

WYCOMBE AIR PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON
22nd March 2018**

PRESENT

Mr R Pushman	Chairman
Mr S Brown	CEO, Helicopter Aircraft Holdings Ltd
Councillor Z Ahmed	WDC Member, Sands
Councillor I McEnnis	WDC Member, Chiltern Rise
Councillor M Detsiny	Lane End Parish Council
Councillor D Broad	Hambleton Parish Council
Mr N Phillips	Sands Residents' Association
Mr A Mann	WAPAG
Mrs M Sarney	General Manager, Wycombe Air Park
Mr R Martyn	Booker Gliding Club
Mr J Smith	Divisional Environmental Health Officer, WDC

(1 member of the public was in attendance)

1. R Pushman opened the meeting.

2. Duration of Meeting

Following the 15 minute public participation, the Chairman stated that the JCC meeting would last as long as it took to deal with the business but he hoped it would be concluded by 8.00 pm.

3. Public Participation

As the only member of the public present, R Rendel asked a general question which was how long was deemed to be a reasonable timescale to wait for a reply to a complaint. M Sarney advised that the air park endeavoured to respond as quickly as possible and ideally within 5 days.

S Brown further stated however that it was difficult to respond to a plethora of complaints from one person and to work through so many took up much time. R Rendel spoke on behalf of K Chanter, who could not be present, and confirmed that K Chanter was acting on behalf of all residents of Frieth and to suggest that his complaints were from one person from one place was wholly inaccurate. S Brown reiterated that complaints should be made by individuals from individual properties so that they could be properly investigated.

Further discussion took place and R Rendel advised that he was still awaiting both an acknowledgement and response to a matter raised at the previous JCC.

A Mann also advised that he had lodged correspondence a week ago and still awaited feedback.

S Brown stated that unfortunately his staff were leaving as a result of people abusing the system. The huge amount of complaints from one person, even though he was speaking on behalf of the village, needed to be more accurate to be able to be properly investigated and therefore it would be more beneficial to all if individuals lodged individual complaints. The Chairman asked that this be conveyed to residents.

A Mann stated that the meeting should not descend into a meeting about complaints but

should continue to seek solutions to the problems being experienced.

R Rendell then asked about safety generally. He stated that he had seen “near misses” close to his house but that safety was not mentioned at JCC meetings. He further asked about the safety record at the air park.

S Brown advised that this was a matter that was dealt with by the CAA and upon which he could not comment as there were strict rules around this. In addition, matters of safety were not within the remit of the JCC.

R Rendell recorded his disappointment. He then enquired regarding respite days as he had not heard regarding his application and he asked for clarification as to whether any of these days could be taken by the air park. He was advised this was a full agenda item and would be dealt with in the formal JCC meeting.

4. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Councillors D Barnes, M Harris, C Whitehead, K Chanter, S Adkins and Nigel Dunn. The Chairman conveyed his best wishes to S Adkins, who found himself again in a similar personal situation as previously.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2017

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

6. Consideration of respite days

Under the lease, there were 4 respite periods allocated, and others at the discretion of the air park.

Discussion took place in respect of the formal request from Frieth Cricket Club. Both dates were acceptable, namely Sunday 8th July 2018 and Sunday 10th June 2018. However, respite would be between 2 and 5 pm only on both days but the air park would endeavour to accommodate respite from 11.00 am on 8th July.

There was also a Rotary Charity Day on 4th August with which R Martyn declared an interest. The air park would be closed from 4-9 pm with access required before and after the event and this closure was at the discretion of the air park.

Councillor McEnnis advised that as it was the centenary of the RAF, the air park had agreed to hold a reception here for a baton changing event on 3rd April from 1 pm. The actual baton exchange would take place at or near the memorial. A tidy up of this area was needed and J Smith would endeavour to assist in this regard.

7. Update from the working group on complaints and traffic patterns

The meeting was advised that the group had met twice. It consisted of Councillor Whitehead, R Pushman, S Adkins and A Mann. Many matters were discussed and taken into account and it had been concluded that the use of the south runway was considered to offer a solution. S Adkins advised that it was used for night flying already, it was a shorter circuit, using less fuel, and it was considered noise would be minimal and therefore this was the recommendation from the working group to S Brown. A Mann added that currently flights over Frieth, Lane End and Hambleden were not visible from the control tower and with this solution there would be total visibility.

