

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT DONCASTER/SHEFFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY SUB-COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESENT: Cllr Yvonne Woodcock (in the Chair)
Martin Gold (Vice-Chair), Cllr Barbara Hoyle (DMBC), Cllr A Cropley (Bawtry Town Council), Cllr Norma McCarron (Blaxton Parish Council), Cllr E Durdy (Hatfield Town Council), Cllr Peter Farrell (Armthorpe Parish Council), Cllr Robert Brown (Blyth Parish Council), Cllr Ben Slade (Maltby Town Council), Cllr David Lindley (Finningley Parish Council), Cllr Paula Haigh (Rossington Parish Council), Mr Philip Cole (Office of Caroline Flint MP) Cllr Chris Stringer (North East Bassetlaw Forum), Cllr S Dixon (Austerfield Parish Council), Cllr Jennifer Worthington (Cantley with Branton Parish Council), Cllr Marilyn Cockett (Auckley Parish Council), Peter Nears (Director, Peel Holdings), David Ryall (Managing Director, Robin Hood Airport), Alan Tolhurst (Chairman, Airport Consultative Committee), Clare Wilson (Environment Co-ordinator, Robin Hood Airport), Martin McCarthy (South Yorkshire Joint Secretariat).

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Cooke (DMBC) and Dr Tony Baxter (Chairman, Health Impact Group).

1 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Sub-Committee held on 3 May 2005 be considered and agreed.

2 AIRPORT PASSENGER FIGURES AND FLIGHT PROGRESS

David Ryall reported to the Committee that during the first 20 weeks of operation, Robin Hood Airport had welcomed 411,722 passengers. Putting these figures into context it was reported that it took Humberside Airport 30 years to gain a throughput of passengers of 500,000.

In addition to the destinations previously reported, Easy Jet would soon commence a daily flight to Geneva from the Airport.

Work had already commenced on adding services to the Winter 2006 and Summer 2007 programmes. Long haul flights to the United States, Caribbean and Mexico would commence during Summer 2006. Fly/Cruises operated by P & O and Princess would also commence shortly. At present the Airport offered 36 destinations to over 21 countries. Again putting these figures into perspective and ignoring internal domestic flights, the figure compared favourably with Leeds Bradford who flew to 38 destinations.

A twice weekly freight service to Dubai was now in operation. In conjunction with local development agencies, work would continue to highlight the benefits of freight movement through the Airport.

The new lounge and additional retail units in the Terminal building would become operational during mid October. This would allow non flying visitors to the Airport the ability to view arrivals and departures from the Airport in comfort.

The Airport's ability to respond to extraordinary flight movement was highlighted recently when pilgrims from the Sheffield Hallam Diocese left the Airport for their annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. The Airport also coped admirably with increased levels of security when the G8 Foreign Ministers were flown in to the county for a recent summit meeting in Sheffield.

Overall, customer feedback has been extremely positive and in particular comments in respect of staff helpfulness and friendliness were always well received. Whilst the Airport could not be responsible for all airline activity, management would continue to pass on comments when received.

In respect of the airline operators, again it was pleasing to report that a number of positive comments had been received regarding the facilities on offer at Robin Hood Airport.

In response to a question regarding the provision of domestic flights, whilst not ruling them out, Doncaster was so well positioned both geographically and in terms of transport links and roads infrastructure, that airline operators would understandably perhaps exercise caution before offering such services.

The management team at the Airport were particularly pleased with progress to date in the take up of units on the adjacent Business Park. David Ryall agreed to report on progress at subsequent meetings.

The Committee agreed that a joint effort, including regeneration agencies from the sub region, was required to market the Airport and its sub region in order to attract inward investment and tourism. David Ryall welcomed the comments and agreed that the process of partnership working was indeed required in order to achieve this objective. The recent G8 Foreign Ministers Summit was a good example whereby the region had the ability to host a conference of such significance. That said, it also highlighted the need for further quality hotel accommodation and conference facilities.

In respect of housing development in the vicinity of the Airport it was confirmed that all units had now been sold to Persimmon Homes and that in respect of the affordable housing project these too had been sold to a social housing provider.

3. CHANGES IN LOCAL AIRSPACE

It was reported that an analysis of complaints regarding noise had uncovered that in many cases the nature of the complaints tended to be that aircraft were flying "off track" from the original flight paths published at the public inquiry.

