

LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT
Minutes of meeting No. 55 of the Consultative Committee
held on Wednesday, 15 August 2007 at 2pm.

Present: Peter Rainbird	Chairman
Alastair Welch	Airport Managing Director
Councillor Jim Clinkscales	Southend on Sea Borough Council
Eddie Cornish	West Leigh Residents Association
Norah Goodman	Eastwood & St. Laurence Residents Assocn.
Councillor Ray Howard	Essex County Council
Councillor Tony Humphries	Rayleigh Town Council
Martin Howlett	Rochford District Council (Officer)
Councillor Mrs Kay Meager*	Castle Point Borough Council
Councillor Andrew Moring	Southend on Sea Borough Council
Councillor John Pullen	Rochford District Council
Councillor Mrs Jean Rowswell	Leigh on Sea Town Council
Shaun Scrutton	Rochford District Council (Officer)
Ron Smithson	Flying Clubs
Councillor Michael Starke	Rochford District Council
Sally Thallon	Essex County Council (Officer)
Derry Thorpe	Southend Trades Council.
George Crowe	Secretary

*substitute member

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Stuart Greengrass (Deputy Chairman), Councillor Mrs. Pam Challis (Director, Thames Gateway), Councillor Melvyn Day (Southend on Sea Borough Council), Councillor Elliott (Maldon District Council), Bob Preston (Southend on Sea Borough Council (Officer)), Keith Ross (Ipeco Holdings), Councillor Bill Sharp (Castle Point Borough Council), Councillor Roy Pearson (Essex County Council), Councillor Kevin Salt (Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils), Councillor Derrick Stansby (Rochford District Council) and Andrew Walters (Chairman, London Southend Airport Co. Ltd.).

2. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for attending during the holiday period. He commented that it had been difficult to find a parking place at the Airport and hoped that this was a sign that the Airport was prospering.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Secretary advised that there had been no changes to the membership notified to him since the last meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2007 that had previously been circulated were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6. AIRPORT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Alastair Welch presented the report for May to July that had been previously circulated with the agenda.

(a) Performance

The following movements were reported:-

Total aviation movements	May	June	July	Total
2007/08	4,407	4,008	4,895	13,310
2006/07	4,295	5,371	5,028	14,694
Commercial mvts. 2007/08	337	285	322	944
Commercial mvts. 2006/07	280	371	323	974

(b) Overview

Mr Welch advised that, given the appalling weather in the early part of the Summer and the impact this had on club flying, the traffic figures had held up well. With the Ford operation now one-year old, the growth when comparing year on year was levelling off.

Whilst the weather had impacted on operations for a number of clubs, there had been significant growth in some of the traffic sectors. For example, business/executive flights were up over 50% in July when compared with the previous year.

Councillor Howard asked if there was any news on additional scheduled flights. Mr Welch replied that there was some interest but that it would be premature to say anything about it at present. He added that he would be disappointed if there were no additional flights next summer.

(c) Staff update

The report advised that new staff in the period under review had been recruited in the Coffee Shop, Security and Check-in team, technical services and the fire team. In addition a new Terminal Manager, Anne Syrett, had been appointed. The

Director informed the Committee that she had formerly been employed by the airline “Go” and by the BAA at Stansted Airport. She was responsible for the smooth operation of the Terminal as well as security across the Airport.

Recruitment for posts in Flight Briefing, Air Traffic, the Coffee Shop, Security and check-in was currently taking place.

A graduate leadership programme for recent graduates who would like to build a career in the industry was being embarked upon. Two successful internal candidates had been appointed who would spend the next two years building their knowledge of the industry and supporting various projects at the Airport to bolster this aim.

In addition, a development programme for the Airport’s non-graduate staff who wished to gain NVQ qualifications was being started.

The Committee was informed that both of these programmes reflected the need to develop staff of the calibre needed to support a growing airport.

(d) Financial Position

The accounts for 2006/07 showed a growth in revenue of 28% over the previous year. This growth essentially funded the paving of the new apron, the new car park, new fire vehicle and the re-texturing of the runway, all of which had been well received.

