

Minutes of the meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 25 January 2024.

Present:	
Tom Crowley	Chairman
Colin Stewart	BAR UK
Chris Larkman	Which?
Cllr Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Cllr Philip Lunn	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 Victoria Chester	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
Ed Winter	Environmental and Amenity Groups
Hugh McConnellogue	Gatwick Airline Operators Committee
Warren Morgan	Co-Chair, Noise Management Board
Samantha Williams	Chair, Passenger Advisory Group
Stuart Pick	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Also in attendance:	
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

1. Apologies for absence were received from:

Stewart Wingate (Chief Executive Officer, GAL), Brett North (Gatwick Diamond Business), Robin Clarke (NATS), Ana Christie (Sussex Chamber of Commerce), Cllr Julie Mockford (Mid Sussex District Council) Graham Lake (GATCOM Technical Advisor), Jonathan Drew (Chair, Noise Management Executive Board), Angie Hills (ABTA), Cllr Bob Bowdler (East Sussex County Council), Cllr Richard Biggs (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council).

2. Minutes Of The Last Meeting

- 2.1 Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of GATCOM held on 2 November 2023 and the Special meeting held on 26 October 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman’s Report

- 3.1 The Chair of GATCOM introduced his report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last Steering Group Meeting that took place on 11 January 2024.

3.2 The Chair highlighted the timetable and process for the examination stage of the DCO as detailed in section 2 of the Steering Group report.

3.3 The Chair also referred to sections 4.3 to 4.5 of his report that detailed the discussion around the GAL consultation on the three proposed changes to the Northern Runway Project. Following Steering Group, a draft response had been circulated to all GATCOM members and the final response was circulated and submitted to GAL on 19 January. This was also added to the GATCOM website.

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

1. That GATCOM consider the Secretariat report in relation to the GATCOM Away Day as detailed at Agenda Item 4.
2. That GATCOM consider the response to the DfT consultation on airport slot allocation system reform as detailed at Agenda Item 5.
3. That GATCOM note the consultation response on the Northern Runway Project Proposed Changes that was submitted to London Gatwick on 19 January.
4. That GATCOM note the detail of the Secretariat report of the UKACCs annual meeting.

4 GATCOM Away Day

4.1 The Secretariat introduced the report (copies attached to the signed minutes) that detailed the discussions and recommendations from the GATCOM Away Day that took place in November 2023.

4.2 It was noted that the report had already been discussed at the Steering Group and as noted in that report, the only concern raised was about increasing the membership and size of GATCOM as it is already a large committee and some members had concerns that it could become too large to manage effectively. The Secretariat explained that recommendation 10 therefore proposed allocating the seat that will become vacant when the transfer of functions from the LEP move to Local Authorities in April 2024, to an Environment Group.

4.3 The following recommendations were approved:

1. Continue with the current meeting arrangement of alternating between in person and virtual meetings for GATCOM and GATCOM Steering Group.
2. In partnership with London Gatwick, liaise with Surrey County Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and Crawley Borough Council about using their Council Chambers and hybrid equipment for a future GATCOM meeting.
3. Look into an alternative room set up for future in-person GATCOM meetings.
4. Consider subject specific surgeries or workshops prior to the in-person meetings.

5. Add Executive Summaries to all GATCOM reports.
6. Agree that East Sussex County Council have a place on the GATCOM Steering Group.
7. Create a member handbook for GATCOM.
8. Agree the GATCOM Work Programme 2024/25 as circulated.
9. Amend the title of the Environment and Amenities Groups on GATCOM to Environment Groups.

4.4 The secretariat went on to explain that the final recommendation (10), came from the break out group that Jonathan Drew had led at the GATCOM Away Day. As Jonathan was unable to be at GATCOM today he asked for the following statement to be read out:

“This was a very interesting break out subject to lead. There were 3 critical points that helped all of us in the breakout group reach the recommendations:

- Firstly, we put all thoughts of “who” the environmental reps might be – CPRE, GACC, one of the NMB chairs, CAGNE etc – to one side: to name names would be distracting and I hope you will be able to do the same today as you discuss this.
- Secondly, we agreed to focus on what was best for GATCOM’s reputation as a statutory body: Whilst Councillors have a clear democratic mandate, there is no such mandate for other members. Currently there is no formal governance on when and how other groups and bodies formally explain their credentials and mandate, with a process to enter and exit GATCOM. The risk is that, without such a process, the reputation of GATCOM and its members risks being tarnished because of a lack of good governance.
- Finally, we examined what would be a fair number of community seats against the full range of environmental issues given the increased public, community and industry focus on environment issues and solutions; and bearing in mind a fair balance with other unelected groups within GATCOM.

