

# GATWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (GATCOM)

**April 2019**

This report is to brief Councillors of the ongoing work of the Gatwick Airport Consultative committee on which I am the Council's representative. The Committee met on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019, when the committee received a number of reports about airport related matters, including several that were important and other for information and noting. The following were the principal items discussed at the meeting.

## **GATCOM STEERING GROUP – CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair's [report](#) of the GATCOM Steering Group meeting was received. The key points, not covered elsewhere on the meeting agenda, to note are:

- **Heathrow Airspace Consultation** – GATCOM's [response](#) to Heathrow Airport Limited consultation reiterated the Committee's previous views about the need for Heathrow's design principles to take a holistic approach to ensure that environmental improvements can be achieved for those communities under flight paths around Heathrow and Gatwick. The response also highlighted concerns about some of Heathrow's design principles having potential to create and/or sustain areas of traffic conflict, particularly for departure routes 3 & 4 where Heathrow's flight Paths currently restrict the rate of climb from Gatwick's traffic. GATCOM will be kept informed of Heathrow's proposals.
- **GAL's New Noise and Track Keeping System** – the first phase of the new system went live on 1 April supported by a brand new fleet of noise monitors, presenting real-time flight tracking and noise data direct to the local community. It also has an automated telephone system to log noise complaints and a mobile phone App. The second phase of the project, which includes a new noise information website, will be delivered over the coming months. GATCOM has asked GAL to give a presentation on the new system at its next meeting.
- **Noise Management Board (NMB)** – GATCOM endorsed the response the GATCOM Steering Group agreed on behalf of the Committee commenting on the Review Sub-Committee's proposed terms of reference for the new operating structure of the NMB. GATCOM's concerns about the proposed terms of reference are set out in paragraph 6.3 of the report of the Steering Group – [click here](#) to see.

The NMB will next meet on 8 May. This will be the last NMB meeting held under the current constitution and marks the end of the NMB's first term. The second term will be effective from July 2019, within the new structure as an NMB Executive Board (NEX) overseeing the implementation/delivery board linked to a new Noise Community Forum (NCF).

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Chief Executive Officer's [commentary](#) on activity and performance of Gatwick over the previous quarter was received. The key points to note are:

- **Future Ownership** – the transaction of half the ownership stake in Gatwick to VINCI Airports is likely to conclude in the coming weeks. GAL is making arrangements to mark the start of the new era for GAL by VINCI Airports and Global Infrastructure Partners at an event in mid-May.
- **Traffic Growth** – Gatwick has seen continued growth and over the past quarter. There were 61.2k aircraft movements handling 9.7 million passengers with an aircraft load factor of 82.1%. The route network continues to grow with new services to Ankara (Turkey) -the only service operating to London, Rio de Janeiro, Miami, San Francisco, Cluj-Napoca (Romania) as well as to a number of other short haul destinations. Gatwick has however lost services to Chengdu, China and Newquay to Heathrow.
- **Service Quality** – Gatwick continues to achieve all its regulatory core service standards and passenger satisfaction scores for both arriving and departing passengers remain high.
- **Drones** – there is still much political, media and industry interest in the drone incident last December.

GAL continues to work closely with Government agencies, specialist companies and other airports to share learning and best practice. The extension to the "No Drone" areas around the airport and the need for signage of areas was noted. GAL was asked to ensure that Horsham District Council was included in discussions on where signage was needed.