(e) Planning and development

At the previous Consultative Committee the two phases of development envisaged at the airport had been outlined (minute 6(c) refers). Phase 1, reflected the development that the airport company wanted to get on with immediately and, Phase 2 represented the development which would follow the outcome of the Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) between Rochford and Southend.

The four key components of the Phase 1 programme were the Airport Hotel, refurbishment of the current Terminal, new VCR and new on site rail station.

Hotel - The planning application for the on-site airport hotel was set to be heard on 12 September. This would be branded Ramada and be a 4* hotel with 131 bedrooms and would provide employment for 50 (full time equivalent) staff. If permission was granted, it was the intention to have the facility open for business for Christmas 2008. Councillor Clinkscales asked if the Hotel would have conference facilities. The Director advised that the hotel would be primarily airport focussed and that, to support conference facilities, it would need to have at least 500 beds. It would have some meeting rooms.

Current Terminal – Work to improve the arrivals hall had been started and the airport company was working with the tourist team to brand the arrivals route in a way which would, hopefully, represent the best of both Essex and Southend. The next improvement would be the landside toilets and coffee shop and would be

started prior to Christmas. The balance of work would be carried out in the first quarter of 2008.

A start had been made on the safety case for the new control tower. The aim was to have this completed in the first quarter of 2009.

The new rail station was now at a critical stage and a meeting was to be held with Rochford Council in August to agree a timetable for the planning matters to be considered. As mentioned at the last meeting (minute 7(b)), it was hoped that the Council would agree to the railway station being able to open before the new terminal building. The Airport's aim was to open this in the first quarter of 2009 and permission would be required from Rochford to allow this to be achieved.

The aim was to complete phase 1 by Summer 2009.

As part of Phase 2, the JAAP would consider, amongst other things, the appropriate use of green belt and the length of runway.

The Airport company was working with the regulator to establish a scheme which would allow it to extend the runway without affecting the church building. In answer to a question from the Chairman, the Director said that, through the JAAP, decisions would be made as to whether an extension was needed and, if so, whether a scheme that would work was feasible. In response to a comment by Councillor Howard, the Committee was advised that a 170m extension would allow the plane that was parked on the apron, near to where the meeting was taking place, to have a range of 1150 nautical miles rather than the current 643.

Councillor Clinkscales asked whether this was due to loadings and Mr Welch confirmed that it was and also due to momentum. He informed the Committee that a wider strip was required if planes landed using the instrument landing system than if visual landings were made. In answer to a question from Councillor Howard the Committee was told that the Airport would challenge the CAA if it was acting unfairly. The Chairman asked a further question and the Director replied that in the last year, the runway would only have not been able to be used on one day due to poor visibility. Southampton Airport, for instance, didn't have an ILS.

In response to a comment by Councillor Starke, the Director advised that if the Airport stayed as it was currently, the number of business movements would slowly increase but there would be likely to be very little further development. But with a runway extension, there was a good probability of holiday flights. He thought that there was a strong case for an extension but said that a business case needed to be made.

Councillor Mrs Meager said that a case could be made on environmental grounds in that local people had currently to travel to other London airports and this part of Essex was geographically disadvantaged. The Director commented that the counter argument was that additional movements would be encouraged. Councillor Howard agreed that there was an environmental case for the extension

and that the Airport should be recognised as a regional one. He said that the local MPs should be used to promote the case.

The report also advised that a decision on the precise location of the new terminal involved green belt considerations and also the feasibility of a public transport interchange. The terminal was currently planned to be offset from the proposed station by a few hundred feet.

It was aimed to complete phase 2 by summer 2011.

(f) Summer works

During the recent Ford two- week summer break, the opportunity was taken to carry out major maintenance work at the Airport. For example, the fire station had new fire appliance bay doors. A new fuel interceptor had been installed to ensure environmental compliance at the fire training ground, runway 06 had been de-lethalised, a major service involving a number of replacement parts had been carried out to the Radar and new LED wig-wag lights had been installed on the runway.

All of this work reflected the growing demands placed on the Airport as the challenge of operating as a fully effective regional airport was stepped up.

(g) Noise comments report

The noise comments report was attached to the report. It informed members that the total number of aircraft movements in the second quarter of 2007 had been 11,950 against 12,482 in the same quarter of 2006. There had been 45 comments.

