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GATCOM 15 OCTOBER 2020**KEY MESSAGES AND OUTCOMES FROM MEETING**

The agenda and papers considered at the meeting are available on GATCOM's website at <http://www.gatcom.org.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

REPORTS AND KEY MESSAGES FROM SUB-GROUP MEETINGS**GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman's Report**

- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's report on the impact of COVID restrictions on nitrogen dioxide pollution was noted. The initial results revealed nitrogen dioxide levels on the Horley Gardens Estate Air Quality Management Area in August 2020 being over 50% lower than any August in the previous three years.
- GATCOM's Independent Technical Adviser's Report on the 2019 Noise Exposure Contours was noted. The addition of the N above contours which give more contextual information to the noise climate at a location showing the average number of overflights was welcomed. These supplementary noise metrics will be used to assess impacts for other noise improvement initiatives/projects.
- END Noise Action Plan monitoring report was referred back to Gatwick Airport Limited's (GAL) Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) to consider the detailed analysis submitted by the Environmental and Amenity Groups' representative on the progress made by GAL. Outcomes from the NATMAG meeting will be reported to the next Steering Group.
- The Government's Call for Evidence on Night Flights is due to be issued before the end of the 2020 (probably late November). GATCOM agreed that a workshop be arranged for all members once the Call for Evidence document is issued so that initial consideration can be given to the questions posed in the Call for Evidence.

Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

- As part of GATCOM's work on influencing "Build Back Better" at Gatwick, PAG highlighted the need to rebuild passenger confidence in air travel requesting that the Government be asked to introduce testing for international travellers, or other mechanisms, to reduce the use of quarantine measures.
- The need to re-establish passenger service performance monitoring or other mechanisms to monitor service standards was highlighted. PAG was however mindful of the costs and resource issues for GAL at the current time.
- PAG was very disappointed at the lack of engagement and consultation on GAL's recently announced forecourt charging decision. GAL has been asked to ensure that PAG is fully engaged on the implementation of the new arrangements, and on the development of and subsequent consultation on the on-airport Red Route system, arrangements for blue badge holders and regular users from local areas accessing the rail station.
- GATCOM recognised PAG's role as GAL's critical friend and passenger advocate during this difficult time and supported its efforts to work flexibly and creatively to ensure a positive passenger experience at the airport is maintained.

Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group

- The ILS joining point monitoring data revealed that between 1-2% of flights were joining the ILS within 8nm causing disturbance and concern to local communities. GAL has been asked to refer the performance data to the Flight Operations Performance and Safety Committee and the Noise Management Board. GATCOM agreed that matter should be raised by the Chairman at the first meeting of the Noise Management Board Executive (NEX).
- Given Gatwick's airspace is less busy, aircraft are currently able to climb higher more quickly on Route 4 and vectored earlier onto more direct routings northwards by air traffic control resulting in a different dispersal of aircraft overflight for some communities. NATMAG will continue to monitor track performance and issues arising from the quicker climb rate and earlier vectoring.
- The results of the analysis into aircraft overflight of Slinfold revealed that the flight paths and altitudes between 2014 and 2019 did not support local community groups' claims that overflight had worsened. A summary of the discussion is contained in the [draft NaTMAG minutes](#).
- The extremely low usage of GAL's automated telephone noise complaints facility was noted. GAL confirmed that it was taking on board members' comments about the important need to retain a telephone facility and was exploring other more cost-effective options. The existence of the telephone facility and number needed to be better publicised rather than just publishing the number on the website.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer's commentary on activity and performance of Gatwick over the previous quarter was discussed. GATCOM thanked GAL for the regular updates on the rapidly changing circumstances at Gatwick over the past few months. Key points to note are:

- **Traffic** – during July to September 2020 Gatwick's busiest months, GAL only handled 1.92 million passengers compared with 14.06 million passengers handled in the same period the previous year. There are currently 18 airlines flying to 97 airports in 45 countries/regions. The South Terminal remains closed at the current time with all flights operating out of the North Terminal.
- **Interim Financial Results** – despite an encouraging start to the year, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic passenger numbers fell by 66% in the first six months to 30 June 2020 impacting revenues, a fall of 61.3% and a £321m loss for the company.
- **Planned capital expenditure** – has been reduced by £157m in 2020 and £196m in 2021.
- **Restructure of the business** – has been undertaken to better align GAL's business to reduced passenger numbers and air traffic forecasts. A new organisation structure will be in place from 1 November resulting in a further 598 job losses at GAL. Even post restructure and whilst preserving 1,867 roles, GAL will have more people in most parts of the business than it will need until passenger volumes return – currently anticipated in summer 2021.
- **Economic Recovery** – GAL is actively engaging with central government, local authorities, business groups and economic partnerships to help support collaborative efforts to plan for and drive economic recovery.
- **Community engagement events** – have continued virtually where possible. GAL has launched its new online event "Gatwick keeping in touch with the Community" enabling local communities to share feedback and ask questions.
- **Forecourt charging** – GAL [presented](#) its plans to introduce next year a £5 charge for vehicles using the forecourt to drop off passengers directly outside its terminals. Free drop off or pick up will be available in the airport long stay cars parks providing 2 hours free parking and free shuttle bus. GATCOM expressed much regret that the airport has had to resort to forecourt charging to raise revenue, expressed disappointment that no prior consultation or engagement has taken place on the scheme and sought engagement and consultation on developing the proposals for the associated Red Route system for the road network on-airport, arrangements for Blue Badge holders and for

local residents who use Gatwick to access the rail network and do not have access to other public transport services to get to the airport.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC INFLUENCING "BUILD BACK BETTER" AT GATWICK

National Aviation Recovery Strategy - DfT update

The key points to note are:

- The Government's work on introducing a COVID testing system at airports was an immediate priority.
- The Government aims to publish the Aviation Recovery Plan in the Autumn, hopefully by mid-November. The Plan is expected to set out more measures to boost air travel, while continuing to prevent the spread of the virus including covering the return to growth of the sector; workforce and skills; regional connectivity and freight; innovation and regulation; consumer issues; climate change and decarbonisation; health, safety and security; and the critical role that UK aviation plays in retaining the UK's global reach.
- The Government has already announced the formation of a new 'Jet Zero Council', which will bring together Government, industry and environmental groups to make net zero emission flights possible.
- There was a need for the Government to revisit the longer-term Aviation Strategy in light of the COVID pandemic and developments on decarbonisation, Jet Zero and other issues that have emerged since the consultation on the draft strategy in 2018. There is no timetable at present to bring forward a longer-term Strategy but the Government expects to set out the way forward on aviation noise policy next year.
- The review of the night flights policy and regime will be subject to a two stage consultation. It is proposed that Stage 1 will be the Call for Evidence on the Night Flights Regime which is expected to be issued in November and will be at least a 12 weeks consultation period. As part of this the Government will also propose a 2 year extension to the current regime while the review is undertaken and a clearer picture about the recovery of the aviation sector was known. The Stage 2 consultation currently planned for 2021 will contain proposals for a new regime. The GATCOM Steering Group has highlighted the need for the Government to review the criteria for the granting of dispensations for flights that are delayed into the night period.

Crawley's Economic Recovery Taskforce

Crawley Borough Council's Chief Executive gave an overview of the immense impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the reduced activity of the aviation sector on people and businesses in the Borough as well as placing additional strain on public services and local authority budgets. The key points to note are:

- Crawley's economy has been impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a recent Centre for Cities report estimating that up to 57 per cent of employment in the town is at risk. Around 80% of Crawley businesses have seen a significant drop in turnover and many businesses have seen turnover reduce to zero.
- Many people and families have lost jobs with many now seeking Job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit applications are continuing to rise and other government financial assistance being sought in order to survive.
- Youth unemployment is at an unprecedented high level and is a major concern. The Council is working with the Department for Work and Pensions on employment support and emergency interventions.
- The Crawley Economic Task Force (CERT) and Town Deal Board have been set up to evaluate the true impact of the crisis on the local economy and to drive the development of a coherent Economic Recovery Plan for the town.
- The Executive Task Force brings together the council, senior business representatives (including GAL) from across the borough, the local MP, a government representative, the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and West Sussex County Council to work collaboratively to provide strategic direction to the development of Crawley's Economic Recovery Plan, working to unlock and harness public and private investment

to the maximum benefit of Crawley's community. A ten point recovery plan has been submitted to the Government.