- **Capital Investment** - GAL continues with its significant investment in improving and updating airport terminals, on the airfield and its forecourts and road network.
- **Sustainability Targets** - GAL's 2018 progress report on its Decade of Change sustainability targets, including its carbon footprint, is currently being independently verified. GAL aims to publish the report in May 2019. GAL confirmed that it is already considering how to take forward its sustainability work into the next decade. The current Decade of Change Strategy runs through to 2020.
- **Gatwick's carbon footprint** - The publicity GAL gives to its carbon neutral accreditation and achievements within the terminal buildings was discussed. Whilst GAL's positive contribution to managing its carbon footprint on-airport was supported and welcomed, GAL was asked to review the wording of its messaging to ensure that there was awareness amongst passengers and staff that the carbon neutral accreditation related to GAL's own emissions. The Environmental and Amenity Groups representative believed that users of the airport should be made aware of the overall carbon footprint resulting from Gatwick's operations. GAL agreed to review the messaging.
- **Special Assistance Service** - performance of the special assistance service providers, Wilson James continued to improve and performance remained solid over the last quarter. ABTA reported on its Accessible Travel and Tourism Seminar taking place on 8 May at which GAL and Wilson James were speakers - [click here](#) for more details.
- **Gatwick Airport Community Trust** - GAL was thanked for its continued financial support for the work of the [Trust](#). Alan Jones, GATCOM's nominated Trustee, reported that 133 applications had been received in this year's round of grant applications. The Trust will award grants to successful applicants in May.
- **Gatwick Foundation Fund** - Kent, Sussex and Surrey Foundations were currently seeking applications for grant funding - [click here](#) for details.

## AIRPORT MASTER PLAN REVIEW

GAL [presented](#) an update on the response to the draft Master Plan consultation. The key points to note are:

- A total of 5,285 responses had been received. As expected the majority of responses were from members of the public and 201 responses were from stakeholder organizations.
- The key themes raised in responses were outlined in the presentation slides.
- IPSOS Mori, commissioned by GAL to analyse and report on the consultation response, is in the process of completing its analysis and will prepare a report summarising the consultation responses.
- The IPSOS Mori report will be issued at the same time as GAL issues the final Master Plan document. Subject to GAL Board approval, GAL anticipates publishing the Master Plan in the second half of the year.
- In the meantime, GAL is taking into account the feedback received in the drafting of the final Master Plan document and as part of that is undertaking further work including traffic and environmental surveys and continued engagement with local authorities.
- GAL was also waiting for the publication of the Committee on Climate Change's Report - this report has since been published on 2 May - [click here](#) to see.
- GAL was asked whether it would publish as part of the report on the consultation the number of objectors/supporters for each of the growth scenarios outlined in the draft Master Plan. GAL confirmed that numerical information would be included in the report, where possible.

Reference was made to the shortage of land supply for housing and business in the Gatwick area and there was a need for the long term safeguarding of land at Gatwick to be resolved. GAL advised that this was an issue being considered as part of the Aviation Strategy Green Paper and the continuation of safeguarding would be an issue to be addressed as part of Crawley Borough Council's review of the Local Plan consultation - due to commence later this year.

## **GATWICK CARGO OPERATIONS**

GAL [presented](#) an overview of its cargo operation. The key points to note are:

- There is around 10,000 to 20,000kg of cargo per passenger flight at Gatwick with cargo carried in the belly of passenger aircraft. For many airlines cargo is becoming increasingly important and is key to long haul profitability.
- Gatwick's cargo centre was sold by BAA in 2005 (along with Heathrow's cargo centre) and is now owned by SEGRO on a 250 year lease. GAL is not therefore in direct control of who occupies the facilities or the operation but works very closely with SEGRO to ensure that growth is facilitated and managed properly.
- Recent growth has been around 20% per annum driven by the increase in Gatwick's long haul traffic. Belly-hold cargo is expected to grow in line with growth in long haul services growing to around c.176kton/annum by 2022 and 183ktons/annum by 2027.
- Most cargo is transferred to the distribution centre at Heathrow via the strategic road network comprising M25, M23 and A23 through Highways Agency signage.
- Trade via Gatwick contributes £7.2bn to UK GDP and supports 113,800 jobs in the UK.
- Firms in Gatwick Diamond area are 1.5 times more likely to export than the national average. 60% of goods are exported from the Gatwick Diamond area and 57% from the Coast to Capital area go to non-EU destinations compared with the national average of 51%
- GAL will continue to monitor the cargo operation to ensure maximum efficiency and minimum impact to the local area.

Whilst recognising the contribution of Gatwick's cargo operation to the national and regional economy, it was pointed out that cargo added weight to aircraft which meant that they were heavier on landing and taking off resulting in a higher noise impact for local communities.

