

**LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT**  
**Minutes of meeting No. 61 of the Consultative Committee**  
**held on Wednesday, 11 March 2009 at 2pm.**

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Present: Stuart Greengrass	Chairman
David Osborn	Vice-Chairman
Alastair Welch	Airport Managing Director
Councillor Keith Bobbin	Essex County Council
Councillor Pam Challis	Director, Thames Gateway
Councillor Jim Clinkscales	Southend on Sea Borough Council
Councillor Peter Elliott	Maldon District Council
Norah Goodman	Eastwood & St. Laurence Residents Asscn.
Councillor Ray Howard	Essex County Council
Councillor Roy Pearson	Essex County Council
Councillor John Pullen	Rochford District Council
Keith Ross	Ipeco Holdings
Councillor Mike Royston	Southend on Sea Borough Council
Councillor Kevin Salt	Rochford Hundred Asscn. of Local Councils
Shaun Scrutton	Rochford District Council (Officer)
Councillor Michael Starke	Rochford District Council
Sallyanne Thallon	Essex County Council (Officer)
Derry Thorpe	Southend Trades Council
Emma Walpole*	Southend on Sea Borough Council (Officer)
George Crowe	Secretary

\*substitute

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tony Humphries (Rayleigh Town Council), Councillor Jean Rowsell (Leigh on Sea Town Council), Les Sawyer (West Leigh Residents Association), Ron Smithson (Flying Clubs), Councillor Derek Stansby (Rochford District Council) and from Nigel Robbins (Southend on Sea Borough Council, Officer).

**2. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

Stuart Greengrass welcomed members to the meeting and said that the Airport was going through interesting and exciting times.

**3. MEMBERSHIP**

There were no membership matters to report.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2008 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 that would not be discussed as part of the agenda.

## 6. VISIT TO SOUTHAMPTON AIRPORT

Councillor Starke reported on the visit to Southampton Airport by representatives of Rochford and Southend Councils. He summed up the experience by saying that Southend Airport and this Committee could learn a lot from Southampton Airport and that residents should have no fears. It currently catered for 2m passengers and was intending to increase that number significantly without a great deal of extra infrastructure. The noise from flight operations were, however, remarkably quiet. Some of the new generation of aircraft that would be expected to use Southend Airport if the proposed developments took place had been seen and they increased their altitude very quickly to avoid the built up areas.

The Airport has its own railway station and a large number of people used it. The charge to park a car was £16 a day. However, there was no facility to enable disabled passengers to get across the tracks into the Airport itself. They currently had to take a taxi and this was an important lesson for Southend. A lift and footway was to be provided. There were parking spaces for 3k cars, a similar number to those to be provided at Southend. However, Councillor Starke wasn't convinced that that number of spaces would be required at Southend. Most airports, he said, required 1k spaces for every 1m passengers.

Alastair Welch responded by advising that disabled passengers and visitors had been considered from the start of the design of the new rail halt at the Airport and the mistakes at Southampton would not be repeated.

Councillor Starke was unable to answer a question from the Chairman about the speed of the growth at Southampton and said that the proposal was to expand to 10m passengers per annum. In answer to a further question from the Chairman he advised that the Airport was situated close to the M27. Although aircraft take off over a residential area, as in Southend, it received few complaints from residents.

Councillor Howard said that he had visited Southampton Airport a few years ago when it had been very run down and he was pleased that it had prospered in recent years. He referred to the Prime Minister having said that day that regional airports were a vital part of the UK's transport system.

## 7. AIRPORT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Committee received Alastair Welch's report for November to February that had been previously circulated with the agenda.

### (a) Performance

The following movements were reported:-

<b>Total aviation movements</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>Total</b>
2008/09	2,105	2,247	2,366	6,718
2007/08	3,881	2,782	3,032	9,695
Commercial mvts. 2008/09	252	229	204	685
Commercial mvts. 2007/08	348	302	356	1,006

(b) Overview

The report advised that the past three months had been very busy as the pace and nature of progression at the Airport stepped up. At the beginning of December the Airport company had been purchased by the Stobart Group, followed within 24 hours with news that the airline, Flightline, had collapsed into administration resulting in the cessation of the Ford flight activities which they had operated. In answer to a question, Mr Welch outlined Ford's current arrangements and advised that the Airport had paid for the improvements to accommodate the company's flights.

Reduction in the volumes of business had continued with the general downturn in the UK, although maintenance was continuing to perform well and employment continued to grow.

The local councils had published the Joint Area Action Plan preferred options report for the future of the Airport. They supported the development of the Airport to 2m passengers per annum by around 2020 and a small extension to the existing runway. This option would see the generation of new jobs on and around the Airport. Stakeholder events on 4 March had been very well attended and positive feedback was received. The Airport had started the roll out of some new branding, with changes to airport signs and new staff uniforms.

The latest Airport Newsletter aimed to inform local residents about the plans and to give them the chance to let the Airport know what they thought. Thus far 90% of responses had been strongly supportive of the plans.

