

Minutes of the meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 2 November 2023, via MS Teams.

Present:	
Tom Crowley	Chairman
Angie Hills	ABTA
Brett North	Gatwick Diamond Business
Chris Larkman	Which?
Cllr Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Cllr Bob Bowdler	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Bob Noyce	Crawley Borough Council
Cllr Helyn Clack	Surrey County Council
Cllr Liz Kitchen	Horsham District Council
Cllr Malcolm Fillmore	Rusper Parish Council
Cllr Margot McArthur	Kent County Council
Cllr Mike George	Horley Town Council
Cllr Richard Biggs	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Cllr Richard Smith	Tandridge District Council
Cllr Rosemary Hobbs	Mole Valley District Council
Cllr Steve Waight	West Sussex County Council
Dominic Rothwell	Unite
Ed Winter	Environmental and Amenity Groups
Fran Downton	Tourism South East
Jo Rettie	Gatwick Airline Operators Committee
Jonathan Drew	Chair, Noise Management Executive Board
Rory Lillington	Airlines UK
Samantha Williams	Chair, Passenger Advisory Group
Stephen Jones	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Also 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
Monique Smart	GATCOM Secretariat
Graham Lake	GATCOM Technical Advisor

1. Apologies for absence were received from:

Colin Stewart (BAR UK), Anthony Middleton (C2C LEP), Robin Clarke (NATS), Hugh McConnellogue (Gatwick AOC), Ana Christie (Sussex Chamber of Commerce), Julie Mockford (Mid Sussex District Council)

2. Minutes Of The Last Meeting

2.1 Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of GATCOM held on 20 July 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman’s Report

3.1 The Chairman of GATCOM introduced his report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last Steering Group Meeting on 12 October 2023:

3.2 GATCOM agreed the following recommendations as detailed in the report:

- That GATCOM note the outcomes of the UKACCs research of ACCs and GATCOMs positive position and agree to produce a press release to publicise the outcome.

3.3 The Chairman drew members attention to the update on the NMB review and that there will be a transition period where the work and membership of the existing NMB will continue. The Chairman proposed that the current NEX Chair, Jonathan Drew, remains a member of GATCOM during this transition period and this was agreed by GATCOM.

4. Chief Executive Officer’s Report

4.1 Stewart Wingate, Chief Executive Officer, GAL, introduced his quarterly report. (copy attached to the signed minutes) and highlighted the key points and activity at the airport over the past quarter:

- Baroness Margaret Ford of Cunninghame is the new Chair of London Gatwick. Sir David Higgins will remain as a non-executive Director. It was hoped Baroness Ford would attend a GATCOM meeting next year.
- Whilst the NATS technical issue on August bank holiday was challenging for all, there were further challenges in September that resulted in a temporary limit on daily flight movements until 1st October. The decision was made alongside NATS, who were experiencing 30% of their staff being unavailable for a variety of medical reasons including COVID. London Gatwick continues to work with NATS to build resilience.
- The five-year Capital Investment Programme was published in July with over £2billion of investment in facilities and services.
- The CAA’s latest accessibility report has rated London Gatwick as ‘Very Good.’
- Gatwick will serve 210 destinations by the end of 2023 making it one of the best-connected airports in Europe.
- The upgrading and improvements at Gatwick’s Rail Station are expected to be completed by the end of this year.
- It was noted that the PINS website to register as an interested party for the Northern Runway DCO, had technical issues on the final day. Both Gatwick and GATCOM confirmed a response was awaited from PINS. Post meeting note – the relevant representation registration period has been extended to 19 November.
- GATCOM welcomed London Gatwick signing the Armed Forces Covenant.
- The opening of the new STEM centre was mentioned, and GAL confirmed that both Graduate and Apprenticeship schemes are running.