- Crawley is one of three towns in Sussex which has been included in the Government's "Levelling up Funding" scheme for a share of the £3.6 billion Towns Fund. Crawley has been granted £25m to be used for capital projects which was welcome but funding for other projects to aid recovery is also needed for a different and urgent response to the immense impact.
- Training and skills development was a key focus to equip the labour market to better respond to recovery.
- In building back better at Gatwick Airport, Crawley Borough Council would like to see Gatwick being an exemplar of green aviation with excellent digital inter-modal transport connectivity platforms for people/freight.

Independent Commission for Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN)

Simon Henley, Commissioner ICCAN, gave a brief update on ICCAN's work as follows:

- ICCAN was established in January 2019 and over the past two years has met with hundreds of stakeholders.
- It published a review of Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA) in December 2019.
- ICCAN's work has continued through the COVID-19 pandemic but it has reviewed its Work Programme. The pandemic has provided a unique opportunity to use aircraft data on movements, monitoring and attitudes to better understand the impact of aircraft noise and an opportunity for the Government to re-think how aviation noise is managed as the industry recovers.
- Since July ICCAN has published its review of aviation noise metrics, its toolkit for consulting on airspace change, its review of aviation noise and public health and the results of its summer 2020 survey.
- In November ICCAN is planning to publish best practice for noise engagement as there is a need for greater consistency in an airport's approach to engagement.
- The need to consider the impact of delivering improvements to address climate change and emissions on noise reduction strategies was highlighted as some improvements may result in a greater noise impact.

GATCOM's approach to a "Build Back Better" Strategy

There is a need for GATCOM to articulate what it views as priorities for GAL, the Government and other key stakeholders in securing the sustainable recovery of Gatwick's operation in terms of the economy, the environment and the social interventions needed. The suggested GATCOM approach set out in the Secretariat's paper built on comments raised at the GATCOM Steering Group meeting. The key points to note are:

- The environmental and amenity groups' representative submitted its views and priorities in advance of the meeting – [see full statement](#). ICCAN's work on future noise management was viewed as important. GAL was encouraged to be the world leader for environmental and sustainability management and performance and to work towards achieving that ahead of Government policy being issued.
- Recognition that airlines at Gatwick had invested in less noisy, cleaner aircraft and were encouraged to continue their commitment to invest in bringing forward new technologies such as electric and hydrogen aircraft.
- The Noise Management Board Executive (NEX) has recommenced and will be looking at priorities raised by different community noise groups in agreeing its Workplan and the objectives to take forward through the delivery group. GAL is developing an Airline Noise Performance Table which will help to benchmark and monitor flight performance. There was a need to recognise in agreeing priorities that GAL will have fewer resources available to explore all suggestions but there were still many different avenues to explore.
- The business community commended the collaborative and proactive work of Crawley Borough Council and emphasised that international businesses located to the region because of the communications link and connectivity provided by Gatwick Airport.

- Businesses had continuing concerns about the lack of a specific aviation support package from Government and the delay in publishing the Aviation Recovery Plan was not helpful to the industry or the wider business community.
- The vital importance of all interests working together collaboratively to secure economic recovery and to support sustainable growth at Gatwick.
- Training for all ages across the labour market was needed to help the Gatwick economy get back on track.
- In building passenger confidence, the need to encourage the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to move to a regionalised quarantine approach and for the Foreign Office travel advice policy to provide additional certainty for businesses and consumers. It was agreed to include this specific point in GATCOM's suggested approach.
- GAL reiterated its commitment to continue with and build on its decade of change sustainability strategy and environmental performance management with the aim of building back stronger and bigger.

GATCOM agreed its approach to a sustainable recovery of Gatwick's operations as set out in the Secretariat's paper including the inclusion of the additional point on building passenger confidence.

AIRSPACE UPDATE

GAL's paper giving an update on the Airspace modernisation programme, Route 4 and Route 5 was noted.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 21 January 2021 at 14:00.

**Paula Street
Secretariat**