

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of the London Heliport Consultative Group held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Monday, 23rd January 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT

Chairman

Councillor Torrington (Wandsworth Borough Council)

Residents' representatives

David Brown (Battersea Reach Residents' Association – LB Wandsworth)
Christina Smyth (LB Hammersmith and Fulham)

Users' representatives

Capt Ian Field (Starspeed)
Capt John Roberts (National Police Air Service)

Observers, advisers and officers

Councillor Leonie Cooper (Wandsworth Borough Council / London Assembly
Member for Merton and Wandsworth)
Simon Hutchins (The London Heliport)
Colin Stanbury (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Martin Newton (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Guy Denington (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Ian Stephenson (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Dr Stephen Dance (London South Bank University)
Tim Fauchon (British Helicopter Association)

1 resident was also present.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Culhane (Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council), Councillor Belton (Wandsworth Borough Council) and Capt Michael Hampton (Capital Air Services).

Minutes - 20th October 2016

On item 1, the minutes of the previous meeting were noted and the following matters were raised:-

- (a) The Chairman referred to a further breakdown of flight movements into different categories for greater transparency and Simon Hutchins confirmed that the Heliport Board considered this request from the LHCG and had decided that it was unable to agree to releasing this information.

The Chairman referred to the 12,000 annual cap on flight movements and said that it would be of more use to see the full picture of flights with a more specific breakdown than that offered. Simon Hutchins informed the meeting that the figures reported in the agenda for 2016 were slightly overstated due to an error in the previously reported figures for quarter 2, which should have been 3,235 (not 3,276), making the 2016 yearly total 11,352 (not 11,393). It was noted that police, military, air ambulance, Government VIPs and Royal Family movements do not count against the 12,000 cap.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Colin Stanbury confirmed that he had been unable to locate specific information on the CAA website about the heliport that would give a clearer indication to the LHCG of the position on specific movements. Simon Hutchins said that the heliport's movements are not reported to the CAA in that way and related to the different ways flights to or from the heliport are handled under air traffic control.

Christina Smyth expressed her frustration over the heliport's refusal to provide additional information on movements, which she said was unsatisfactory and made it difficult for the Group to carry out its consultative role and to help improve the situation for residents. She raised the question of reporting back to the three local authorities to ensure they are aware of the situation. The Chairman, Councillor Torrington said that the views of the LHCG would be communicated to the Leader of Wandsworth Council, Councillor Govindia and that he was already aware of the heliport's position on providing additional information on movements, and other issues around the heliport's involvement with the planned noise study, and had indicated concerns.

In response to a suggestion from the Chairman that the Mayor of London also be alerted, Councillor Leonie Cooper (attending in her London Assembly member role) said that she had been contacted by residents regarding the heliport and that the issue could be referred on.

- (b) The Secretary confirmed that he had contacted the DfT for an update on possible section 35 designation for the heliport and that a reply was awaited.

Membership of the LHCG

On item 2, the Chairman referred to the appointment of Bill Harper to the LHCG – unfortunately he was unable to attend the meeting due to a family funeral in the USA.

Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels

On item 3, Colin Stanbury again welcomed Dr Stephen Dance to the meeting and told the Group that work had continued on the proposed noise monitoring study and that this had culminated in the development, design and production of equipment for the study.

Dr Stephen Dance confirmed that, in conjunction with Foster and Partners and assisted with a Government grant, a device had been produced that provided real time data. The device would be going into 30 schools in Wandsworth as an educational tool but would also be used in residential homes as part of the study.

The equipment is 'plug in and go' and does not require wi fi. If a power supply problem occurred the device would just re-start when the supply came back on. Dr Dance said that the device had a 10k radius and would record 'what, when and how noisy'.

Dr Dance confirmed that the device would be used to record 'noise energy' indoors (and a spare room would be ideal but not the only option), whilst certified calibrated readings would also be taken for the study outside. The plan was for noise measurements to be taken inside dwellings between mid-February and mid-March within a 5k radius of Battersea Park. A further 6 month study would then be undertaken of noise levels outside premises closer to the heliport.

The Chairman confirmed that the London Boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Wandsworth would contribute toward the costs of the study but that unfortunately the heliport did not feel that it could agree to take part. It was noted, however, that Wandsworth intended to underwrite any shortfall and commission and manage the project on behalf of the LHCG.

Colin Stanbury said that it was important that the community 'buy-into' the project and David Brown asked for an indication of the study's overall purpose, following completion and results analysis, to assist with the engagement process. Christina Smyth put forward the view that the study would be the first step in helping to improve quality of life for those affected by noise from the heliport and in response to her suggestion the Secretary undertook to circulate a 'bullet point' summary of the study's reasons and aims to help the engagement process.

Information on Helicopter Movements

On item 4, the 2016 quarter 4 movement figures were before the Group.

During discussion, Dr Stephen Dance said that the study may be able to distinguish between sightseeing and other flights, although the Group noted Tim Fauchon's comment that the noise signature of similar aircraft may make this difficult.

Noise Complaints

On item 5, the Group noted the complaint reported and Simon Hutchins said that it was difficult to either prove or disprove the alleged delay to the flight as reported by the complainant.

Any Other Business

On item 6, the following matters were raised:-

- (a) The Chairman informed the meeting of the expected airspace consultation that would shortly take place and the intention that the LHCG would respond.

Colin Stanbury confirmed that the consultation was linked to the recent Heathrow third runway decision and was expected to be launched by the DfT / CAA within the next few weeks. Councillor Leonie Cooper expressed interest in this consultation also in view of the impact on City Airport. The Group noted Tim Fauchon's comment that there had been previous attempts to alter height

restrictions that cover areas such as the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace that would have benefitted traffic using both the heliport and City Airport.

- (b) Tim Fauchon reported that the issue of the use of heli-lanes by the USAF that had been reported at the last LHCG meeting had been taken up with the CAA and confirmation had been received that this would not happen in future.

Date of Next Meeting

On item 7, the Group agreed to meet again on Monday, 15th May 2017.

The meeting ended at 7.52pm