

**Minutes of the meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 16 May 2024.**

<b>Present:</b>	
Tom Crowley	Chairman
Cllr Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Cllr Bob Bowdler	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Helyn Clack	Surrey County Council
Cllr Malcolm Fillmore	Rusper Parish Council
Cllr Margot McArthur	Kent County Council
Cllr Mike George	Horley Town Council
Cllr Christopher Phillips	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr Victoria Chester	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Cllr Nicholas White	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
Chris Larkman	Which?
Jonathan Drew	Co-Chair, Noise Management Board
Clive Brooks	Passenger Advisory Group
Brett North	Gatwick Diamond Business
Robin Clarke	NATS

<b>Also in attendance:</b>	
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:**

Stephen Jones (London Chamber of Commerce and Industry), Cllr Liz Kitchen (Horsham District Council), Cllr Bob Noyce (Crawley Borough Council), Ana Christie (Sussex Chamber of Commerce), Angie Hills (ABTA), Cllr Richard Biggs (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council), Samantha Williams (PAG Chair).

**2. Minutes Of The Last Meeting**

2.1 Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of GATCOM held on 22 January 2024 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 18 April 2024. The report contained six recommendations and the Chair addressed each individually.

3.2 The first recommendation, as detailed in section 2.2 of the Steering Group report, was in relation to Gatwick Noise Action Plan (NAP). Steering Group were

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notified that the NAP submitted to Defra in September 2023 had yet to be formally signed off by the Secretary of State. It was explained that this is because Defra are waiting for all NAPs to be finalised prior to signing any off. Steering Group raised concern about this delay for the Gatwick NAP and suggested GATCOM contacts Defra to clarify the situation and ask for the Gatwick NAP to be formally approved.

3.3 Ian Greene from the DfT did confirm that this was the case and that it was the same process that had been followed in the past. He also added that he saw no reason why Gatwick could not publish their new NAP with a caveat that it was subject to final adoption by the Secretary of State. GAL noted this option.

3.4 **GATCOM agreed** that the GATCOM Chair should contact DEFRA and ask why the Gatwick Noise Action Plan (2024-2028) has not yet been signed off by the Secretary of State.

3.5 The second recommendation was in relation to the Steering Group consideration of the GACC paper on compensation for the effects of Airspace Change on newly overflowed communities (copies attached to the signed minutes). The Chair explained that although many of the Steering Group members spoke in support of this issue, it was acknowledged that it is a national issue, and it was felt the best way forward would be to take it up via UKACCs as the umbrella organisation for all Airport Consultative Committees.

3.6 The Secretariat added that GATCOM have been made aware that the DfT has recently responded to the request directly for the next meeting of DfT's Airspace Modernisation SEG to consider compensation. The DfT's response stated that unfortunately they cannot accommodate a discussion on compensation at a meeting of the Stakeholder Engagement Group (SEG) as they do not believe this is the correct forum for this agenda item as this is intrinsically linked to increased noise effects rather directly from Airspace Modernisation.

3.7 The Secretariat explained that via UKACCs there have been discussions on this subject at the DfT's Airspace and Noise Engagement Group (ANEG) meetings. Given the DfT's most recent response and advice from UKACCs, it was suggested that if GATCOM is minded asking UKACCs to consider and take forward these issues, then we should reference ANEG (Airspace and Noise Engagement Group) rather than SEG (Stakeholder Engagement Group).

3.8 **GATCOM agreed** to ask UKACCs to consider the GACC paper on the 'Compensation For The Effects Of Airspace Change' and whether they would support asking the DfT to add this issue to the next meeting of the Airspace and Noise Engagement Group (ANEG).

3.9 **GATCOM agreed** to consider the response to the DfT consultation on night flight regime for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted from October 2025 as detailed in agenda item 9. This would be discussed further at agenda item 9.

3.10 **GATCOM agreed** the following recommendations in relation to future meeting arrangements:

- That alternative venues for GATCOM meetings are not pursued for the immediate future.
- Alternative venues should be used for GATCOM Away Days.
- That the option of hybrid meetings is not pursued for the immediate future.

