

**WYCOMBE AIR PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON  
24<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

**PRESENT**

<b>Mr R Pushman</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Mr D Phillips</b>	<b>General Manager, Wycombe Air Park</b>
<b>Councillor Z Ahmed</b>	<b>WDC Member, Sands</b>
<b>Councillor D White</b>	<b>Hambleden Parish Council</b>
<b>Councillor N Timberlake</b>	<b>West Wycombe Parish Council</b>
<b>Ms Jenny France</b>	<b>Great Marlow Parish Council</b>
<b>Councillor D Barnes</b>	<b>WDC Member, Greater Marlow</b>
<b>Mr H Luxton</b>	<b>Booker Common and Woods Protection Society</b>
<b>Mr R Wetenhall</b>	<b>Wycombe Air Park Action Group (WAPAG)</b>
<b>Mr N Phillips</b>	<b>Sands Residents' Association</b>
<b>Mr R Martyn</b>	<b>Booker Gliding Club</b>
<b>Mr A Young</b>	<b>HeliAir</b>
<b>Mr J Smith</b>	<b>Divisional EHO, WDC</b>

**(3 members of the public were in attendance)**

1. The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and opened the public participation section of the meeting stating that the usual rules applied.

Q. M King, stated that he felt there was an unacceptable delay in response to complaints made to the air park. He cited an incidence of a complaint being made on 22<sup>nd</sup> August; an acknowledgement was then received on 29<sup>th</sup> August from D Phillips advising that he had been away but as at today's date, he still awaited a detailed response. From what he had understood Mr King considered there were fewer complaints being made so he could not understand the delay.

In addition, he advised that the complaints form on the air park's web was not easy to find and he suggested that this form should be located in a prominent place on the home page. Further, he suggested that currently all complaints made went through WAPAG's website and he recommended that they should go through the air park website, particularly as WAPAG were currently experiencing difficulties with their website. The air park could then copy any through to WAPAG so that WAPAG linked to the air park form rather than the other way around.

A. D Phillips stated that he was aware that he had a number of outstanding complaints for which he apologised. This was not the norm; he had been off work and had been snowed under with a myriad of issues. He assured Mr King that he would respond in full to his complaint.

D Phillips also advised the meeting that he did have a number of concerns regarding complaints handling via the website, which only recently went live. He acknowledged that the complaint form was in the wrong place and gave an undertaking to have this relocated and made a quick link. He advised that the form was a replication of the WAPAG one and he asked whether this remained fit for purpose. He asked whether it would be more helpful if complainants could complete just one form which would allow the capture of multiple reports and he asked for feedback in this respect.

Q. Resident, Shogmoor Barn, stated that currently it took a lot of effort to put in a complaint and the suggestion of one form which could be completed with multiple reports would be helpful. He further suggested that it was his opinion that some pilots were not taking their GPS with them or were not turning it on. In fact, K Chanter, who regularly undertook monitoring, had stated that he had monitored aircraft and when he referred to a particular one, there had been no trace of it.

A. D Phillips stated that he did not consider that pilots were deliberately doing this. The tracking device was in the form of a black box with an on/off switch. He acknowledged that this was a management issue, which required rectification. Mr King asked that something be done to enforce their use on all circuit flights. D Phillips confirmed that he had mandated the use of GPS tracking on all training flights, so he would ensure this happened. He was currently considering putting them in aircraft at the beginning of each day and leaving them on, as they had a long battery life.

Q. The same resident of Shogmoor Barn advised that the wrong information had been displayed on the website in respect of the date of the next JCC meeting.

A. D Phillips made a note of this for rectification.

Q. T Griffith, Heathfield Road, Sands, stated that his neighbours had suggested that there was no point in attending JCC meetings as nothing ever changed. The residents of Sands were disturbed by flying activities mainly at the weekend.

A. D Phillips stated that he was acutely aware of the impact of aircraft on various areas around the air park. He saw his role as trying to strike a reasonable balance. Next time Mr Griffiths complained, he would endeavour to visit so that they could examine what could be done to minimise any impact. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the JCC was a consultative committee, from which he hoped that solutions to the problems raised could be arrived at. D Phillips went on to state that the last three to four months had been unusual as R35 had been used more frequently and as a result, more complaints from Sands had been received. However, he reiterated that movements were half of what they had been a decade ago.

