

WYCOMBE AIR PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 11th July 2012

PRESENT

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| Mr R Pushman | Chairman |
| Mr D Phillips | General Manager, Wycombe Air Park |
| Councillor R Emmett | WDC Member, Hambleden |
| Councillor I McEnnis | WDC Member, Chiltern Rise |
| Councillor J Richards, OBE | WDC Member, Greater Marlow |
| Councillor Z Ahmed | WDC Member, Sands |
| Mr N Timberlake | West Wycombe Parish Council |
| Mr R White | Hambleden Parish Council |
| Mr M Detsiny | Lane End Parish Council |
| Mr H Luxton | Booker Common and Woods Protection Society |
| Mr R Martyn | Booker Gliding Club |
| Group Cpt K Dearman | Wycombe Air Centre |
| Mr J Smith | Divisional Environmental Health Officer, WDC |

1. R Emmett opened the meeting and advised those present that R Pushman had been delayed but would be joining the meeting shortly. He welcomed both Lane End and Hambleden Parish Council representatives.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies had been received from Heli Air and both R Pushman and N Timberlake for lateness.
3. **Duration of Meeting**
It was the intention to finish the business part of the meeting by 8.00 pm when it was hoped that there may be some members of the public wishing to join the meeting.
4. **Declarations of Interest**
Declarations of interest were received from employees and operators of the air park. On his arrival, R Pushman declared an interest in that his grandson had been accepted as a work experience student at one of the helicopter companies.
5. R Emmett advised that under the constitution, the JCC could co-opt a member to the committee at any time and he proposed that R Pushman be co-opted. He had lived in the Wycombe District area for some 50 years and following a career in the RAF he had managed his own business. He had served for 12 years as a County Councillor at Buckinghamshire County Council; had been a District Councillor for 24 years; Chairman of Hughenden Parish Council; Chairman of the Conservation Trust and Chairman of the Association of Local Parish Councils in Bucks. He clearly had extensive experience of chairing meetings and he did not reside within the cartilage of

the air park. He considered that he would be an excellent person to have on the JCC. His co-option was seconded by I McEnnis and unanimously supported. R Pushman then joined the meeting. He advised that he had been approached to join the JCC and to take on the role of Chair. He stated that he had no intention of becoming an Executive Chairman; the air park had a superb manager in D Phillips and he came into this role confident of the work undertaken by others. He would conduct meetings fairly and use this forum as a means of communicating messages. He believed all should part in good spirits and remain friends with the belief that all things could be sorted out. If everyone worked on that basis he believed this would become a meaningful forum between the Manager; the operations of the air park and the residents in the vicinity. He had a genuine wish to serve the residents and an interest to maintain the number of people employed at the air park. R Emmett proposed R Pushman as Chairman. This was seconded by I McEnnis. There were no other nominations and R Pushman was duly elected as Chairman.

6. Nominations for Vice Chairman

M Detsiny nominated D White. He had sat on the JCC since 2003 and had developed a huge knowledge of issues facing residents. He represented a parish most affected by noise issues and he considered it was important that the Vice Chairman should represent parishioners. D White responded in that he felt he may not be able to do this as he considered he may not be able to take the neutral stance associated with this office and he had not been prepared for this nomination. He requested a conversation with the Chairman before reaching a decision. M Detsiny apologised for not discussing his nomination before hand. It was agreed this nomination remain on the table until the next meeting.

7. Duration of Meeting

The Chairman suggested the meeting should last no longer than 1½ hours. He also asked the meeting to consider whether the public should be invited to have their say before or after the business part of the meeting. M Detsiny also suggested that the frequency of meetings be considered. D Phillips stated that his instinct suggested every 2 months to the end of the year or possibly longer (6 meetings a year) and then to review this with a view to possibly reducing meetings to every quarter (4 meetings a year). It was therefore agreed that currently meetings would be at 2 monthly intervals.

Z Ahmed enquired whether he could bring a representative with him and the meeting considered that it would not be appropriate for the JCC to become bogged down with individual issues.

J Smith advised that there was guidance available as to who should sit on the JCC and whilst there was District and Parish Council representation, his view was that the JCC was light on representatives from residents' associations. He advised that in the past both Sands Residents' Association and Frieth Village Society had been represented.

The Chairman considered that if residents' associations were properly constituted then their views would be valid providing there was no conflict with the Parish Council and he suggested that their attendance should be considered.

Discussion ensued. D Phillips was eager to engage with the wider communities and the more interaction with residents' associations and action groups so much the better. N Timberlake advised that he had a little reluctance to extend membership where there was already a Parish Council representative in attendance. D White suggested that an invitation to attend should also be extended to WAPAG. D Phillips reiterated his desire to engage with all groups. WAPAG were the most vociferous voice currently but providing discussions could be held in a mature and balanced fashion, he would support their inclusion. Both M Detsiny and D White considered this would be a most significant step forward to have WAPAG at the table. Whilst WAPAG had a membership of over 100 people, it was agreed that should they be invited, they would need to nominate only one permanent representative to sit on the JCC. Whilst D Phillips supported this idea, he suggested it could not be presumed that WAPAG would want a seat at the table as they had spent considerable time and money pushing for specification.