You should note that the majority of the breakout group recommended 4 environmental representatives for GATCOM to give parity and balance with business & economic groups with the expected winding up of one of the business groups later this year. However, I note that in line with concerns about an expansion of GATCOM, you are being asked to consider a single extra representative instead. So today, you are considering a compromise solution following discussion at the steering group – I don’t see compromise as a dirty word because it also means listening to and considering others’ views. Given that, whatever your personal view is today, I hope you can support the recommended changes. Taken in their entirety, I and break out group members believe they will strengthen GATCOM’s reputation and good governance – and add real value on environmental for all of us and for Gatwick airport too.”

4.5 A number of members made comment on the recommendation including the following:

- It was suggested that more thought should be given to how and to whom the vacant seat should be allocated once the LEP functions transfer to County Councils in April.
- Good governance is vital and any individual on GATCOM should have the backing of a constituted organisation with transparent membership.
- The Environmental impact of Gatwick is broadly equivalent to the Business and Economic issues so they should have an equal number of representatives. It would therefore make sense to allocate the vacant seat from the LEP to an Environment Group.
- GATCOM originally had one Environment seat, following a review a few years ago it was decided that the NMB Chair should be added as a second Environment seat. Many groups are on the NMB so those groups can raise specific issues at the NMB. However, it was noted that the NMB is purely about Noise and not other Environment issues.
- It was also suggested that residents can raise Environment and Noise issues via their local Council representative on GATCOM.
- There was some concern about the selection of groups, but it was confirmed that if the recommendation were approved, a process would be developed and bought back to GATCOM for approval.

4.6 As a majority view was not clear from the discussions, the Chair asked for a show of hands for those in favour or against recommendation 10. The vote resulted in 8 GATCOM members in support and 9 GATCOM members opposed. The following recommendation was therefore rejected:

10. Increase the number of seats for Environment Groups on GATCOM from 2 to 3 by making use of the vacant seat created by the transfer of functions from the LEP to Upper Tier Councils (who are already members of GATCOM) from April 2024. And that a process, taking account of the conclusions reached at the awayday, be developed and agreed for the selection and term of environmental groups to serve as members of GATCOM.

5 Consultation on Airport Slot Allocation System Reform

5.1 The Chair referred members to the briefing note attached at pages 33-39 and also to the draft consultation response that was circulated separately. It was explained that unfortunately Graham Lake, GATCOM's independent technical advisor, was unable to attend today but hopefully members have read his briefing paper.

5.2 The Secretariat explained that the consultation deadline had been extended and the closing date was now 8 March 2024. Because of this GATCOM does understand that some groups and organisations will not be in a position to confirm their views until nearer to the deadline. However, this was the closest GATCOM meeting to the deadline so it was agreed it should be discussed today.

5.3 The secretariat went on to explain that Graham Lake's briefing and a draft GATCOM response was discussed at Steering Group. As stated at paragraph 4.2 of the Steering Group report members agreed that GATCOM should respond to this consultation with comments to ensure opportunities for environmental improvements, resilience and better use of airspace. This had been reflected in the draft response circulated to members and added to the GATCOM website earlier this week.

5.4 The Chairman invited Seb Pelissier from EasyJet and representing the Airline Operators Committee (AOC) to offer their views. Seb explained that airline's view was that adding environmental factors would complicate the system and that this was covered by other regulations. Airlines could therefore not support the draft GATCOM response in its current form. It was also noted that the AOC would be meeting on 7 February, after which time they would hope to be able to submit a collective position from the Airlines.

5.5 London Gatwick stated that they agreed with the Government objectives that any revised system should stimulate a competitive environment by creating an efficient, transparent, and dynamic slot market; and establishing a framework for the allocation of new slots.