3.11 The fifth recommendation asked GATCOM to consider putting in place a rule to not allow filming or recording of GATCOM Meetings. The Chair referred members to

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the Steering Group discussion around this at section 6 of the Steering Group report. Various options were discussed and considered but the recommendation to not allow filming or recording of GATCOM meetings was put forward for the following reasons:

- GATCOM does not record its own meetings so without a formal record of events it is not thought appropriate to allow informal recording or filming.
- GATCOM has a large number of elected local authority members, who are used to meetings in public being recorded. However, GATCOM does also have an equal number of members of whose roles do not include such public scrutiny.
- Lastly although GATCOM could state that permission must be sought to use any film or photos on social media this would be difficult to monitor and enforce.

3.12 **GATCOM agreed** that a rule should be put in place to not allow filming, recording or photography of GATCOM meetings and that a statement be agreed to add to each future agenda.

3.13 The final recommendation from the Steering Groups was to note that C2C LEP are no longer a member of GATCOM and that options for the vacant seat will be considered at the next GATCOM Away Day. **GATCOM agreed.**

## 4. Chief Executive Officer's Report

4.1 GATCOM received a report from Stewart Wingate, Chief Executive Officer, GAL on activity at the airport over the past quarter (copy attached to the signed minutes). He then highlighted the key points from his quarterly report as follows:

- London Gatwick has seen continued growth with 40.9 million passengers passing through the airport in 2023.
- During 2023 the airport hit 99% of all measured core service level requirements.
- Mark Johnston joined GAL in March as the new Chief Operating Officer
- London Gatwick has recently welcomed several key stakeholders to the airport, including the Prime Minister, during his visit to see Border Force, the new Aviation Minister Anthony Browne MP and local MP, Henry Smith. Baroness Ford, the new GAL Chair has also been meeting stakeholders and hopes to attend a future GATCOM meeting.
- The new Rapid Exit Taxiway (RET) has opened. This enables arriving aircraft to leave the main runway at a more optimal location after landing which will improve the overall efficiency of the airfield, reduce delays and go-arounds, at the same time as helping to reduce emissions.
- A partnership between Metrobus, West Sussex, Surrey and Kent County Councils and London Gatwick has won a bid for funding to launch a new fleet of 43 hydrogen buses. Prior to the GATCOM meeting, GATCOM members took a ride on one of the buses as well as visiting the new Gatwick Rail Station and GRIDSERVE the new electric forecourt at Gatwick. All these projects contribute towards Gatwick's aim to reduce emissions from transport used to reach the airport and GATCOM members congratulated Gatwick on these great projects.
- The North Terminal Departure Lounge refurbishment has seen considerable progress including new seating, flooring, wall finishes, a new airline information desk, more flight information screens, a quiet zone and introduction of plants and greenery.
- London Gatwick has welcomed a number of new airlines including China Southern, Air China, China Eastern, Swiss and Air Peace.
- In 2023, London Gatwick donated its highest ever amount of over £750,000 to local charities and initiatives. Through a number of schemes and match funding, Gatwick have been able to support local charities across Sussex, Surrey, Kent and beyond.

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- The Northern Runway plans are undergoing a formal examination stage which started at the end of February and will run through to the end of August. All elements of the project proposals are subject to detailed scrutiny for the next six months through a mix of written submissions and public hearings by a panel of five independent inspectors. Project updates can be found here on the [Planning Inspectorate website](#).

4.2 A number of GATCOM members questioned the CEO about issues with taxis parking in residential roads around Gatwick, including on double yellow lines or in residents parking zones and across driveways. GAL is aware of the issues and works in partnership with a local stakeholder group that has recently put-up signage in some areas to deter such parking. GAL will continue to work with the local stakeholder group, including the local authorities and the taxi companies. GAL also confirmed that there is a dedicated taxi waiting area with facilities at the airport so there is no need to park in surrounding roads. It was also noted that if the DCO for the Northern Runway was successful the proposed new S106 agreement includes funding for off-airport parking controls which includes enforcement against unauthorised car parking.