Q. Councillor D White stated that White Waltham had three grass runways which allowed for greater variation and he asked if an additional runway could be achieved at the air park.

A. D Phillips considered that this would be unworkable. Discussion ensued regarding a suggestion put forward by H Luxton and D Phillips agreed to look into this.

Q. R Wetenhall read out an email sent on 1<sup>st</sup> September regarding fixed wing aircraft flying low over Spring Coppice. The residents concerned then visited the air park and had ascertained that the pilots were not told to avoid Spring Coppice, nor were they advised to look at Pooley's Guide. It was suggested that air traffic should advise pilots about sensitive areas as a matter of routine.

A. D Phillips advised that it was the responsibility of the pilot to ensure that he was aware of what was permitted. Air traffic control required all visitors to book in for prior permission and all pilots are asked if they are familiar with the noise abatement procedures in operation. He expressed surprise that fixed wing aircraft were in the vicinity of Spring Coppice, as that area was predominantly used by helicopters. D Phillips agreed to respond to Mrs Pratt regarding this matter.

**2. Election of Vice Chairman**

The Chairman advised that he had received a nomination from Wycombe District Council but he asked that this matter be held over to the next meeting.

**3. Duration of meeting**

It was hoped this would be one to one and a quarter hours.

**4. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillor I McEnnis and Councillor M Detsiny. It was noted that Councillor N Dunn was unable to make Tuesday evening meetings.

**5. Minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

In respect of item no. 6, D Phillips and N Phillips would discuss this outside of the meeting. Councillor Ahmed pointed out that he had been referred to as Councillor Ali and this would be amended. He also advised that he had referred to Arundel Road and not Underwood Road. With those amendments, the minutes of the above meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**6. Matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda**

The Chairman advised that a meeting had taken place with the Leader of WDC, Deputy Leader, Property Manager and Environmental Officer, in order to discuss the Council's forward plans for lease renewal. He advised that these talks were confidential and ongoing.

**7. DEFRA Noise Action Plan**

D Phillips advised that he wanted the last draft to capture all the comments from the various bodies. He had therefore included a further comment from Councillor D White and he asked for any final observations within the next two days. R Wetenhall enquired whether the operating helicopters carried GPS tracking. He was advised that one company currently did this and the other would be mandated to do so. R Wetenhall made one other observation in that page referencing was now slightly out of sequence.

D Phillips confirmed his intention to now submit this.

**8. Noise complaints received by the Air Park**

D Phillips advised that there appeared to be relatively few hot spots, although he had received some complaints from residents of Innings Lane and Shogmoor. The last three months had seen approximately 1000 flying hours each.

**9. Noise complaints received by Wycombe District Council**

J Smith reported that there had been one complaint received from Frieth Road, Marlow regarding glider tugs and the complainant was in direct contact with the gliding club.

**10. Silencers**

D Phillips advised that four of his five aircraft had been fitted with silencers. However, he had received informal feedback from K Chanter in that he had not noticed much of a difference. He advised that he would expect the noise levels to show an 8 decibel reduction but he accepted the "nuisance" from circuit flying remained.

**11. Reports from other bodies**

Booker Common & Woods Protection Society – H Luxton reported that there were no official complaints through the society. He suggested that this item could be removed from the agenda and if necessary, he could report any complaints under item 8.0

Sands Residents' Association – N Phillips stated that he had stopped sending in a report as he considered the contents were rubbish.

**12. Community Matters**

D Phillips advised that he had an intake of students from Bucks New University and a few from Brunel University commencing with him. Councillor D White enquired if these students flew all year. He was advised that this was the case and in addition they undertook flying on a Saturday as well as Mondays/Wednesdays/Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings. N Phillips advised that from his observations, infringements were far worse during the week. D

Phillips further advised that their peak flying would take place between January and mid March, when their flying activity amounted to 70% of his circuit flying activity.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that meetings would be held quarterly in January, April, late June and September.

**The date of the next meeting was therefore agreed as 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 6.30 pm at the Air Park.**

The meeting closed at 7.25pm