Work had started on an environmental impact assessment.

(c) Spring Clean

The aircraft removal programme was all but complete and this had freed up valuable space for other commercial purposes, in particular, storage of viable aircraft at appropriate rates. A number of redundant buildings and small hangars at the rear of the 'county' hotel had been removed and the land was being reserved for new hangars.

(d) Noise comments

A total of 10 noise comments had been received. Four of these related to Southend, of which three related to jet movements and one to aircraft fumes.

Referring to minute 11 (19 November 2008), the Committee was informed that the working group was suggesting that the Airport should move from the restrictions at night being based on numbers of movements to a new control based on noise levels. This was considered to be best practice and would present the possibility of managing a significant reduction in permitted noise levels. It was proposed to further develop proposals for a noise framework based on a noise quota and report to this Committee at its next meeting. New control and reductions would be incorporated into a noise action plan which would follow Government Guidance when this is published later in the year. The Committee discussed these proposals and agreed that the work of working group should continue. A discussion on how the conclusions should be presented at the appropriate time concluded that this was

a complex issue and much misinformation was already being propagated to raise unnecessary fears amongst the local community. The outcome of the review would need to be carefully presented to ensure the true position could be correctly understood by those affected.

The Airport Managing Director undertook to provide to Councillor Salt a copy of the noise footprint included in the consultation for aircraft taking off in a north-easterly direction.

**Action: Airport Managing Director**

## **8. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Airport Managing Director's report updated the Committee on progress with the Airport development programme. In Phase 1, work preparatory to detailed design for the new the new Control Tower was to be completed. This was to satisfy the challenges presented by local flood zones. Meanwhile, the navigational aids study into the equipment to be used in the new tower had been completed.

Further improvements to the business jet waiting facility and coffee shop were being planned. A new cash machine that would dispense euros as well as sterling was due for installation in the Terminal.

Terms with the Hotel operator had been agreed and an agreement to lease was due to be signed in the near future. This would last for three months at the end of which the build would start or the Airport would talk to other developers who wanted to build a hotel at the Airport.

So far as the rail station was concerned, the GRIP 4 stage had been signed off. Work track side to remove vegetation had started and the Stobart Rail team were very focussed on completing the build this year. The major work was expected to start in late May. Network Rail had never before seen a station completed in this timescale but the Airport was certain it was possible, provided commercial terms with Network Rail could be agreed and a dialogue was taking place.

## **9. INWARD INVESTMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

The Airport Managing Director's report advised that Avionicare had announced the creation of a new partnership which saw them carrying out their maintenance to a number of business jets and significantly increased the amount of space demand they would have over the next few years.

Inflite had all but completed their new workshops and planned to demolish the old facilities.

The purchase of the Airport by the Stobart Group was a significant milestone in the Airport's history. The purchase of two fire vehicles to replace the two older ones had already taken place. They were due for delivery in March. Mr Welch also informed the Committee of arrangements being made to design further fire vehicles to be introduced at the Airport in due course.

ATC Lasham continued to turn work away due to the shortage of qualified staff available in the area and was exploring the possibility of recruiting in Sweden for new staff to work in Southend.

The Airport had released a number of staff following a reorganisation in January after the collapse of Flightline and the reduction in Ford activity. The staff required to support passenger operations and diversions, including eleven in one night in March, was still more than adequate.

Flybe had confirmed that their Summer Jersey schedule would operate again this year.

#### **10. PRESS PACK**

The press pack of newspaper cuttings relating to the Airport was received and noted.

#### **11. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

In the Airport Managing Director's report there was mention of the Stop Airport Expansion Now (SAEN) which was opposed to the Airport's expansion. Mr Welch had written to a number of the leading members of the group inviting them to meet with him to discuss any concerns they may have. They had chosen not to take up the offer. After a vote on the issue, the Committee agreed that it would like to hear their views and that a representative of SAEN should be invited to address a meeting of the Committee to be held immediately before the next meeting on 20 May.

**Action: Chairman/Secretary**

It was noted that presentations had been made to the Chalkwell Ward and the Mendip and Treecot residents associations as well as a number of charitable and other functions. Mr Welch undertook to attend a meeting of the Eastwood & St. Laurence Residents Association.

**Action: Airport Managing Director**

The Committee discussed the debate on the expansion proposals in the local media and the criticism of the lack of balance in some areas. In response to a suggestion that there was a belief that the consultation was abbreviated, Shaun Scrutton advised that the consultation period had been extended to 9 April.

#### **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### Southend Festival of the Air

In answer to a question the Committee was informed that the Southend Air Show was to be renamed the Southend Festival of the Air and that the Red Arrows would be attending on bank holiday Monday, 25 May.

#### **13. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

It was noted that the Committee had agreed that meetings during 2009 would be held at 2pm on:

Wednesday, 20 May 2009;  
Wednesday, 19 August 2009;  
Wednesday, 18 November 2009.

**The meeting ended at 3.40pm.**