It was therefore agreed that Sands Residents Association, Frieth Village Society and WAPAG be invited to send one representative to attend future JCC meetings and the Chairman would issue

personal invitations to them.

8. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2012 were tabled and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

9. Matters of report not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

D Phillips advised the JCC that much to his disappointment he had not yet been able to put GPS tracking into each aircraft. Trials had been held, following which he had not been satisfied with the clarity and accuracy of data coupled with the fact that the software did not work. He personally had found this very frustrating and irritating. He confirmed that he would install this on the 17 aircraft he operated and that Helicopter Services had also agreed to install the same on their fleet. He confirmed that he would develop a system to report back to the JCC and whilst this tracking was not foolproof it would provide much better follow through. R Martyn also agreed to take this back to the manager at Booker Gliding Club.

D Phillips also advised that as of midnight Friday 13th July 2012, all airspace would be under the control of the military, due to the forthcoming Olympics. There would therefore be a need to change the operations and all operations were required to stay within 3 miles of the airfield. He emphasised that during this 32 day period things may be forced upon them that they had no control over and because of the restrictions he anticipated the total number of movements would drop off. He also asked those present to communicate to the local communities that he may be forced to fly inside of the NAZ. For this period, gliding operations would temporarily relocate to Thame and this would give him the option to fly circuits south and east of the airfield in order to spread the noise.

10. Noise Complaints received by the Air Park

D Phillips apologised for the oversight on his part in not producing this for inclusion with the agenda.

From 17th April – 9th July there had been 28,000 movements. 84 complaints had been received from 9 individuals with 3 of the 9 complainants raising 76 of the total number. Of the 84 complaints, 71 contained insufficient data to further investigate; 3 proved nothing to do with the air park leaving 10 that were able to be followed up and the pilot debriefed. Of the 10, there were no persistent offenders.

11. Noise Complaints received by Wycombe District Council

J Smith advised that 3 varied complaints had been received. 1 related to noisy helicopters at Gypsy Lane, Marlow; this was believed to have been a different helicopter which gave rise to a subtle difference in the noise footprint causing the complaint of "noisy helicopter". The other related to noise from an aircraft at Harleyford, Marlow disturbing the tranquillity and this was thought to be an aircraft from Heathrow. Finally a complaint regarding loud aerobatic activity over Longwick had been received and after investigation it had been considered this did not relate to aircraft from Wycombe Air Park.

12. Reports from other bodies

H Luxton reported that no complaints had been received through the Booker Common and Woods Protection Society. However, some observations had been reported to him namely a large blue helicopter with a stripe on the side flying over the Arundel Road estate coming around 3 or 4 times in an hour and then disappearing.

13. Letters Received

There were none.

14. Planning Matters

D Phillips advised the meeting that the lease of the air field was due for renewal in October 2014 and he had now had an initial meeting with C Brocklehurst from the Council from which a degree of common ground had emerged. D White enquired whether any new clauses might be included and D Phillips advised that this had been a high level meeting and no detailed discussions had yet been held, and this matter was very much a work in progress.

15. Community Matters

D Phillips advised that he believed the air park to be an integral part of the community and he wanted to further foster these links. As from September, he had Aviation Degree students from both Bucks New University and Brunel attending for flight training. He felt that in the last few years the air park had not been good at promoting the community aspects of the air park, such as jobs and training, and he also wanted to encourage people to understand more about the air park and so he was working on plans for an open day.

16. AOB

M Detsiny advised that the DFT guidelines stated that there should be a proper secretariat for the JCC and not just a minute taker. R Martyn considered that the current function worked well. D White considered that the remit of the secretariat should include the ability to give technical advice to its members. The Chairman reminded the meeting that it was a consultative group and not an executive group but nevertheless he and D Phillips would discuss this matter. Following discussion it was agreed that the first part of the meeting from 6.30 pm – 7.00 pm should be for public participation and this would be promoted.

D White enquired as to the timetable for the noise action plan. D Phillips advised that he was currently awaiting an invitation from DEFRA and DFT to talk to them and it was his understanding that the plan was expected for the autumn. He anticipated an informal consultation process through the JCC indicating the issues and possible solutions and a draft plan would go to the Secretary of State. This would then be converted into a formal consultation exercise across the community. He proposed that this item would be discussed at the September meeting.

17. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 27th September, 2012 at 6.30 pm at the Air Park. Public attendance would be from 6.30 – 7.00 pm and this would be advised to all the Clerks of the involved Parish Councils for publication.