5.6 GATCOM Members asked Seb and GAL a number of questions including the following:

- It was acknowledged that this was a highly technical area, but GATCOM welcomed the briefing note and Airlines views.
- Was there much evidence that the current system was not working? Seb responded suggesting there was little evidence. GAL used the example that during Covid, airlines held onto slots but did not fly and situations like that need to be looked at.
- There were mixed views on whether slots should be auctioned but it was agreed that there should be more accountability for the slot co-ordinators.

5.7 GATCOM agreed that the draft response be amended after 7 February, based on expected further comments from the Airlines and the Airport and that it be circulated to all members for final comment before being approved by the Chair and submitted to the DfT by 8 March 2024.

6 Chief Executive Officer's Report

6.1 Tim Norwood, Director of Planning and Corporate Affairs, shared apologies from Stewart Wingate and presented the Chief Executive Officer report of activity and performance of London Gatwick over the previous quarter. Questions from members were addressed, including the following:

- London Gatwick stated that little change was expected as a result of the intended acquisition of GIP, one of London Gatwick's major shareholders, by BlackRock.
- Regarding the recent consultation of the three proposed changes to the Northern Runway Project, London Gatwick confirmed that the consultation had included leaflets delivered to local residents, national and local media releases, social

media posts and meetings with Local Authorities and Parish Councils. It was noted that a telephone helpline and email address was also set up for any questions about the proposals. The consultation had now closed and lots of responses had been received. These would be collated and submitted with a report to PINS. If the changes are accepted by PINS, then it would be brought into the examination and there would be a further opportunity to comment on the changes as part of the examination process.

- Following the official opening event for the new Gatwick Train Station, members praised the cooperation between organisations for this project. However, members asked London Gatwick and GATCOM to continue to work with Network Rail and train operators to streamline ticketing and increase the hours of rail operations around Gatwick.
- Due to the short-term night time restrictions that had to be put in place in December, staffing in the Air Traffic Control was discussed. London Gatwick confirmed that they are still working closely with NATS to increase staffing levels and manage any disruption.
- In respect of the increase to the forecourt drop-off charge at the airport, members raised concerns that one postcode area in Horley was not included in the local exemption scheme. It was mentioned that many local residents outside the scheme do not have public transport as an option so have to drive to the airport. It was also questioned why electric vehicles have to pay the charge. London Gatwick explained that the main purpose of the scheme was to disincentivise people from making the least sustainable 'kiss and fly' journeys to and from the airport by car although they could still drop off in the long stay car parks free of charge and use the free shuttle service to the airport should they wish.

7 Gatwick Education Engagement Programme

7.1 GATCOM welcomed Melanie Wrightson, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, from London Gatwick. Melanie provided a [presentation](#) that detailed the many different aspects of the education programme at London Gatwick including the newly opened STEM centre, the Endeavour STEM Programme, Career Live Broadcasts, Apprenticeships and Graduate Programme. This is generating a significant number of engagement opportunities for school children and students from across Sussex, Surrey and Kent.

7.2 It was noted that the next apprenticeships opened to applicants in mid-February and 13 new graduates would be recruited in the autumn. If members want more information on any aspect of the education programme or to visit the STEM centre, they should contact the team at STEM@gatwickairport.com

8 Member's Questions

8.1 Two questions were received in advance from Angie Hills of ABTA and Chris Larkman of Which?

8.2 Question 1 from Angie Hills – ABTA

Please can GAL clarify how the increase in charge for the forecourt/drop off zone, helps achieve the aim for 60% of journeys to and from the airport to be zero or ultra-low emissions by 2030. Do GAL financially contribute to the rail and bus providers and if

so, could they provide further details of the investment provided and whether they are consulted on how the investment is used. Especially given for example there are no direct trains from Kent.

8.3 London Gatwick Response to Question 1

Drop-off charges help contribute to targets for sustainable travel because they aim to disincentivise the least sustainable way of travelling to the airport and reduce the relative cost of alternative public transport options. Drop-off or 'kiss and fly' travel usually means 4 car journeys to and from the airport, two which are generally single occupancy, contributing to local road traffic congestion and emissions. Annual mode share data from Luton and Stansted Airports before the COVID-19 pandemic indicated that the introduction of drop-off charges contributed to mode shift away from Kiss and Fly towards more sustainable modes of transport.