5. Member’s Questions

5.1 One question was received in advance from Cllr Helyn Clack, GATCOM Vice Chair and representative from Surrey County Council:

I have recently been approached by county councillor colleague asking if I would like to use my members grant funding to make a donation to River Mole Watch
<https://www.rivermoleriverwatch.org.uk/>

The Mole arises just south of the airport and travels northwards underneath the runway emerging in the Parish of Charlwood and Hookwood and onwards through Surrey to the River Thames. What work is being undertaken by the airport to regularly test the water quality in the river in the Gatwick vicinity, Does the airport monitor pollution and report events in the river? How does the airport support the work of the River Mole River Watch?

5.2 The response from London Gatwick was:

All of London Gatwick's water discharges to the River Mole are lab tested at least weekly. Furthermore, any discharges that may contain de-icer are monitored 24/7 to ensure that this contamination is diverted to our pollution lagoons and then treated at the Sewage treatment works. In addition, since 2010 we have monitored the long-term health of our local river environment, by undertaking quarterly, in river, biological monitoring. This data indicates that our discharges are not having any detrimental impact on local water ecology.

Downstream of our main discharge we have a device which monitors critical water parameters and reports to a cloud-based monitoring site. We share this information with the EA. In recent years this has helped us, and the EA respond quickly to both pollution (not London Gatwick source) and natural environmental events. In both cases we provided equipment and resources to assist in the efforts to minimise impact to fish and other wildlife. London Gatwick are often the primary reporters of pollution events in the local rivers and streams. We often go on to help remediate these events by deploying our equipment including oil booms or oxygenation pumps and on occasions have even traced the upstream sources to assist the EA.

We are formalising a partnership with River Mole River Watch to show commitment in promoting local water stewardship.

We have extended financial support (£1,500) to provide essential testing equipment that ensures the continuation of their testing program for at least this year.

6. Great British Railway Transition team

6.1 GATCOM welcomed Emily James, Stakeholder Engagement Lead, Great British Railways Transition Team, who provided GATCOM with a [presentation](#) and overview of her teams work and plans for rail reform.

6.2 Emily explained that GBRTT's purpose was to create a simpler, better railway for everyone and referred to the governments 'Plan for Rail' that referred to bringing together track and train with decisions being more joined up and made closer to the customer.

6.3 Emily went on to detail some of the work that the team had already been involved in including a call for evidence on the long-term strategy for rail and working closely with the DfT on the first National Rail Accessibility Strategy that was hoped to go out to consultation.

7. Gatwick Railway Services Update

7.1 GATCOM welcomed Tim Aveline and Paul Codd from Govia Thameslink who provided a presentation (copy to follow) and update on rail services at Gatwick.

7.2 They explained the improvements work at Gatwick Station including double to space for passengers, the new track layout, five new lifts, eight escalators and four new staircases which make the station more accessible and allow passengers to pass through more quickly and with ease.

7.3 They went on to detail some data on passengers and the fact that Govia Thameslink is a commuter-based network but the data for Gatwick does show peaks around holiday times for travellers. Paul also explained the airport specific marketing campaigns with an 'out of London' focus pushing for rail travel where car use is higher.

7.4 Members raised a number of questions to which responses were provided:

- The new Rail Station was welcomed but the lack of access for local residents was of concern and some members felt this could be improved.
- It was confirmed there was adequate capacity on the Brighton mainline for additional passengers should the DCO progress.
- The Croydon Area Remodelling Schemes was on hold due to lack of funding from the treasury.
- It was confirmed that improvements to the East/West rail services were being implemented from December with services becoming half hourly. This was part funded by London Gatwick through the Transport Fund.
- Some members questioned why the Gatwick Express was still a premium price when it was no longer a premium service, but it was confirmed this is still considered to be a separate service to the commuter service. It was also confirmed it would continue as a service to Brighton.
- There were no plans to extend the hours of service either earlier or later. This was due to the fact that Network Rail need time for track maintenance.

