

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services)

to

Transport, Capital, Inward Investment Working Party

on

18th February 2021

Joint Report prepared by:

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and

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London Southend Airport Monitoring Report – Reporting Year 2019-20

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Working Party to review key monitoring data, details of complaints and London Southend Airport Annual Report 2019-20 (the “Annual Report”).
- 1.2 The report relates to London Southend Airport’s Annual Report 2019-20 for the 12 month period 1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020. This was before the COVID-19 restrictions came into force. The Annual Report for 2020-21, a year in which the Airport has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, will come to the Working Party later this year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **To note the monitoring data contained in London Southend Airport Annual Report 2019-20 for the 12 month period 1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020 and the Section 106 Agreement Year Summary 2019/2020 which demonstrates general compliance with the obligations contained in the relevant planning agreements and leases.**
- 2.2 **To note the details of complaints received in the 12 month period 1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020 as contained in the Annual Report.**
- 2.3 **To note the rest of the contents of the Annual Report and the satisfactory and successful position reported.**
- 2.4 **To note the ongoing review of the Section 106 Operational Control Documents referred to in paragraph 3.17.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council owns the freehold of London Southend Airport (“the Airport”) which has been leased to London Southend Airport Company Limited (“the Airport Company”) since 1994. The Airport Company is owned by the Stobart Group.

- 3.2 London Southend Airport saw another year of substantial passenger growth, growing by 43% to 2.1 million in the year March 2019 to February 2020 (in comparison to 1.5m in 2018/19 and 1.1m in 2017/18). Ryanair delivered the majority of the growth, commencing operations in April 2019 with a three aircraft base. Wizz Air and Loganair also commenced operations, operating up to seven destinations between them.
- 3.3 During 2019/20 the Airport also developed their commercial offering with improved retail shopping and services for passengers. A new partnership was launched with a major global logistics operator. The new logistics operation included an initial two-year agreement, which created over 200 new job roles on the airport site and resulted in an investment of £1.3m to enable the conversion of an existing hangar facility into a new Cargo Warehouse (the 'Stobart Aviation Services SENA' hangar was formerly the 'Inflite' hangar located to the north of the runway within the Maintenance Area North with vehicular access via Aviation Way).
- 3.4 Airport growth of course comes with its challenges and a key one for the Council is to manage the Airport's environmental impacts. In the Reporting Year the Airport reported a 36% reduction in its CO₂ emissions per unit revenue in 2019, and zero waste collected from the Airport to landfill since 2015. These are both welcome achievements. It also began the task of benchmarking its performance against both airport peers and analogous businesses in other sectors, to provide a sound basis for environmental action planning in areas such as carbon, air quality and noise management. This work continues in the current year.
- 3.5 The planning consents for the Airport development given in 2010 impose much more stringent controls than had existed previously on aircraft traffic movements ("ATMs") particularly at night, as well as take-off and landing procedures and noise restrictions. In particular the maximum number of ATMs at night was reduced from more than 900 to 120 per month from 2012 onwards.
- 3.6 The Airport's operational controls are repeated in the leasing arrangements. The controls are designed to achieve a balance between protecting residents from the environmental impacts of the Airport, while delivering the significant benefits to the local economy of a revitalised Airport with the associated jobs created.
- 3.7 The full London Southend Airport Annual Report 2019-20 is included at **Appendix 1** ("the Annual Report"). It details the employment generated by the Airport and how the expansion has supported local employment (see pages 27-32). The report confirms that over 360 new jobs were created during the 2019–20 reporting period. It also confirms that 83% (as at February 2020) of staff employed by London Southend Airport live in a local SS postcode area.
- 3.8 The Chairman of the Airport Consultative Committee ("ACC") confirmed the committee's approval of the Annual Report on 16th July 2020.
- 3.9 Attached at **Appendix 2a, 2b and 2c** is some general information about the Airport which appears on the Council's website.