4.3 One Member congratulated GAL on investing in sustainable vehicles. He also asked in relation to noise, about the new airlines and what types of aircraft they are using. It was agreed this information could be provided to members after the meeting.

## 5 Economic Benefits of The Gatwick Region

5.1 Richard Lennard, Economic Partnership Manager, GAL and Emma Colyer, Trade & Tourism Business Development Manager, GAL, provided a presentation that detailed how London Gatwick actively promotes the economic benefits of the Gatwick region to generate foreign investment and expansion of existing businesses and drive up the value of the visitor economy.

5.2 The presentation contained a [Gateway Gatwick tourism video](#) created with local tourism authorities: Visit Brighton, Visit Surrey, Experience Sussex and Invest West Kent to show the diversity of tourist attractions, landscapes, cultures and venue options whilst using Gatwick as the Gateway to this region.

5.3 In addition, it was mentioned that London Gatwick generated £4.1 billion for the regional economy and supported over 56,570 jobs. This is evidenced in a recently published report [Local economic impact of London Gatwick 2023](#). This [short animation](#), included in the presentation to GATCOM, presents the airport's economic impact by area.

## 6 Member's Questions

6.1 One question was received in advance from Alan Jones.

### 6.2 Question 1 from Alan Jones

Discussions are already in hand for a s106 Agreement if the Northern Runway DCO is approved. However, the existing s106 Agreement between GAL, West Sussex County and Crawley BC has been extended twice in recent times. Within the current s106, Gatwick Airport Community Trust Charity was adopted and has been operational for 23 years. It is not included in the proposed new s106 so GATCOM will no longer have a Trustee representative to the charitable process. Apart from the generous grant money

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that GAL have made available over the years, airline noise fines have also been directed to GACT but there have been very few. Recently, we were presented at GATCOM with a new approach to fining airlines based on noise infringements from three different types (chapter) of aircraft and this could lead to a higher level of fines. There does not appear to be any indication how GAL propose these fines will be used? If the DCO were to be unsuccessful, would the current s106 agreement be extended yet again and would GACT be the organization that would administer this money in addition to other monies?

### **6.3 London Gatwick Response to Question 1**

The current s106 agreement expires at the end of 2024. GAL has already met with officers from Crawley Borough Council (CBC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to commence discussions on extending the life of the existing s106 Agreement beyond 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. All parties agreed that the existing agreement and its obligations should be extended through a 'light touch' review for a further 12 months until the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. All parties also considered that, by the end of 2025, the outcome of the Northern Runway Project (NRP) Development Consent Order (DCO) application should be known. GAL confirmed its intention, should consent be granted for the NRP DCO, to ensure there would be no break between the existing s106 Agreement and any Agreement associated with the NRP DCO coming into force. It was recognised that this transition could occur before the end of 2025 and would be subject to reviewing the details of the NRP DCO decision when it becomes available.

Discussions on a NRP s106 Agreement are currently on-going with the joint local authorities as part of the NRP Examination process. This makes provision for a new London Gatwick Community Fund which would replace the Gatwick Airport Community Trust. GAL can confirm that the intention is that fines associated with departure noise limits would go directly into the London Gatwick Community Fund, in the event of a new NRP s106 agreement taking effect.

In circumstances where the NRP did not receive consent, then GAL would consider appropriate next steps for the existing s106 Agreement in that context by the end of 2025.

6.4 One Member did add that he felt the new Community Fund should be split 4 ways across all four Counties and not three as currently proposed with Sussex being classed as one County.

## **7 Passenger Advisory Group**

7.1 Clive Brooks, on behalf of the Chair of PAG introduced the report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last PAG meeting that took place on 21 March 2024 and activities during the last quarter. He highlighted to GATCOM the recent work of PAG and how they continue to work closely with GAL on the Departure Lounge expansion and refurbishment plans.

7.2 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.

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### 8 Airspace Update

8.1 Andy Sinclair, Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy provided a number of updates in relation to Airspace and Noise.

