

## Discussion - Airport Commission's Recommendation

### The Eden Centre Edenbridge July 17th 2015

- Presenters : Mathew Balfour KCC Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport
- Clive Pearman KCC Vice Chair Environment & Transport
- Joe Ratcliffe, KCC Strategy Transport Manager

20 people attended and there were apologies from Paul Carter KCC Leader and local MPs

The meeting opened with a reprise of the earlier meeting held at Hever Castle in November 2014.

The impact of the Davies Commission was then discussed. The commission considered three proposals these are:-

- 2nd runway at Gatwick,
- an extended runway at Heathrow,
- a third north runway at Heathrow.

Recent studies suggest that a 4th runway will be needed by 2050

The Davies Commission has recommended a third north runway at Heathrow.

Reasons for this include

- More long haul connections
- Greater connectivity to London
- Economic benefits
- Air freight movements are greater at Heathrow than Gatwick which is mainly short haul

Conditions have also been recommended

- a ban on all scheduled night flights in the period from 11.30pm to 6.00am, which is only possible with expansion
- no fourth runway: the government should make a firm commitment in Parliament not to expand the airport further - there is no sound operational or environmental case for a fourth runway at Heathrow

- a legally binding 'noise envelope' putting firm limits on the level of noise created by the airport
- a new aviation noise levy to fund an expanded programme of mitigation, including noise insulation for homes, schools and other community facilities
- a legal commitment on air quality that new capacity will only be released when it is clear that compliance with EU limits will not be delayed
- a Community Engagement Board, under an independent chair, with real influence over spending on mitigation and compensation and over the airport's operations
- an independent aviation noise authority, with a statutory right to be consulted on flight paths and other operating procedures at all UK airports
- provision of training opportunities and apprenticeships for local people, so that nearby communities benefit from the jobs and economic opportunities

The Davies Report is now with the Department of Transport who are looking at the recommendations and checking the facts and figures presented.

Gatwick are challenging the report on the grounds that Davies has overestimated Heathrow's ability to deliver the proposals while Gatwick have been underestimated.

At the moment Heathrow are making no comment.

There was discussion with regard to noise impact and how the current methods for measuring noise are outmoded and worthless. KCC have said that noise pollution is something which district and borough councils could do well as they have the expertise unlike KCC.

It was also demonstrated by way of maps of recorded flight paths that West Kent is subject to increased flight departures from Heathrow thus unfairly giving the impression that Gatwick is the cause.

It was reported that Easyjet are about to retrofit noise reduction equipment to their Airbus 320 fleet which will reduce the characteristic engine whine of these aircraft.

KCC are supporting the expansion at Heathrow and will be contacting district and borough councils with a view to encouraging local support.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Further reading is available here:-

Davies Report <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/airports-commission-releases-final-report>

For the latest airport news in the UK <http://www.uk-airport-news.info/>