

**NOTES OF THE 45th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
LIAISON GROUP OF UK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES (UKACCs)
HELD ON THURSDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2022 AT BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT**

ACCs present:

Belfast International Birmingham	Tom McGrath, Chair Colin Flack (meeting Chair) Rosemary Tyler, Vice-Chair Lee Stevenson, Secretary
Bristol Farnborough Gatwick Glasgow	David Hall, Chair Philip Riley, Chair Monique Smart, Secretariat David Flint, Chair Donald Grant, Vice-Chair
Glasgow Prestwick Heathrow	Richard Searle, Chair Liz Sugg, Chair Mark Izatt, Deputy Chair & Chair of Passenger Services Group Rebecca Cox, Secretariat
Inverness Leeds Bradford Liverpool John Lennon	Pat Hayden, Chair Alan Wrigley, Chair Bob Swann, Chair Mike Jones, Secretary
London City Luton Manchester Southampton Stansted	Duncan Alexander, Chair Martin Routledge, Chair Steve Wilkinson, Chair Laura Johnston, Secretary Shena Winning, Chair Frank Evans, Secretary

In attendance:

UKACCs Secretariat	Paula Street
DfT	Ian Greene
DfT	Huw Jones
DfT	Carl Helicarr (virtual for item 2.1 (b))

Apologies:

Aberdeen Belfast City East Midlands Edinburgh	Alan Stewart, Chair Carol Edwards, Chair Guido Liguori, Chair Robert Carr, Chair Janice Hogarth, Secretary
Gatwick Manchester Newcastle	Tom Crowley, Chair Mike Flynn, Secretary David Haley, Chair John Littleton, Vice-Chair
Southend	David Osborne, Chair

1. SESSION 1

1.1 Welcome and introductions

- Nick Barton, CEO, of Birmingham Airport Limited, welcomed everyone to Birmingham Airport. He emphasized the importance of ACCs as extremely useful and valuable critical friends to airports, recognising that ACCs were an unequivocally good way of bringing independent oversight to the airport's operations on behalf of the various interest groups

to help resolve issues. He believed that airports needed to be held to account and ACCs gave balanced and honest feedback to airports on the many complex issues faced by them and their communities.

- Colin Flack, UKACCs Chair, thanked everyone for attending in person and outlined the proposed format for the meeting.

1.2 Notes of 2021 annual meeting

- The matters arising were reviewed and would be picked up during the meeting.
- **Approved:** the notes of the 2021 annual meeting.

2. SESSION 2

2.1 Our airports: experience over the year and future opportunities and challenges

a) Key issues and challenges for ACCs in 2021-22

Paper 1, summarising the contributions to this item made in advance of the meeting, had been circulated with the agenda. Those present were invited to comment and a lengthy discussion followed. The key issues identified across the UKACCs membership were:

- **Recovery from the pandemic, including airport staff resource, recruitment and retention:** There was consensus that airports were hopeful that by next spring they would start to see an improved position. However, it was felt that there was a need for measures to attract people to work in the aviation sector, including higher paid jobs, effective staff retention policies and improved employment packages. It was suggested that allowing potential employees to undertake training whilst security checks were being carried out would help speed up the recruitment process. The DfT were asked to consider this and UKACCs would pick this up at future meetings with them. During the recovery process airports had been blamed for issues that were in fact related to third parties providing a service to them. Better communications were required to address these misconceptions and it was suggested that UKACCs put together a one-page summary of who was responsible for what at airports to assist ACCs.

ACTION: UKACCs

- **Surface access:** Several issues raised were linked to recovery. Provision and frequency of public transport services had not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Availability and choice of such transport modes was not only important to passengers but also for attracting and retaining staff. Public transport services needed to be flexible, regular and affordable, including in the unsociable hours to match shift working patterns. Some ACCs from the larger airports reported that their Transport Forums were looking at free bus travel and investment in cycling and walking routes.
- **Sustainability and environmental issues:** The negative impact of aircraft overflight and noise on local communities from a wide area around airports continued to be the main topic of discussion at ACC meetings. Many airports were seeing an increase in complaints as the sector recovered and traffic returned. Persistent and exceptionally frequent complainants were skewing the reporting figures and a number of ACCs were looking at how to address the handling of such complaints.
- **Airspace modernisation and airspace change:** Although ACCs were confident that airports were putting in place effective engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and communities as required by [the CAP1616](#) process, concerns were raised about the complexity and lengthiness of the process, in particular:
 - ACCs foresaw that problems may arise at the end of any such process which had begun so long ago, with people not understanding the outcome or what had been agreed at the start. It would be important for airports and the CAA to plan how to manage expectations.
 - Reference was made to the sound lab used as part of the HS2 project which replicated the noise the implemented scheme would generate. It was felt that the use of a similar sound lab for airspace change projects would help the public better understand the overflight and noise impacts as well as enhance engagement, particularly as it was proven that perception of noise was subjective.

- It was agreed that clearer definitions were needed on what respite meant and how it could be delivered as part of an airspace change project. Any proposed respite needed to be honest, realistic and achievable.
- The DfT reminded ACCs that the CAA had relatively recently engaged on the [review of CAP1616 and a consultation was expected shortly](#)¹. The DfT would look to review its air navigation guidance to the CAA in light of the outcome of the reviewed CAP1616 process. It was also confirmed that any airspace change proposals already started would continue to follow the current process.
- It was noted that there had been delays in the process to date as a result of resourcing issues at the CAA. This was currently being addressed.

The UKACCs secretariat would continue to raise these issues during their regular meetings with the CAA.

