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GATCOM 14 OCTOBER 2021

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 & OTHER MEETINGS

GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman's Report

- GATCOM agreed to ask 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.
- GATCOM endorsed the outcome of NATMAG's assessment of the draft END Noise Action Plan (NAP) 2019-2024 Mid-Term Progress Report, noting GAL's commitment to ensure the next iteration of the END NAP from 2024 onwards includes SMART targets against which progress performance can be measured.
- GAL have been asked to take forward the points and suggestions raised by NATMAG set out in paragraph 2.4 of the Secretariat's report at Appendix 1.
- The approach to END NAP annual reporting set out in paragraph 2.5 of the Secretariat's report is endorsed.
- An update on the FASI-South airspace change project was requested for the GATCOM meeting in January 2022.

Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

- The PAG's activities and its engagement with GAL as the 'critical friend' over the past quarter and its role as advocate on behalf of passengers was noted.
- GATCOM agreed the need to develop an understanding the implications of the Government's waiver of the 80:20 runway slot rule on Gatwick's operation (see item below).

Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)

NATMAG's activities over the quarter and the key messages to GATCOM were noted.

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

- The NMB Executive Board's report of NMB activities was noted.
- Thanks were given 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

The Chief Executive Officer's commentary on activity and performance of Gatwick over the previous quarter was discussed. The key points to note:

- The airport handled 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 570m 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 welcome 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 from summer 2022 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 Northern Runway DCO consultation was launched in September. All interested parties and individuals are encouraged to take part before the deadline of 11:59pm on 1 December 2021.
- 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 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 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.

Implications of 80:20 Slots Waiver for GAL

GAL provided an overview of the implications of the 80:20 slots regime. Key points to note:

- 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 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 season.
- GAL is lobbying the Government 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 a series of slots or commit to use them.
- GATCOM noted the implications for GAL and agreed to continue to monitor the implications for GAL.

NORTHERN RUNWAY DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (DCO) – PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION & NEXT STEPS

GAL [presented](#) an update on the consultation, an overview of the project and the next steps. Key points to note:

- GATCOM's and local authorities' calls for a longer consultation period than GAL's originally proposed nine weeks consultation has been taken into account. The consultation launched on 9 September with a 12 weeks consultation period. The deadline for submissions is 11:59pm on 1 December 2021.

- All consultation documents are available on GAL's website. There are [different formats](#) including a 16 page Summary Document, a more detailed 160 page Consultation Overview Document, and the 1600 page technical Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).
- Information on the consultation is also available via a [virtual exhibition](#) tool on the website as well as at [deposit locations](#) and [Mobile Project Offices](#). 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 take on board all the feedback received and will finalise its application to the Planning Inspectorate. In the meantime, GAL continues to engage with local authorities on the detailed technical work still being undertaken.
- GATCOM noted the extensive information and assessments published as part of the consultation material which included an assessment of CO₂ emissions.
- Members highlighted feedback received from local residents about some of the mobile project offices being hard to find or were in inaccessible locations, or attendees were told that 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.
- GAL noted concerns about potential increased levels of noise for nearby residents and 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. GATCOM highlighted however that it was the frequency of overflight that was of equal concern to affected residents and also needed to be addressed.
- Disturbance from the project construction over many years as well as the potential increased level of construction traffic on local roads, and particularly rural roads was of concern to GATCOM. GAL confirmed construction traffic routes will be set so that 80% of vehicles arrive via the M23 spur road to minimise the impact on rural roads; comments or concerns on this can be made in consultation responses.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) recent guidance on air quality standards was raised. 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.
- Representatives of the business interests and tourism interests welcomed the proposed expansion at Gatwick and will encourage businesses, the supply chain, and the industry to respond to the consultation.

The proposed [approach](#) to GATCOM's response to the consultation was considered. Key points to note:

- It was suggested that GATCOM consider adopting majority and minority views in its consultation response and there was general agreement to this approach. A position of neutrality should however be maintained as previously agreed 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.
- GATCOM reaffirmed that its role was to:
 - 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.

- 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.
 - recognise that there will be differing views across the membership of the Committee but the essential need for all interests was 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 that it can provide constructive, balanced feedback to GAL.
- Members agreed that a Special Meeting of GATCOM be scheduled in November to consider and agree its response to the pre-application consultation. **The Special Meeting has been arranged to take place on Friday 26 November at 14:00.**
 - It was agreed as the most pragmatic solution that GATCOM should submit a high-level statement on issues of common concern that need to be addressed by GAL. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a draft statement of response to the consultation which reflects the different shades and aspects of the debate and the diverse views of members whilst emphasising the common ground. The draft response needed to address concerns over disturbance from the project's construction and construction traffic on the road network, CO₂ emissions relating to growth, air quality, and the noise envelope.

CRAWLEY ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK FORCE

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. Key points to note:

- 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.
- GATCOM indicated support for the Task Force's work highlighting diversification as key to enhancing and sustaining the town into the future. GAL advised that priorities for the airport included skills development in engineering and digital to support this 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; this will also support Gatwick's future growth plans.

GATWICK AIRPORT STATION

GAL [presented](#) an update on the Gatwick Station Redevelopment Project. Key points to note:

- 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.
- 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 will report back.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- A Special Meeting of GATCOM to consider the Committee's response to GAL's Northern Runway consultation will take place on Friday 26 November at 14:00
- The next ordinary meeting of GATCOM will take place on Thursday 20 January 2022 at 14:00.

Paula Street
Secretariat