8. Airspace Update

8.1 Andy Sinclair, Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy provided an update on the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation - South (FASI-S) for Gatwick (ACP-2018-60), part of the UK airspace modernisation programme. He explained that the Design Principle Evaluation (DPE) and the Initial Options Appraisal (IOA) have been completed and were submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for review at the Stage 2 Gateway. The decision to proceed to stage 3, the consultation stage, has been approved.

8.2 The Department for Transport and the CAA are exploring drawing all individual FASI airspace change projects together under a unified delivery model through a single design entity (SDE). As the scope, process and timeline for this initiative is in development the project schedule for Gatwick's airspace change is uncertain.

8.3 It was noted that the CAA has published the revised CAP1616 Airspace Change process. It was not yet known what affect this would have but it would be discussed more at the next NaTMAG meeting and as more information comes out from the CAA.

8.4 It was confirmed that this year's Noise and Airspace Annual Public Meeting would be held on 6th December the details of which would be circulated very soon.

9. Noise Management Board (NMB) – Executive Board (NEX) Report

9.1 Jonathan Drew, Co-Chair of the NMB, introduced his report (copies attached to the signed minutes) that summarised the key messages and recommendations arising from recent meetings.

9.2 Jonathan confirmed that the second term of the NMB was drawing to a close and that London Gatwick would update on plan for the future of the NMB later in December. As previously mentioned there would be a transition period where the current Co-Chairs and workplan would continue.

9.3 Jonathan also referred to [The NEX report](#) that had been circulated to GATCOM members this morning and summarised the NMB second term workplan items, achievements and continuing projects. He explained that the majority of NMB projects have been delivered or are on the verge of being delivered and he thanked all members and Gatwick for taking part and helping to deliver the projects. It was noted that there are a small number of ongoing projects on which work will continue during the transition period.

9.4 It was also agreed that GATCOM writes a short note to the Department for Transport, copied to the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing, asking senior officials to incorporate a policy on aviation noise and land use planning in the Noise Policy Statement for England. The Co-Chairs will supply appropriate wording to the GATCOM Chair & Secretariat.

10. Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)

10.1 Mike George, GATCOM's lead member for noise, introduced his report (copies attached to the signed minutes) that summarised the key messages and recommendations arising from recent meetings.

10.2 GATCOM noted the report and NATMAG's key message that the discussion from NCL presenting on the Round 4 NAP actions and skeleton plan was found to be very useful. NaTMAG had been able to contribute and comment on the draft plan before it was submitted to Defra. Sign off by Defra was expected in the first quarter 2024.

11. Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

11.1 The Chair of PAG introduced her report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last PAG meeting that took place on 28 September 2023 and activities during the last quarter. She explained that PAG had had lots of engagement with GAL including the Capital Programme and the expansion of terminals.

11.2 It was noted that both the Chair and Vice Chair had been reappointed to their roles for a further four and two years, respectively. This was welcomed by the GATCOM Chair and members. It was also noted that interviews for new volunteers PAG members would be taking place shortly.

11.3 GATCOM agreed the recommendation that GATCOM notes the work of PAG and its engagement with GAL as the 'critical friend' and support its role as advocate on behalf of passengers.

12 Appointment to Sub Groups

12.1 GATCOM received the Secretariat's report setting out for approval the appointment to be made to NaTMAG.

12.2 Resolved – That GATCOM agreed the appointment of Cllr Victoria Chester (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council) to NaTMAG.

13 Date of Next Meeting of GATCOM and its Sub-Groups

13.1 GATCOM noted the next meetings of GATCOM and its sub-groups as follows:

- The next meeting of GATCOM will take place on Thursday 25 January 2024 at 2.00pm in person at Gatwick Airport
- The next meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group will take place on Thursday 11 January 2024 at 2.00pm, virtually via MS Teams
- The next meeting of PAG will take place on Thursday 7 December 2023 at 10am at Gatwick Airport

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 4.06pm.