

,WYCOMBE AIR PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON
24th September 2019**

PRESENT

Mr R Pushman	Chairman
Councillor Z Ahmed	WDC Member, Sands
Councillor C Whitehead	WDC Member, Hambleton
Councillor I McEnnis	WDC Member, Chiltern Rise
Councillor D Barnes	WDC Member, Greater Marlow
Councillor D Broad	Hambleton Parish Council
Councillor N Dunn	Great Marlow Parish Council
Mr N Phillips	Sands Residents' Association
Mrs M Sarney	General Manager, Wycombe Air Park
Mr K Black	Safety Manager, Wycombe Air Park
Mr P Allies	WAPAG
Mr R Martyn	Booker Gliding Club
Mr M Greenwood	AAA
Mr B Watts	AAA
Mr A Young	HeliAir
Mr J Smith	Divisional Environmental Health Officer

(0 members of the public were in attendance)

1. As there were no members of the public in attendance, the Chairman went straight into the formal business agenda.
2. **Duration of Meeting**
This was anticipated to be between 1-1.5 hours.
3. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies had been received from R Russell, A Mann, C Goss and B Tranter.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2019**
The minutes of 21st May were tabled and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. N Phillips advised that he considered that he had been credited with something which he did not raise in respect of the weather section of the air park's website.
5. **Matters Arising**
Cllr Whitehead advised that the unitary authority process had moved on. Community Boards were being proposed throughout the District and he wondered if the JCC may be dissolved

into a Community Board and therefore no longer required. J Smith confirmed that the JCC was not a council committee but administered by the air park, to which members of the council were invited to attend. He continued in that he expected the JCC's constitution would need to be amended before the May 2020 elections to reflect the changes to ward names, and to reflect the new role of the members of the Buckinghamshire council (because there would no longer be any District Councillors). In addition, there was also a consultation in respect of the some of the Parish and Town Councils so this would also need to feature in the constitution.

The meeting was reminded that the current constitution had been drafted through a sub group of this committee and was in the gift of the air park. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that a sub committee be formed now to review the constitution. This would consist of R Pushman, M Sarney, Cllr Whitehead and J Smith. The Chairman agreed to suggest and circulate some dates.

Action – R Pushman

6. Update on progress of the Noise Action Management Plan

M Sarney stated that unfortunately she had no further information of substance to share in respect of WAP's intention for the fleet going forward, apart from the fact that it was being reviewed.

There were some new Piper aircraft that S Brown had shown interest in and therefore all she could report was that the matter was progressing. P Allies enquired if there would be a phasing out of older aircraft, as newer, better, quieter equipment came on line. Discussion flowed onto the most accurate tracking devices and M Sarney advised that currently work was being undertaken with Skyecho, monitoring how this worked. P Allies commented that he understood that the Cessners had permanently installed transponders but that the Piper aircraft did not.

R Martyn enquired if electric powered aircraft had been considered. K Black stated that there was a flying school in Norway claiming that it hoped to be up and running in 2023/25 and the air park would be keen to understand the cost implications and how it worked. He further advised that robust aircraft would in any case be required for training purposes.

Cllr Whitehead asked as to the life expectancy remaining in the existing fleet. He was advised that the engines in the fleet were good. M Sarney also stated that it was hard to find alternatives to the Cessner 152 to use in circuit training and all the current fleet were able to be maintained so their life expectancy was as long as they could be maintained to a safe standard. Additionally, the fleet underwent x rays to show any signs of metal fatigue.

Discussion took place around the dBa difference between the Cessner 152 and the Piper 28 which continued with M Sarney advising that S Cripps was currently lodging a high volume of complaints so they were reviewing processes, including helicopters, to try to ascertain what was occurring in respect of noise. She added that she did not have the manpower to look into all of the complaints made, so she was trying to fix the problem at source by looking at what the procedure should be.

P Allies suggested modern transponders for all aircraft. K Black suggested that the cost of each was circa £7K.

N Phillips had made a request that the twin aircraft GPS be tracked as he did not consider it had been on the right track. K Black advised that he had spoken to the pilot who had confirmed that he had not studied the noise abatement procedures sufficiently and the turn had been delayed and the air park apologised for that and the fact that N Phillips had subsequently received a badly worded email.

