local authorities and other statutory consultees on the detailed technical work still being undertaken.

60. GATCOM members raised the following points:

- It was noted that the consultation material included an assessment of CO2 emissions.
- Feedback had been received from local residents about some of the mobile project offices being hard to find or at inaccessible locations, and some attendees being told they needed to book an appointment. GAL undertook to investigate these matters and make improvements where necessary. GAL also advised that new locations for the mobile project office have been added following feedback from local councillors.
- Communities were concerned about potential increased levels of noise, and highlighted that the frequency of overflight is of equal concern to affected residents which needed to be addressed. GAL confirmed the proposed 'noise envelope' would give residents confidence that as the project reaches full capacity (circa 2038), there would be less noise compared to noise levels in 2019 – the airport's busiest year to date.
- Disturbance from the project construction over many years was a serious concern as well as the potential increased level of construction traffic, including

sub-contractors, on local roads and particularly on rural roads. GAL confirmed construction traffic routings will be established. The majority of vehicles (approx. 80%) arrive at the airport via the M23 spur road which minimises the impact on rural roads. GAL encouraged comments or concerns on this to be made in consultation responses.

- The recent World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance on air quality standards was highlighted and GAL asked if this will be taken into account in the planned expansion. GAL confirmed it is obliged to adhere to the current UK Government standards and that should the Government's standards be revised in future GAL would have to comply with any new standards.
- The representatives of business interests and tourism interests welcomed the proposed expansion at Gatwick and confirmed they will encourage businesses, the supply chain, and the industry to respond to the consultation.

61. GATCOM considered the Secretariat's paper (copy attached to the signed minutes) on a suggested approach to GATCOM's consideration of a response to the consultation.

62. Members suggested that GATCOM considers adopting a position of neutrality reflecting both majority and minority views in its consultation response with a focus upon those issues where there was common ground. The Environmental and Amenity Groups' representative did not agree that GATCOM should adopt a neutral position. It was also commented that GATCOM should take a position on emissions in its response to the consultation, and that clarification is needed on the appropriate emissions and noise baselines.

63. GATCOM also reaffirmed its previously agreed role which is:

- To help disseminate information to interested parties and the wider community on GAL's work, the statutory planning processes which need to be followed and the issues being discussed, and to assist in building an understanding of the implications and impacts through constructive discussion.
- To explore with GAL and the local authorities potential conditions and/or undertakings GAL would be prepared to offer as part of the statutory planning process.
- To recognise there will be differing views across the membership of the Committee but that the essential need for all interests is to have mutual respect for views expressed at meetings when exploring options and, where possible, to build a consensus on those matters/issues where the Committee can agree in order to provide constructive and balanced feedback to GAL.

64. GATCOM also commented on the need for a balance to be struck between encouraging recovery of the airport, allowing for future sustainable growth, and minimising the environmental effect on local communities and carbon emissions.

65. It was agreed that:

(1) GATCOM maintains its previously agreed position that it neither supports nor opposes GAL's growth plans;

(2) GATCOM's previously agreed role as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the Secretariat's report be further endorsed;

(3) a Special Meeting of GATCOM be arranged to take place at the end of November to consider and agree its response to GAL's Northern Runway pre-application consultation; and

(4) the Secretariat be asked to prepare a draft statement of response to the

consultation based on the approach set out in paragraph 5.3 of the Secretariat's report and the comments raised and agreed at the meeting.

Crawley Economic Recovery Task Force

66. Crawley Borough Council's Head of Economy and Planning presented an update on the work of the Crawley Economic Recovery Task Force and Town Deal Board (copy of presentation slides attached to the signed minutes). Key information was highlighted, including:

- Pre-pandemic Crawley was a successful large town, achieving 27% growth between 2013-19 with high economic output and employment levels. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the town with circa 16,000 jobs lost on the Gatwick Airport campus and unemployment rising to 9% of the population, and disproportionately affecting young people at 14% unemployment.
- Crawley experienced the highest rate of furlough in the UK and 57% of Crawley jobs base were judged 'at risk' by Centre for Cities.
- A Recovery Plan and Task Force has been created aiming to regain Crawley's output and build its post-Covid recovery by working collaboratively with stakeholders including representatives from businesses, communities, local MPs, local authorities, Police, NHS, Gatwick Airport, and the Local Enterprise Partnership. Regular meetings take place to assess the ongoing impact on the town, oversee development, engage with community representatives and stakeholders to develop the Towns Fund scheme, and to monitor the delivery of the regeneration scheme.
- £21.1m Government funding has been given for 10 projects identified in the Recovery Plan which included town centre urban regeneration, Crawley growth programme, skills and enterprise, connectivity, retaining professional businesses, and decarbonisation. Maximising sustainable transport connections is also key to sustainable growth.
- The importance of Gatwick to Crawley's economy was highlighted, not just for direct employment but for the secondary and tertiary jobs the airport helps to sustain.

67. GATCOM indicated support for the Task Force's work highlighting diversification as key to enhancing and sustaining the town into the future. Some members expressed concern about the risk of over-reliance on the aviation sector which had been highlighted by the pandemic. There was also a need to draw in younger families to the community surrounding the airport. GAL advised that priorities for the airport included skills development in engineering and digital to support economic recovery and gave an example of a green tech skills pilot project with local West Sussex colleges to help ensure a workforce fit for the future workplace and future employment opportunities in the aviation sector as the airport grows.

Gatwick Airport Station

68. GAL presented an update on the Gatwick Station Redevelopment Project (copy of presentation slides attached to the signed minutes). Key information was highlighted, including:

- The station project refurbishment will provide benefits and new facilities which also aim to provide a seamless journey through the station including improved accessibility for persons with restricted movement.
- The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic led to a small pause of works but is on course to be completed in March 2023. Lower passenger volumes due to the pandemic have enabled the construction contractor to accelerate elements of the project.

- Low-carbon concrete has been used for the development and over the next few months the steel structure will take shape.
- Platforms 1-4 (not included as part of the redevelopment project) already had ample capacity and GAL confirmed that the project design would provide additional capacity to accommodate future airport growth.

69. GATCOM welcomed the positive progress of the project and the anticipated future benefits for passengers. It was queried whether platforms 1-4 (not included as part of the redevelopment project) already have sufficient capacity to cope with increased demand from GAL's growth plans. GAL confirmed platforms 1-4 have ample capacity and that the project design would provide additional total capacity to accommodate its future growth aspirations.

70. GATCOM asked for an update on future train service capacity and track availability, the progress made on the Windmill Junction Project, and the reinstatement of the Gatwick Express. GAL undertook to seek information from Network Rail and GTR on these points.

Dates of next meetings of GATCOM and its sub-groups

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

- Special Meeting of GATCOM to consider the Committee's response to the Northern Runway DCO consultation - Friday 26 November 2021 at 2pm
- GATCOM Steering Group – **rescheduled** to Friday 7 January 2022 at 10am
- Passenger Advisory Group – Thursday 16 December at 1.30pm
- GATCOM - Thursday 20 January 2022 at 2pm.

72. GATCOM noted the next meeting of GAL's Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) on Thursday 4 November at 10am, and the next meeting of the Noise Management Board Executive Board (NEX) on Wednesday 3 November 2021.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 5.02pm.