- 3.10 Attached at **Appendix 3** is an “Operational Controls Summary Table” which identifies the key controls which now apply to the Airport operations, including the important controls on night flights: This table is also on the Council’s website.
- 3.11 Ensuring that the Airport Company complies with its obligations is very important. In this regard the Council receives regular data on ATMs from the Airport Company and the Section 106 Agreement Year Summary 2019/2020 is attached at **Appendix 4**.
- 3.12 The data supplied by the Airport Company is taken from air traffic control logs maintained by controllers individually licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (“CAA”). The data is also supplied to the CAA and the ACC. Checks carried out by Planning Officers, including an annual audit/spot check of reporting data compiled by the Airport Company for the CAA and the Council, have confirmed the integrity of the data supplied.
- 3.13 In addition, on the 19th July 2012, the Council established an Airport Monitoring Working Party (now part of the Transport, Capital, Inward Investment Working Party) as a further mechanism to check that the Airport Company is complying with its obligations. Attached at **Appendix 5** are the terms of reference of this Working Party, which now undertakes the role.
- 3.14 The Working Party meets approximately once per year and the last meeting was held on 21st November 2019. At this last meeting, the Working Party noted the satisfactory position in terms of the Airport Company complying with the obligations imposed on it during the period up to 28th February 2019. The minutes of the Working Party were duly noted at Cabinet on 25th February 2020 (minute 870) and then at Council on 16th July 2020 (minute 152).
- 3.15 **Aircraft Traffic Movements (ATM) Controls & Noise Preferential Routes**

Pages 53-60 of the 2019/20 Annual Report contain key monitoring data relating to ATM Controls and compliance with Noise Preferential Routes for the period 1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020, together with commentary.

The data was verified as correct by the ACC as part of the sign off procedure referred to in paragraph 3.8.

The Section 106 Agreement Year Summary 2019/2020 at **Appendix 4** contains additional information.

In summary, there has been general compliance with the obligations contained in the relevant Section 106 Planning Agreements and leases with regard to ATMs:

- The total number of ATMs (excluding “Exempt” ATMs) was 36,979 (69% of annual permitted movements) against an annual limit of 53,300
- There were 1,022 Cargo ATMs (2.76% of 37,006 total ATMs) against an annual permitted number of the lesser of 5,330 or 10% of total ATMs.
- There were zero Boeing 737-300 ATMs against a limit of 2,150.

- Whilst there can be up to 1,440 ATMs per annum during the night (subject to a number of strict limitations in terms of types of aircraft and noise levels), the actual figure was 1,085 (after discounting 367 diverted, delayed or exempt ATMs).
- The operational controls permit up to 120 ATMs per month (less delayed, diverted or exempt ATMs) during the night and, should this quota be exceeded, then penalty provisions apply that require reductions in the quota in subsequent months. On average in the Reporting Year, there were 90 ATMs per month with the lowest number in March 2019 (7 ATMs) but the quota was exceeded in June 2019 (128 ATMs) and July 2019 (139 ATMs) and therefore penalties applied. The Airport remained well within these penalty provisions with 77 ATMs in August 2019 and less than 120 ATMs in subsequent months thus complying with the operational controls.
- No passenger flights took off or landed in the Reporting Year between 2300 and 0630 hours unless they were Delayed or Diverted (615 in the Reporting Year); and the permitted provision to allow up to 90 passenger flights per month to be scheduled to land within the 'shoulder period' of 2300 and 2330 hours was complied with (308 scheduled passenger flights in shoulder period in Reporting Year; highest number was 45 in August 2019 with an overall 28.5% of 1080 movements permitted in a year).
- At night over the 12 month period, only 32% of aircraft took off towards or landed from the south-west and in every case this was in accordance with one of the six prescribed safety reasons in Schedule 1 paragraph 3.39b the Section 106 Planning Agreements (including safety; any reasonable requirements of ATC to ensure safe operations; standard separation requirements of National Air Traffic Services; weather conditions prevailing at time of ATM making it unsafe; performance capabilities of aircraft in the prevailing conditions; limitation of the approach aid facilities).
- During the day time over the 12 month period, 29% of aircraft landed from the south-west (against a maximum permitted figure of 50%) and 46.9% of all arrivals and departures were from the south-west (against a maximum permitted figure of 50%). All such take-offs and landings were in accordance with one of the six prescribed safety reasons in Schedule 1 paragraph 3.40b the Section 106 Planning Agreements (including safety; any reasonable requirements of ATC to ensure safe operations; standard separation requirements of National Air Traffic Services; weather conditions prevailing at time of ATM making it unsafe; performance capabilities of aircraft in the prevailing conditions; limitation of the approach aid facilities) or were dictated by movement volumes.
- There has been full compliance with the day-time and night-time noise restrictions. Zero aircraft with a Quota Count (QC) of more than 2.0 (EPNDB 95.9) have taken off or landed at the Airport during the day-time in the Reporting Year; and zero aircraft with a QC of more than 1.0 (EPNDB 92.9) or any helicopters have taken off or land in the night period.