7. Complaints Procedure

M Sarney considered that the reporting of complaints was not working for the air park, nor the public. Some were received via email, some were lodged on the website and some written complaints were received.

She invited comments on the complaints system so that a revised procedure could be produced. What was it that complainants wanted? Was it individual feedback for each complaint? Was it GPS tracking information for each complaint?

N Phillips would like individual feedback and also advice as to whether the aircraft had been on track and also to know if any action had been taken.

K Black advised that an idea he had was for all complaints to go into the system and be given a URN, which amongst other things, would enable the air park to know which ones required reply. This would then stop staff receiving complaints randomly and ensure that residents got considered answers, which he hoped would restore their faith that they were being considered appropriately.

It was suggested that an SLA be agreed in respect of timescales for reply, for example, within 10 working days. This would require specific time each week to be allocated to a staff member to review same and get back to complainants. K Black went on to say that ideally, he would like to see all complaints go through such a system, however if there was an imminent issue such as a consistent particular aircraft getting it wrong multiple times on the same day, then he would expect to receive a telephone call. M Sarney advised that she considered that complaints needed to be reviewed in a more structured way to evidence to residents that we were intent on resolving them. K Black therefore requested comments as to what members would like to see. He asked if people wanted to be able to log in and view their own complaints and he enquired as to the appropriateness of having a pre completed form and automated replies. P Allies fully supported this as he considered that some complainants were now suffering from complaint fatigue. He also enquired if complaints were received from “familiar” people, would the system be able to recognise these as such? He also remarked on the current repetitive nature of the form. K Black asked for any further feedback to be provided to him and hoped to be able to provide a demo at the next meeting.

Action – All/K Black

As a heads up, M Sarney advised that the air park had a new set of students starting and their circuit training stage would generally take place February/March/April with the Easter break being used to consolidate flying before going solo. Student numbers were down on those of last year. There was discussion regarding this year’s cohort whose flying time had to be extended and J Smith advised that if complaints were not investigated at the time then both the student and instructor were long gone.

8. Matters of report not elsewhere on the agenda

The Chairman and Cllr McEnnis recorded their thanks to the air park in respect of its co-operation and assistance regarding the Armed Forces Day, especially K Black. It was considered that the PR around the event also put the air park “on the map” and made the public more socially aware of it. It was quite simply a fantastic day with over 10,000 attendees.

P Allies enquired if an advisory note had been despatched to parish councils about the event and this was confirmed.

P Allies mentioned the overgrown state of hedges along a stretch of Marlow Road between Lane End and Marlow (B482) so much so that when a rubbish truck was travelling the road, its wheels were over the centre line, which was dangerous. It was agreed that a letter be drafted to BCC Highways Department drawing attention to the overgrown hedges and the obscuring of road signs and requiring this stretch of road to be dealt with.

Action – S Fryer

An observation was also made in that the traffic management personnel at the Armed Forces Day had used the entrance on this stretch of road for ingress and egress and at times there were long queues.

N Phillips enquired if the issue of silencers had been written off. M Sarney advised that whilst there had been no progress, this was still a live matter.

P Allies enquired as to the financial viability of the air park. He was advised that as with many organisations it was expensive to run and it was a balancing act. There was a shortage of ATC's and sometimes this meant complete closure of the air park. In addition there was a shortage of engineers. P Allies wondered if the air shows held at the air park assisted financially in any way. M Sarney advised that whilst these were good to raise the profile of the air park, it actually cost the air park in terms of lost revenue.

N Phillips asked if any progress had been made in respect of the relocation of the gliding club and R Martyn advised that this was work in progress. J Smith advised that the local plan had been approved and the south side of the air park removed from the Green Belt and designated as employment land. Therefore work on the planning application to relocate the gliders to the north side of the air park was progressing. The JCC would be consulted on the planning application and the changes to air space before being sent to the CAA. K Black and J Smith would pick up this point outside of the meeting. P Allies suggested that at the appropriate time, a special JCC may be required.

Action – K Black/J Smith

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 4th February 2020 at Wycombe Air Park at 6.30 pm