London Gatwick's Sustainable Transport Fund (STF), which is formed from a combination of a levy on our passenger parking spaces, staff parking allocations, forecourt charging and red route enforcement, makes important contributions to public transport services which benefit airport staff, passengers and our local communities. We use a range of data inputs to collaboratively develop proposals for service enhancements with operators, including CAA passenger mode share data, the results of the airport-wide staff travel survey and passenger and staff feedback. In recent years, on rail the STF has contributed capital funding to the building of Platform 7 and the Gatwick Airport Station redevelopment, as well as the doubling in frequency of Great Western Railway's Gatwick to Reading service from December 2023. We also work closely with Metrobus to provide service enhancements on local bus routes to and from the airport, with approximately £600,000 budgeted for supporting Metrobus services in 2024 alone. This includes running services later into the evenings, 24-hour services and other changes to routes and timetables to encourage more people to travel to the airport by local buses. Gatwick also contributed to Metrobus' hydrogen buses and have pledged further support of £950,000 for further expansion of the hydrogen fleet, subject to the successful outcome of a West Sussex County Council funding bid to the Department for Transport.

The Transport Forum Steering Group meets quarterly. Member organisations include Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex and Kent County Councils, Crawley Borough Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, National Highways, Network Rail, Govia Thameslink Railway, Great Western Railway, National Express, Metrobus, Transport for London and PAG. The Transport Forum Steering Group are consulted regularly on proposed initiatives for the STF, monitors spend, and members are encouraged to bring forward their own suggestions and projects for funding.

Kent remains a key target area for public transport services to and from London Gatwick, however, there are significant challenges to enabling new bus, coach or rail services to the county. A previous coach service by National Express, part funded by Kent County Council and Gatwick Airport, was withdrawn after a few months due to very low passenger numbers and a service launched by megabus in 2023 was similarly challenged by low uptake.

We remain open to proposals from bus and coach operators for services to Kent and other underserved areas. However, any investment in services from the Sustainable Transport Fund must ensure value for money and demonstrate positive outcomes in terms of patronage, mode shift and the ability for services to operate with reducing levels of subsidy. Past experience has demonstrated that services to Kent face extremely high operational costs and challenges in achieving passenger numbers that mean we must carefully consider future proposals to ensure we support services that have the best possible chance of success and becoming sustainable with reducing or no

subsidy. However, notwithstanding the challenges, the Northern Runway project has identified mitigation measures for Kent.

In terms of rail provision - Network Rail have recently concluded a study exploring the potential rail case for direct services between Tonbridge and Gatwick, to which we contributed data and insights. The study concluded that there may be a case to extend the existing Tonbridge to Redhill service to Gatwick, but that services beyond this to other locations in Kent would require significant investment in infrastructure and faces significant logistical and operational challenges. We will continue to work with Network Rail, GTR and the DfT to encourage operators to bring forward Tonbridge-Gatwick services at the earliest opportunity, but we recognise there are constraints and challenges for the rail industry to overcome to enable trains to operate.

8.4 Question 2 from Chris Larkman – Which?

Following the successful evacuation of all passengers and crew after the recent Japan Airlines crash, has Gatwick Airport and the airlines reviewed their emergency evacuation procedures?

8.5 London Gatwick Response to Question 2

The self-evacuation of the aircraft occupants is primarily the responsibility of the airline and aircraft crew. Often this can be as a result of liaison with ground-based Rescue & Fire-fighting Services (RFFS). However, for an incident such as the Japan aircraft accident, where no prior indication of a problem was in evidence, the evacuation will be initiated by the crew/persons onboard, and the responding RFFS crews will dynamically react accordingly to the incident evolving in front of them.

The saving of life is the primary objective of the RFFS, where passengers and / or crew are unable to self-evacuate, Fire service crews will aim to rapidly suppress and extinguish fires in order to facilitate a search of the aircraft.

London Gatwick Airports Rescue & Fire-fighting Service have reviewed the open-source information in relation to the Japan Aircraft Accident. Our equipment, personnel and tactics/techniques are subject to continued regulatory oversight and auditing. An appropriate RFFS provision, along with a high level of inter-agency Interoperability and emergency planning, provides London Gatwick Airport with a confidence that we can appropriately respond to emergencies of a similar nature.

9 New Economics Foundation

9.1 GATCOM welcomed Alex Chapman, Senior Economist from the New Economics Foundation who provided a [presentation](#) summarising his recently published report – Losing Altitude. He explained that The New Economics Foundation was a charitable think tank whose mission was to set an economy that works for the people and the planet, and the report looks at the national economic dynamics of air travel in the UK. He explained that although the report was not specific to Gatwick, he had tried to make his presentation relevant to Gatwick and GATCOM.