## **PLANNING AND AVIATION NOISE**

Crawley Borough Council [presented](#) an overview of its Local Plan Policy which addresses the policy vacuum left by the revocation of Planning Policy Guidance Note on Planning and Noise (PPG24) which resulted in the absence of technical guidance at national level. The key points to note are:

- Crawley Borough Council's Local Plan adopted in 2015 includes a bespoke noise policy underpinned by specific noise standards aimed at preventing development in areas where noise exposure is greater than 66dB. This approach was found "sound" by the Planning Inspector at the Local Plan Examination and successfully defended at planning appeal.
- The Local Plan policy addresses potential future noise exposure and references the noise contours produced for a possible wide spaced runway.
- The Borough Council is to review the current Local Plan and will be consulting on the first stage in the Summer 2019. The Council is considering ways in which to strengthen its current approach with possible inclusion of further restriction on noise sensitive development where exposure from aircraft noise would exceed 60dB.
- The health impacts from noise were summarised along with the recommendations of the new WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines issued in 2018.
- A new challenge is that the recent change to national planning policy of "Permitted Development" allows noise sensitive developments to come forward without restriction or mitigation - an example of the conversion of First Choice House from office accommodation to housing with poor quality glazing which exposes occupants to significantly high noise levels.
- Crawley Borough Council is happy to share its experience with other planning authorities.

GATCOM was concerned about the problem arising from office to residential conversion permitted development rights in terms of noise exposure to occupants of the new homes and also in respect of the loss of much needed business space in the area. GATCOM agreed to raise these matters in its response to the Aviation Strategy Green Paper.

The Chair commended the approach taken by Crawley Borough Council and encouraged GATCOM members to share details with their organisations. He had mentioned Crawley's approach at a recent meeting he had with Robert Light, Head Commissioner, Independent Commission for Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) and highlighted the problem with permitted development rights for conversions to housing.

## END NOISE ACTION PLAN 2019 -2024

- GAL's END Noise Action Plan (NAP) 2019 - 2024 was adopted by Defra on 11 February 2019. The Environmental and Amenity Groups' representative advised that the community groups have approached Defra as they believed that GAL's END NAP should not have been adopted as it did not adhere to the requirements of the END.
- Working through NATMAG, GAL has developed a [work plan](#) for 2019 to take forward 14 actions in the NAP which include those actions GATCOM previously identified as a priority for GAL to take forward early in the life of the plan.
- GAL is committed to reporting regularly on the progress made in delivering the END NAP actions as follows:
  - GAL will provide updates to the quarterly meetings of the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG).
  - The NATMAG minutes will contain a summary of GAL's updates to give greater transparency to the progress being made.
  - GAL will publish an annual END NAP Progress Report which will be presented to NATMAG and GATCOM.
- GATCOM agreed its [approach](#) to monitoring the delivery of the actions in the END NAP as follows:
  - GATCOM's Lead Member Noise summary report of NATMAG to include details of NATMAG's deliberations of the END NAP, progress made and any issues of concern. This will enable GATCOM to review progress and issues on a quarterly basis and to make recommendations to GAL and NATMAG where necessary.
  - GATCOM Steering Group to consider the outcome of the Section 106 agreement Annual Monitoring Report, which is required to include the independent assessment of at least two noise obligations contained in the agreement, and to bring to GATCOM's attention issues of concern.

## AIRSPACE UPDATES

### CAA Airspace Change Process - CAP 1616: GATCOM's Role in the process

- The CAA's new comprehensive airspace change process for designing and consulting on changes to airspace came into effect in January 2018. There are seven stages in the process with four gateways when the CAA's approval must be given before the airspace change sponsor can progress to the next stage.
- The CAA expects airspace change sponsors to engage with local representatives such as local authorities, airport consultative committees and local groups in developing its airspace design principles and design options.
- As airport consultative committees are required to be engaged in the process, GATCOM agreed its role in process as set out in the Secretariat's [report](#).
- Concern was raised by two members about the absence of a requirement for GAL to engage with interested parties on the Statement of Need prior to its submission to the CAA before the decision was made on whether or not to initiate an airspace change process. That was a matter for the CAA to address as prior engagement was not a requirement of the new process. GAL confirmed that for FASI-S, GAL's approach to the development and content of its statement of need was in line with the statements of need submitted to date by the other airports involved with the FASI-S project and had been submitted in accordance with the CAA's requirements.