- In terms of compliance with the Noise Preferential Routes which apply to departing aircraft over 5.7 tonnes, the limited numbers of infringements are set out on page 59 of the Annual Report and fines issued are detailed on page 60.

3.16 Complaints

In response to common enquiries and complaints regarding the Airport, the Council published a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) on our website in February 2020. It is available via the Airport information page referenced in **Appendix 2**. This is a useful reference document for Councillors and members of the public.

Complaints about the Airport operations during the 12 month period 1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020, is essentially a matter for the Airport Company to deal with, as made clear on the Council's website (**Appendix 2**).

The Airport Company has a comprehensive complaint's handling service which responds to comments and complaints about aircraft noise and routing. Complaints data, including information on complaints resolution, is considered regularly by the ACC. ACC minutes are published on the [Airport's website](#) providing opportunity for review.

Included on page 34 of the Annual Report is reference to engine testing. The Airport are required to investigate engine testing complaints and they have confirmed that in the Reporting Year there were two such complaints received in April 2019 and November 2019. However, these reported incidents were found to comply with the terms of the current Engine Testing Best Practice Plan (under review – see below).

Included on pages 38-40 of the Annual Report is a summary of noise complaints received and investigated by the Airport Company between 1st March 2019 and 29th February 2020. The total number of noise complaints was 7,005 which is a significant increase in the figure for 2018/1 of 1505. It noted that 6,711 of these related to aircraft operating in or out of London Southend Airport.

Of these 6,711 complaints, 16 related to **five non-complaint aircraft movements** that had breached noise abatement controls by initiating an early turn before reaching the required 2.5 mile straight departure when taking off towards Leigh-on-Sea. Full details of all non-compliant departures and the fines issued against them can be found on page 59 of the Annual Report.

The data within the Annual Report, demonstrating general compliance with the obligations contained in the relevant Section 106 Planning Agreements and leases, was verified as correct by the ACC as part of the sign off procedure referred to in paragraph 3.8.

Where complaints are received by the Council they are generally passed to the Airport Company to respond to. Where the complaint relates to the Council, then these are responded to by an appropriate officer.

3.17 Other Section 106 Operational Control Documents

The [Airport Surface Access Strategy \(ASAS\)](#) was reviewed in the Reporting Year taking into account the fact that the 1.5m and 2m passengers per annum thresholds were reached in quick succession. The revised ASAS was formally agreed by members of the Council's Development Control Committee on 9th September 2020. The strategy has been published as the February 2020 review document as no amendments were made to the strategy beyond this date.

In addition, the following documents were approved prior to the opening of the extended runway in 2012, pursuant to the Section 106 Planning Agreements:

- Carbon & Environmental Management Plan
- Air Quality Monitoring
- Wake Vortex Repair Scheme
- Quiet Ground Operations
- Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Public Noise Complaints Procedures
- Engine Testing Best Practice Plan

A current review of these documents commenced a while ago and is nearing completion.

- 3.18 Senior Officers of the Stobart Group will be attending the meeting to answer any queries Councillors may have relating to the 2019/20 Annual Report (including the monitoring and complaints information contained therein) and the Section 106 Year Summary 2019/2020.

4. Corporate Implications

4.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Connected and Smart – An airport that has continued to open up business and leisure travel overseas, but in balance with the local environment.

4.2 Financial Implications

None

4.3 Legal Implications

Details of the main controls imposed on the Airport Company are set out in the report and the Appendices.

4.4 People Implications

None.

4.5 Property Implications

Relevant issues are set out in the report.

4.6 Consultation

None – although the planning approvals for the Airport development were subject to standard consultation processes.

4.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

No significant implications.

4.8 Risk Assessment

The monitoring process referred to in this report is designed to ensure that the requirements of the leases and S.106 Agreements are complied with.

4.9 Value for Money

Not applicable.

4.10 Community Safety Implications

The Airport must operate in accordance with CAA requirements.

4.11 Environmental Impact

The purpose of the report is to address compliance with controls designed to minimise the environmental impact of the Airport.

5. Background Papers

The planning permissions and S.106 Planning Agreements relating to the Airport.

The leases relating to the Airport.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 [London Southend Airport Annual Report 2019-2020](#)

Appendix 2 [General Information about the Airport published on the Council's website](#)

Appendix 3 Operational Controls Summary Table published on the Council's website

Appendix 4 Section 106 Year Summary 2019/2020

Appendix 5 Terms of Reference of the Transport, Capital, Inward Investment Working Party