10 Airspace Update

10.1 Andy Sinclair, Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy provided an update on the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation - South (FASI-S) for London Gatwick. Andy explained that:

- GAL passed its Stage 2 Gateway (options development and options appraisal) in October 2023.
- Stage 3 (Consultation Preparation) is currently paused to allow for consideration of the concept of a single design entity (SDE). The scope, process and timeline for this work is being developed by the DFT and CAA and will be subject to public consultation during Q2/3 2024 if taken forward.
- The impact and delay to GAL's Airspace Change Process is currently unknown. However, GAL is exploring with the CAA, ACOG and NATS opportunities for an initial deployment of the FASI-S route structure to the south of London Gatwick.
- The deployment split process will be captured and explained in the upcoming UK Airspace Change Masterplan Iteration 3. (Iteration 2 CAP2312B)
- GAL (with NATS) are holding stakeholder engagement sessions in January to introduce the ACOG-led public engagement exercise which will set out Airspace Change Masterplan Iteration 3 (including the mechanism for split deployment of the GAL FASI-South airspace change).
- Stage 3 Gateway is anticipated for January 2025. Public consultation was planned for Q1 2025.

10.2 GATCOM members provided the following questions and comments:

- GAL confirmed that if they were to progress an initial deployment to the south of London Gatwick this would not mean the realigning of more routes from the north to the south.
- It was requested that the results of the Fair and Equitable Distribution (FED) Study be published. GAL confirmed that it had been presented to the CAA and GAL were waiting for a response. [*Post Meeting Note: The CAA published CAP 2971 Fair and Equitable Distribution Interim Report - Distribution of aircraft noise Gatwick Airport on 9 February.*]
- Concern was raised about airspace designs that proposed Performance Based Navigation (PBN) arrival route options and, in particular, the potential for the creation of concentrated flightpaths when only single route options were proposed. GAL responded stating that they must follow the legal process and were confident this would deliver an optimal outcome but that will not be known until the full process using the agreed methodology is completed.

10.3 Andy went on to provide an update in relation to Route 4:

- Stage 3 is in progress. Consultation Preparation including a Full Options Appraisal has commenced.
- The CAA have indicated that the most recent track performance statistics should be used in producing the indicative baseline data. The CAA have also confirmed that from Stage 3 onwards, GAL will need to comply with the CAP1616 version 5, which requires additional environmental analyses to be conducted (including a Habitats Regulations Assessment).
- Due to these clarifications, Gatwick is estimating additional work and slight delay to completion and subsequent stages.
- The Public Consultation is planned for Q4 2024.

11 Noise Management Board (NMB) – Executive Board (NEX) Report

11.1 Warren Morgan, Co-Chair of the NMB, introduced the NMB report (copies attached to the signed minutes) that summarised the key messages arising from recent meetings. The main issue to highlight was the NMB meeting with the CAA that was due

to take place on 12 February with a focus on the FASI-South process for Gatwick and next steps.

12 Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)

12.1 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.

12.2 The main issues highlighted were:

- The outcome of the Defra review of the NAP (2024-2028) was expected in February.
- NaTMAG next meets on 1 February. If Members have any new noise concerns, they are encouraged to inform NaTMAG, via the GATCOM Secretariat.
- There was still a vacancy for a GATCOM Councillor to join NaTMAG. Any members interested should speak to Cllr Mike George, Lead Member for Noise, or the GATCOM Secretariat.

12.3 GATCOM noted the report and NATMAG's key messages.

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

13.1 The Chair of PAG introduced her report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last PAG meeting that took place on 7 December 2023 and activities during the last quarter. The PAG Chair highlighted to GATCOM the recent work of PAG and how they are regularly kept up to date on issues such as the ATC staffing and the next generation security scanners and how these may affect passengers.

13.2 Three new PAG members had been recruited and GATCOM welcomed them on board.

13.3 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.

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

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

The next meeting of GATCOM will take place on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 2.00pm.

The next meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group will take place on Thursday 18 April 2024 at 10.00am.

The next meeting of PAG will take place on Thursday 21 March 2024 at 1.30pm

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 4.35pm.