### Airspace Modernisation: FASI(S)

- GATCOM endorsed the [officer response](#) to GAL's "An Introduction to Design Principle Development" engagement document issued on 19 March 2019.
- GAL gave an update on the process of engagement to date and the timeline that GAL is working to in developing the design principles for the project.
- GAL has since issued its second engagement document "Design Principles Outline Proposals" . The deadline for comments is 17 May.
- The need to ensure that the development of the design principles were not in conflict with the work being undertaken by the NMB was highlighted.
- It was agreed that GATCOM's response to the second engagement document would be agreed on behalf of GATCOM by the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair, Lead/Deputy Lead Member for Noise and those GATCOM members that also served on the NMB. This would include the comment

about the alignment of the design principles with the work of the NMB.

- GAL is aiming to submit the final document on 13 June to the CAA ready for the gateway assessment scheduled to take place on 28 June.
- It was questioned whether town and parish councils would be invited to comment on the second engagement document. There was a particular request to involve Horley Town Council in the engagement. GAL advised that the same set of stakeholders as used for the initial engagement would be used for the second round of engagement. Horley Town Council would receive a copy of the document via its GATCOM representation. GAL was asked to give an explanation in its communications on the engagement process as to whom had been invited to engage at this stage in the process and why and of the opportunities for others to engage as the process progresses.

#### **Departure Route 4**

GAL gave an update on the changes required to Departure Route 4.

- The changes required to revert the Route 4 conventional standard instrument departures (SID) to their position as they were before 7 April continues to be progressed. All design work and validation has been completed. Implementation of the change to the Route 4 conventional departures is now expected to take effect in September 2019.
- As regards the development of the airspace change proposal, GAL is commencing engagement with identified stakeholders on the development of design principles for the route. The Design Principles Questionnaire and invitation to Design Principles workshops was circulated on 17 April. Response to the questionnaire is requested by 10 May. Focus groups (to be held on 15, 16 and 20 May) will be used to help develop the design principles with the intention of circulating a draft Design Principles document mid-June before submitting the final "design principles proposal" to the CAA by 12 July for consideration at the CAA's assessment scheduled for 26 July 2019.
- It is expected that full consultation on options for the route will take place at the end of 2019/start 2020.

#### **NOISE AND TRACK MONITORING ADVISORY GROUP (NATMAG)**

- GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise [summary report](#) of the deliberations of NATMAG was noted as were the key messages to GATCOM.
- GATCOM's thanks and appreciation of the work undertaken by Bob Peters, AAD on community noise monitoring at Gatwick over many years would be conveyed to Mr Peters who had now retired.

#### **PASSENGER ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)**

The [report](#) from the Chairman of PAG was considered. The key points to note are:

- As required under new guidance from the CAA GAL is required to set up a Disability Forum. PAG will discuss with GAL how the work of the new forum will link to the work of PAG.
- PAG continues to review with GAL the way in which disruptive events are handled. Lessons learned are always taken into account. PAG congratulated GAL on the handling of recent events
- Consultation on GAL's annual review of the Capital Investment Programme commenced on 26 April. PAG has a formal role in the review process to ensure the passengers' perspective is taken into account in GAL's planning. GATCOM will be kept informed of PAG's views.

#### **DFT CONSULTATION: "AVIATION 2050: THE FUTURE OF UK AVIATION" - AVIATION GREEN PAPER**

- GATCOM agreed its [response](#) to the DfT's consultation on the Aviation Green paper subject to:
  - The inclusion of a comment on the need for the Government to address the challenges now posed in terms of housing developments in areas exposed to significant noise as a result of permitted development rights
  - The review of the Committee's draft response in respect of its comments on climate change once the report of the Committee on Climate Change is issued to ensure that there are no further issues that need to be taken into account.