8.2 Mr Sinclair confirmed that the Noise Management Board (NMB) is currently in a transitional period. The first of the pre-agreed 'touchpoint' meetings was held on 13 March where the NMB third term proposal was shared and discussed with second term members. A follow-up meeting was held on 17 April at which second term members shared feedback on the third term proposals. The next touchpoint meeting is scheduled for 12 June. Feedback is still being received and will contribute towards the final proposals. NMB Workplan updates are still being produced to ensure that progress of the ongoing NMB projects (i.e., the proposed new Departure Noise Limits scheme, the Reduced Night Noise trial, the Low Noise Arrival Metric) are captured and published.

8.3 Mr Sinclair confirmed that GAL are now in Stage 3 of the Airspace Modernisation airspace change process. However, the DfT and the CAA are exploring a different way of taking the programme forward, replacing multiple sponsors responsible for their own airspace projects with a single organisation known as a Single Design Entity (SDE) drawing all individual projects together into a single programme. A ministerial decision on the SDE concept is expected to be taken by the end of May. Following this a full public consultation on the SDE is anticipated to start in June or July.

8.4 London Gatwick, jointly with NATS and the Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG), have put forward a proposal for initial deployment of the FASI route structures to the south of the airport, called London Airspace South. ACOG conducted a public engagement exercise between 12 February - 24 March on the UK Airspace Change Masterplan, including this deployment. Ahead of that GAL held stakeholder engagement sessions on 24 and 30 January. The results the ACOG engagement are expected in the next few months.

8.5 This split deployment process will be explained in a future iteration of the UK Airspace Change Masterplan, a draft of which is currently scheduled to be published in the summer. Subject to availability of CAA resource, the Stage 3 Gateway and public consultation is planned for Q1 2025.

### 9 DfT Night Flight Restrictions Consultation

9.1 GATCOM welcomed Ian Greene and Gary Marshall from the DfT. They provided a [presentation](#) explaining the detail of the Night Flight Restrictions consultation as it relates to Gatwick Airport. Members were also referred to the Secretariat's report and draft consultation response (copies attached to the signed minutes).

9.2 In relation to the requirement for designated airports to write to the Secretary of State each year about dispensations, one Member asked the DfT what the purpose of such a letter would be. Gary Marshall stated that it would ensure dispensations are being applied within the rules and Ian Greene added that it would also provide transparency as the letters would be published.

9.3 Members questions and comments were mainly around dispensations, and some felt that stricter guidance could be introduced to limit the approval of dispensations. There was much debate on this subject and what should be included in the GATCOM

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response. In conclusion it was agreed to include an additional point (point 9) in the GATCOM response, similar to the alternative wording for point 8 that GACC had suggested in the draft response.

9.4 GATCOM Airline representatives stated that they could not support point 7 of the draft response that stated quota rollover from one season to another should not be permitted. It was agreed that point would remain, but it would be added that Airlines did not support this view.

9.5 GATCOM agreed that the draft response be amended as detailed above in 9.3 and 9.4, and that it be circulated to all members before being approved by the Chair and submitted to the DfT by 22 May 2024.

9.6 Post meeting note: The final submitted response can be found [here](#).

## **10 Noise Management Board (NMB) – Executive Board (NEX) Report**

10.1 Jonathan Drew, 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 took place on 12 February with a focus on the FASI-South process for Gatwick and next steps.

## **11 Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)**

11.1 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.

11.2 The main issues highlighted were:

- There is 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.
- NaTMAG continue to be concerned about poor CDO performance of a number of airlines. GAL are aware of this and are working closely with those airlines.
- NaTMAG were pleased to note the reducing in 'slow to vacate' in the go around data they receive. This is a positive effect of the new Rapid Exit Taxiway.

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

## **12 Date of Next Meeting of GATCOM and its Sub-Groups**

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

- The next meeting of GATCOM will take place on Tuesday 16 July 2024 at 10.00am virtually via MS Teams.
- The next meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group will take place on Monday 24 June 2024 at 10.00am
- The next meeting of PAG will take place on Thursday 13 June 2024 at 1.30pm

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Chairman

The meeting concluded at 4.08pm.