As mentioned at the last Consultative Committee meeting, the Metropolitan Police had been carrying out training with their new helicopter in April. These operations had resulted in 23 noise comments – over half of all comments received in the three month period.

Whilst higher than last year, Mr Welch said that it was interesting to note that a number of complaints related to aircraft attempting to land on runway 06 in bad weather. The absence of precision approach equipment (ILS) on this runway had resulted in a number of noisy approaches which had produced comments. Part of the proposals to the regulator for a runway development would include the addition of ILS on runway 06 which would alleviate this situation.

7. PLANNING ISSUES

The planning issues were dealt with under the Airport Managing Director's report (minute 6 above).

8. SOUTHEND AIRSPACE

The Committee received the following letters:

- dated 22 June from Andrew Walters to stakeholders;
- dated 26 June from County Councillor Stephen Castle to NATS;
- dated 12 July from County Councillor Stephen Castle to the CAA;
- dated 17 July from CAA to County Councillor Stephen Castle;
- dated 11 July from James Duddridge, MP., to Andrew Walters;
- dated 3 July from James Duddridge, MP., to NATS;
- dated 26 July from Department for Transport to Andrew Walters.

The agenda advised that Andrew Walters wished to record his thanks to Essex County Council, Rochford District Council and James Duddridge, MP., who had made representations and Mr Welch added his thanks. He said that the Airport was not opposed to the growth of London City Airport (LCA) but that it must not be allowed to affect Southend Airport. It was important that the CAA should recognise the problem before it went out to consultation on the proposals for LCA's airspace.

Councillor Howard referred to a return flight he had made from LCA when the aircraft had been stacked over the Southend area at a relatively low height. Councillor Clinkscales said that the River Thames estuary should be used as the stacking area. Mr Welch said that planes had to come in over Shoebury because of the firing range and he again outlined the difficulty for the CAA in that the boundary between two zones runs along the centre of the river and controllers can only deal with one zone at a time (minute 7(a) of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May refers).

9. INWARD INVESTMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Mr Welch reported that an advertisement was to be placed in the trade press for a Fixed Base Operator (FBO) to run an aircraft maintenance and business jet operation.

10. PRESS PACK

The press pack of newspaper cuttings relating to the Airport was received and noted. There were no questions about them.

11. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Councillor Clinkscales asked whether it was possible for some aircraft to be required to turn right after take off to reduce the number of low flying aircraft over the Mendip estate area. Residents were becoming unhappy about the nuisance. The Managing Director said that the Airport was looking at environmental issues and was anxious to minimise aircraft noise. He advised that aircraft had to fly 1000 feet in a straight line (1500 at night) following take off. Mr Smithson commented that light aircraft would turn right but that larger aircraft needed to have a stabilised approach and had to clear the area as soon as possible after take off. Mr Welch said that aircraft had less of an impact when taking off and that he was looking at the possibility of putting a precision approach on

runway 06 so that it was on both ends of the runway. He undertook to look at the issue raised by Councillor Clinkscales and to discuss it with him.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Managing Director reported that he was thinking of arranging to meet with the leaders and chief executives of Rochford and Southend Councils to explain the development issues and explain, for instance, that an extension of the runway would make the Airport safer. He asked for views as to whether there should be a wider briefing for all councillors of those authorities.

The Chairman suggested that there should be a morning conference for all councillors and other organisations should be included. Councillor Howard said that Essex county councillors should be invited.

Councillor Starke said that the Councils were represented on this Committee. He suggested that the proposals should be firmed up before there was any briefing. People were hearing about proposed developments but were not seeing anything actually happening. Councillor Meager suggested that the development phases might change as circumstances changed and said that it was important for councillors to understand the Director's vision because it would make their decision-making easier. She referred to the Afghan Airlines hijack incident at Stansted in 2000 when many night flights were diverted to Southend Airport and said that there had been no resulting complaints. Mrs Goodman suggested that more than one briefing session should be held to because smaller groups would tend to avoid conflict.

The Chairman summed up the discussion by saying that the idea of a briefing(s) was a good one and that the format should be considered further, perhaps by discussing the matter with individual members of the Committee.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the last meeting in 2007 would be held on Wednesday, 21 November 2007 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 3pm.