Before the Airport opened a major airspace change was developed by the National Air Travel Service (NATS) that realigned and widened the airway structure to the north of the airport. Peel were not consulted during the process, which had been finalised before Robin Hood Airport was granted a CAA Licence. This was a factor

in the day to day airspace management under taken by NATS which sequences all aircraft movement into and out of Manchester, Leeds Bradford, Humberside and Robin Hood Airports.

The Airport arrival and departure tracks presented at the public inquiry were unchanged, however the position where aircraft enter or leave controlled airspace is now geographically nearer the Airport. The routing given to aircraft (by NATS which is out of the control of the Airport) to enter or leave controlled airspace does on occasion steer them away from normal flight paths. It was stressed that this was not an unusual procedure in open airspace.

Robin Hood Airport had a working relationship with NATS and Manchester Airport and was planning for its own controlled airspace for the future in order to minimise the noise disturbance to neighbouring residents. It was however noted that an application for controlled airspace was a lengthy process and might take up to a minimum of 18 months.

The Sub-Committee welcomed clarification on this issue.

4 AIRPORT SURFACE ACCESS STRATEGY – FARRRS

Peter Nears informed the Committee on progress in relation to the Finningley and Rossington Regeneration Route Strategy (FARRRS).

The Scheme included a dual carriageway link to the Airport from junction 3 of the M18 which would also provide access to Rossington.

The function of the scheme was threefold:

- To improve access for local communities in the South East of Doncaster to the M18 and the wider motorway.
- Provide access to regeneration sites in Rossington and Finningley which are either land locked or have poor access to the strategic road network.
- Support the continuing growth of the Airport and its role as an employer and focus of regeneration in Doncaster and the sub region.

Part of the process would of course involve integration with other regional and sub-regional strategies including the regional spacial strategy and for example South Yorkshire's Local Transport Plan.

In order to conform to Department for Transport Guidance, a programme had been devised incorporating a procurement strategy, the engagement of a contractor and the various strategic processes required in a project of this nature. It was hoped that the scheme would have commenced by the year 2009.

One of the key economic impacts of the scheme would be providing better access to potentially 4,000 jobs.

In addition Peter Nears circulated a draft copy of the Robin Hood Airport Master Plan Programme, which covered the period 2005 to 2030. The Master Plan set out a future vision for the Airport taking account of the Aviation White Paper and regional spacial planning requirements.

A Stakeholder consultation exercise would commence later in the year before the Master Plan was submitted to the Department for Transport early in the new year.

The Committee thanked Peter Nears for his presentation.

5 COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- (i) Noise Open Day – it was hoped that an Open Day would be held in the future to highlight to communities the work the Airport undertook to ensure minimum disruption to the lives of the people living in the vicinity of the Airport.

The Sub-Committee welcomed progress in this area.

- (ii) Heritage Memorial – Alan Tolhurst, Chairman of the Airport Consultative Committee outlined the work that had taken place to date in respect of the creation of the Heritage Memorial in front of the Terminal building. The Memorial would provide a fitting tribute and permanent commemoration of the part played by the RAF in the rich history of Finningley, Doncaster and the region.

The Memorial would comprise of a stone column which would be inlaid with slate slabs and engraved, featuring a history of the former air base and details of the Squadrons and Units that had operated from the base.

In addition a further column would be topped by a stainless steel sculpture, (recognising Sheffield's world recognition in this field and emphasising local input in this project). The sculpture would rotate and be lit at night to achieve maximum impact.

The Committee congratulated those involved in this work to date and supported the proposal put forward. Members agreed to relay this information to their respective communities.

- (iii) ACC Logo/Website/Information Boards - The Secretary reported that the Airport Consultative Committee now had its own distinct Logo, a copy of which was circulated. The Committee's website was to be launched during the week and Members and the public could access it by logging onto www.rhacc.org.uk.

In an attempt to further promote the work of the Airport Consultative Committee and raise public awareness of its role, information boards and leaflets were being produced which could be used by a range of organisations. In the first instance it was hoped to undertake visits to the

local Authorities in the region to highlight to elected representatives, the role and function of the Committee.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Airport Consultative Committees, Community Sub-Committee would be held on Wednesday 7 December 2005 at 2.00pm at the Airport.