ACTION: UKACCs

- **Airport expansion and planning processes:** When any such projects were being undertaken by an airport, it was vital that ACCs work proactively to inform stakeholders and assist them in building an understanding of the project and associated issues. They should ensure that they were not simply providing a platform for local community groups to either object to or support projects.

b) Aviation Policy update

- The DfT presented an overview of '[Flight path to the future](#)', the Government's strategic framework for the aviation sector which was published in May 2022. The key points to note were:
 - The strategy built upon the Aviation 2050 Green Paper consultation and took into account subsequent changes, including the impact of Brexit and the pandemic. The Strategy had four themes - enhancing global impact for a sustainable recovery; embracing innovation for a sustainable future; realising benefits for the UK; and delivering for users - which supported a 10 point plan to be delivered in collaboration with the sector – [click here](#) to see.
 - An Aviation Council had been established to prioritise issues and help deliver the 10 point plan, chaired by the Minister for Aviation with rotating co-chairs from the sector, with Stewart Wingate, CEO, Gatwick Airport Limited undertaking this role for the next year. The Aviation Council would also set up sub-groups to bring in a wider audience such as ACCs and local interest groups.
 - The Council's membership would be reviewed on an annual basis, and six-monthly updates would be issued to give transparency to its work. An Aviation Council mailbox had been set up - aviationcouncil@dft.gov.uk.
 - The Government was working through ICAO on international travel resilience and international security, looking to ensure that growth was supported and capacity used in way that delivered benefits to the UK whilst fitting with its priorities of decarbonisation and the [Jet Zero Strategy](#).
 - The Flight Path Strategy did not contain any fiscal commitments, but rather set out a road for the aviation sector to deliver.
- The DfT also gave an update on the Noise Policy review. '[Flight path to the future](#)' stated that the Government would set out next steps on noise policy in 2023. Earlier this year, the DfT had held a series of discussion groups with ANEG (Airspace and Noise Engagement Group) and a range of other stakeholders on key areas of policy, with UKACCs being represented at all the focus groups. The key points to note included:
 - The DfT had not yet responded on a national night flights policy and the review of the night flights regime at the three London noise designated airports (Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted) was ongoing. The DfT would respond to that review in one of two ways: either a short, focused consultation on a noise abatement objective for the designated airports in January/February 2023; or the issuing of a

¹ CAP1616 consultation was launched on 5 January 2023 and closes on 5 March 2023

https://consultations.caa.co.uk/safety-and-airspace-regulation-group/acp2022/?mc_cid=30c033d50a&mc_eid=04771e7b05

major statement on noise policy towards the end of 2023 followed by a consultation on the night flights regime for these airports.

- The DfT had commissioned a piece of research aimed at improving understanding about how exposure to aviation noise at night contributed to sleep disturbance and annoyance, with a particular focus on how this relationship varied at different times of the night. This study, the Aviation Night Noise Effects study (ANNE), would be conducted at eight airports around the UK. It would consist of two parts, the first a subjective study in 2022 with a questionnaire on exposure to noise at night and how it disturbed people, the results of which would be published in summer 2023 and would inform the Night Flights Review consultation later in 2023. The second phase would be an objective study, with volunteers who would be wired up and monitored overnight - and have a noise monitor in their bedroom - to determine the impact of exposure to night flights overhead. Results of this were due to be published in summer 2024.
- The CAA had now assumed its new functions assigned following the closure of ICCAN. It would be taking forward the ANAS survey looking at daytime noise attitudes. This was a large-scale study of around 15,000 respondents with the fieldwork being undertaken next summer. UKACCs requested that the outcomes of the DfT's night noise attitudes research ANNE and the CAA's night-time study be brought together to provide a comprehensive picture and ensure that both studies were aligned with no overlap. The CAA would also be looking at ICCAN's CAP1616 consultation process toolkit.
- The CAA would produce an annual report on aviation noise and performance across UK airports. This would be in addition to, and go hand in hand with, the CAA's triannual report on the environmental performance of the UK aviation sector (a statutory requirement at European level) due to be published very shortly. This work would look at the benefits of a range of noise metrics in different scenarios to establish which were most effective.
- The importance of addressing noise and land use planning policy guidance and building regulations was discussed. There was a need to address development in noise contours areas close to airports and for tailored guidance and regulations for housebuilders where development was permitted in areas close to airports. The DfT was aware of this issue and was liaising with the DLUHC.
- In the interests of transparency, a request was made that a summary of the work described above, with timelines, be drawn up and made available for ACCs to share with stakeholders. The UKACCs secretariat would look at this.

ACTION: UKACCS

3. SESSION 3

3.1 DFT Information Gathering Exercise of ACCS

- The DfT gave an overview of the high-level key outcomes of the information gathering exercise undertaken earlier in 2022. 54 ACCs had been invited to respond to the survey and 36 responses were received, of which 21 were UKACCs members. Subject to approvals, DfT intends to publish a full report in early 2023.
- Some of the issues and challenges facing ACCs identified in this survey had been reflected in discussions during the meeting, including:
 - How to achieve better engagement with democratically elected representatives and the wider public. Such members appointed to ACCs were not always perceived to truly represent the views of their organisations/electorate, and there were problems with frequent non-attendance. It was acknowledged that residents' frustration because of this lack of trust in their representatives could be one of the reasons behind the rise in local community campaign groups. It was suggested that member attendance records should be published on the committee's website/airport webpage.
 - How to ensure that ACC members were sufficiently knowledgeable about the issues they were asked to consider. A number of ACCs shared their practices, such as holding new member induction sessions or away days outside of the formal ACC

meeting cycle. Some ACCs also circulated weekly or monthly updates, which had been well received.

The meeting closed at 13.00, with the internal business of UKACCs to be discuss in the afternoon.

Rebecca Cox
UKACCs Secretariat