S Brown advised that there was the issue of the gliding fraternity to consider and a safety case would need to be put to the CAA. On the latter point he advised that he had been in discussion with the CAA for over 3 years on a particular issue, which still remained unanswered, so he wished all to understand that this may not be the quick fix all hoped for. In respect of the gliders, they were currently on the south side so would need to move to the north side and discussions with them would be needed, which could not take place until they had sorted out their lease issues, so whilst S Brown confirmed he was keen to take this forward, there were some obstacles to overcome. In addition, a resident's survey would be required and consideration would need to be given to the payment of the safety case. He also stated that flying it on the limited scale as was the case currently, was different to flying this circuit on a regular basis. R Martyn stated that the gliding club had operated for some 40 years and were currently in discussion with the council.

Discussion then turned to some correspondence that had come to light from C Brocklehurst and Councillor Whitehead which appeared to be contradictory. S Brown's view was that the intention of the correspondence was indeed correct, but that the mechanism had been over

simplified and that certain permissions were required from Sir Francis Dashwood. A Mann stated that as both routes were currently flown, he thought that further consents should not be too difficult to obtain. N Phillips requested that a map of the proposed routes that were hoped to be implemented was produced. R Martyn was asked to advise how many glider flights took place per day, and this was estimated at 30-40 which could be as many as 8 an hour on a heavy day. M Detsiny suggested undertaking all survey work prior to making the request to the CAA, so that the application could include the approval of local residents, the JCC and WDC, which would hopefully speed up the approval process. S Brown advised that currently he also endeavoured to stagger the use of runways during normal flying practice, had raised the ceiling height of circuits, reduced the number of flights, increased revenue without flying and turned down a large training contract, yet he was seeing more complaints for less flights, so he was running out of ideas, not to mention feeling demoralised.

A Mann stated that he felt that all were on the same side, although he could not help feel that the solution was not being grabbed. J Smith disagreed with this point. S Brown reminded the meeting that he has raised this a couple of years earlier but that meaningful discussion with the gliding company could not take place until the lease was sorted. He referred to unresolved issues with the gliding club who were parking gliders near the trailers and not at the side of the glider hangar. S Brown also considered that the gliding company may have a case against the council – the gliding company needed to comply with their present lease which did not align with his lease. R Martyn confirmed his understanding in that a move to the north side could not take place until the issues with the council had been concluded. S Brown considered that the correspondence from C Brocklehurst to Councillor Whitehead was misleading. J Smith was asked to speak with C Brocklehurst to clarify the position and as it stood, we were going around in circles. S Brown reiterated that in 2004, movements were circa 150K, three times what they were now and he wondered if residents had become more noise sensitive.

It was agreed that:

- The Chairman write to C Brocklehurst to ask him to clarify his statement and set out how that appeared to differ from what both S Brown's and R Martyn's understood the position to be.
- The working party would meet again prior to the next JCC.
- A plan of the proposed new route be produced and circulated to JCC members, and
- The Chairman and Councillor Whitehead meet with C Brocklehurst to explain the proposed new route.

S Brown added that he had tried lots of different things; movements were down yet there was a plethora of unjustified complaints and he was at a loss to know what else to do. He had turned down a large contract as previously advised, which would have taken movements up to 155K. A Mann referred to the specification order and reminded the meeting that it had stated that a local solution should be found.

Discussion then turned to the use of silencers, and S Brown advised that he had one new aircraft arriving in the summer, at a cost of £500,000, which would be 7 decibels quieter, but that all aircraft did have silencers. In his opinion secondary silencers were not the solution and made little difference but that electric aircraft could be. However, production of these had not been announced due to certification issues.

J Smith advised that WDC had undertaken a noise monitoring exercise some 10-11 years ago at White Waltham and had been satisfied that there was a tangible difference and this research was shared with the JCC at the time. S Brown advised that the test needed to be repeated here at the air park as there were many variables, including the altitude at climb out and the location made a huge difference. J Smith disagreed with this point but agreed to share the report and this would be circulated with the minutes.

8. Complaints registration system

M Sarney confirmed that complaints could be made on line, on the telephone or complainants could write in and in respect of the latter two, they were then transferred to the on line system

and this is how the statistics were produced.
WDC confirmed that they did not now receive complaints.

9. Community Matters

The air park would host an Elite Show on 11/12 May from 10-5 pm which was a lifestyle event show aimed at those people with a “top of the range” lifestyle.

Aero Expo would again take place 14-16 June 2018.

On 4th August 2018, the Rotary Club would be holding a charity vintage car event and he hoped to get the Bucks Free Press involved as the public could attend.

10. Date of Next Meeting

10th July 2018 at 6.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm