

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT DONCASTER SHEFFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT

8 DECEMBER 2006

PRESENT: Alan Tolhurst (Chairman).
Robin Thomas (RAF Cranwell),
Cllr Pat Bartlett (DMBC) (Chair – Noise Monitoring Sub-Committee),
Andrew Bosmans (FODSA),
Cllr Chris Underwood-Frost (Lincolnshire County Council),
Cllr Norma McCarron (Blaxton Parish Council),
Cllr Paula Haigh (Rossington Parish Council),
Roger Ranson (Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership),
Neville Deardon (Doncaster Chamber),
David Ryall, Clare Wilson and Robert Cooke (RHADS).

Also in attendance:- Cllr Peter Farrell (Armthorpe Parish Council), Cllr Patricia Schofield (DMBC), Cllr David Lindley (Finningley Parish Council), Cllr Peter Scholey (Maltby Town Council), Julian Proudman (Bassetlaw DC), Cllr Angela White (ERNLLCA), Cllr Bill Higgins (Tickhill Town Council), Cllr Keith Isard (Bassetlaw DC).

Apologies for absence were received from:- Cllr Yvonne Woodcock, Cllr Mick Jameson, Cllr G Robinson, The Office of Caroline Flint MP, Cllr Barry Johnson, Colin Jeynes, Nigel Tomlinson, Michael Carnell, Cllr Ken Sanderson and Cllr Barbara Hoyle.

The Chairman welcomed Robert Cooke, the new Operations Director at Robin Hood Airport, to his first meeting of the first Airport Consultative Committee.

MATTERS DISCUSSED

1 PRESENTATION – AIRSPACE DIVISION AND POLICY

The Chairman welcomed back Robin Thomas from RAF Cranwell. Following last presentation to the ACC, Robin had kindly agreed to come along again and talk on the issue of Airspace Division and Policy. The presentation sought to outline the respective divisions of airspace in the United Kingdom and an understanding of the ways in which aircraft operated within these divisions.

The following points were noted by the Committee:-

- Airspace in the UK is divided vertically into lower, middle and upper airspace.

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT DONCASTER/SHEFFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
8/12/06

- Airspace is divided into controlled and uncontrolled airspace. Air Traffic Control (ATC) instructions were mandatory in controlled airspace and advisory outside controlled airspace.
- Pilots may follow Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) in any airspace (if they hold an instrument rating) and Visual Flight Rules (VFR) in those airspaces where it was permitted.
- Pilots must ensure that separation rules were adhered to, by using the appropriate ATC service or by maintaining Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC).

It was noted in particular that RHADS was underneath a number of airways running roughly East to West. It is set between two areas of intense air activity, to the north of Lincolnshire and the Vale of York area. In addition the Airport is surrounded by active airfields, both civilian and military and by restricted airspace. Aircraft arriving and departing RHADS had to be directed by ATC to avoid all the surrounding hazards and therefore directions with regard to height and direction.

It was noted that a proposal to establish a control zone and a control area for RHADS would formalise the airspace around the Airport. Passing traffic would need clearance to cross this airspace and this would ensure a more ordered flow of aircraft around the Airport. Aircraft arriving and departing the Airport would be operating in controlled airspace and would therefore be operating under positive air traffic control; pilots would have to follow the established inbound and outbound routines and would not be able to deviate from their cleared flight path unless their aircraft was in imminent danger.

The Committee placed on record its thanks and appreciation to Robin for yet another excellent presentation and in particular for making such a complex subject more understandable.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Airport Consultative Committee held on 13 September 2006 were considered and agreed and the following points raised:-

- (i) Last Call Sequestration Scheme – Clare Wilson was able to report on the latest position in respect of the Scheme which had been reported at the last meeting.

Andrew Bosmans stated that in respect of the issue of environmental sustainability and initiatives that supported the planting of trees to offset carbon emissions from aircraft, the Airport should remain positive about the work that was taking place to support environmental objectives. He felt it was extremely frustrating that the Government appeared to be focussing on air flight in particular in its campaign to reduce carbon emissions.

In respect of the Scheme itself, whilst it was disappointing that only a small amount of money had been donated, it would not deter operators from maintaining it in its current format. It was reaffirmed that the Airport would match all donations made on a like for like basis.

- (ii) FARRRS – Whilst it was disappointing to report no new developments with regard to the link road to the Airport from the M18, it was pleasing to note that Doncaster MBC had committed to reducing the congestion around Junction 3 of the M18 and spending £39 m on duelling the carriageway at White Rose Way into Doncaster.

3 AIRPORT OPERATORS REPORT

David Ryall, Managing Director, updated to the Committee on the latest developments taking place at Robin Hood Airport.

Since opening, passenger throughput was approaching 1.5 million passengers and the rolling 12 month figure had risen to 950,000 per annum. The Airport now served over 45 destinations in 26 countries. Business development work continued to focus on adding services to Europe, the Middle East, North America and Asia. Development work was founded on serving business and leisure, (inbound and outbound), whilst paying close attention to the multi-cultural mix in the region.

Ryanair services now included Pisa and Gerona in addition to Dublin. The Wizz Air service to Katowice in Poland continued strongly and the airline had announced that from June 2007 it would increase that service from 3 to 4 rotations a week, and add a 4 weekly service to Gdansk. Since the last meeting, Flybe.com had commenced double daily air flights to Belfast City Airport and in addition, discussions were continuing for the development of more intra-UK services.

As reported at previous meetings, Robin Hood Airport had quickly developed a niche in terms of supporting the fly cruise industry; the first of this service type would commence on 4 January 2007. P&O were selling holidays well into 2008/09.

Work continued to develop the air freight business at the Airport, however work was continuing on securing a scheduled operator. It was pointed out that this had nothing to do with the Airport's physical characteristics, but more about the regions import/export business needing to change their well established pattern of concentrating on the principal road network.

Work around the Business Park development continued at a pace. The groundwork for the hotel and a 10,000 sq ft development was complete and construction work would commence early in the New Year as would the link from Hirst Lane directly into the Airport.

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT DONCASTER/SHEFFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
8/12/06

Following a meeting on 4 December 2006 with the CAA Directorate of Airspace Policy, (DAP), the Airport was preparing to begin formal consultation on a proposal to create controlled airspace around the Airport and provide connectivity with the upper airways. The ACC was to be consulted as part of this process in order that the community Members represented, could be fully involved in this formal procedure. The creation of a controlled airspace around RHADS was being proposed to enhance safety and would not result in any changes to the previously agreed departure routes.

A new primary radar supplied by Raytheon of Canada had been installed and was currently undergoing rigorous commissioning tests prior to gaining CAA approval. The new radar was expected to be in service during March 2007 and would remove the need for the Airport to rely on radar coverage from the RAF.

Work was due to commence during February 2007 to upgrade the Instrument Landing System (ILS), to runway 20 to provide CATIII Standard. This along with surface lighting improvements would enable the Airport to continue operations safely during conditions of poor visibility. The project would also encompass the provision of an ILS (CATI) to the O2 runway.

Work commenced at the end of October to upgrade the runway lighting to meet CATIII Standards. The work was being undertaken at night, Sunday – Thursdays between 2300 hours and 0600 hours. During these times the runway was closed to all traffic. The project was due to be completed by the end of March 2007.

David Ryall believed that the Airport Master Plan would be published during the second quarter of 2007. The Plan would incorporate the Airport's aspirations in respect of passenger and freight figures and how it would handle environmental issues up to 2030.

On the issue of wind farms, it was confirmed the Airport had raised planning objections to a number of the 56 that were proposed within the Airport's Wind Energy Safeguarding Area (30km radius about RHADS).

Cllr Underwood-Frost agreed to report back to West Lindsey DC and Lincolnshire County Council on the time frame in respect of the publication of the Master Plan. It was vital that the broader strategic planning objectives of all local authorities in the region took account of the Airport's own long term aspirations. This was particularly relevant in respect of Regional Spatial Strategies.

The Committee thanked David Ryall for his report.

4 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Neville Dearden from Doncaster Chamber outlined progress since his report to the last meeting.

In respect of the work being undertaken by Renaissance South Yorkshire, he agreed to make available to the Committee the latest progress report in respect of the programme review.

The Airport had hosted an event on 20 November 2006 to which a number of business leaders and dignitaries were invited. The aim of the event was to promote the Airport and its economic benefits. The Aviation Minister was in attendance and the event was used to promote the unique selling points that Robin Hood Airport could offer the region.

As reported at the previous meeting, a very successful exchange had taken place between dignitaries here in South Yorkshire and Poland. Neville Dearden thanked representatives from Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Humberside for all their efforts in promoting this event.

Discussions were ongoing with officials in Islamabad in preparation for the commencement of flight to Asia later in the year.

Work on the Chamber of Commerce Business Lounge (jointly sponsored by HSBC and DLA Piper) in the Airport terminal was commencing and it was hoped that this would be an added incentive for the business traveller to make increased use of the Airport.

The meeting discussed the extent to which an Air Freight Strategy was being promoted within the region. It was noted that at present, of the total freight movement within the county, only 120,000 tonnes per annum was air freight. The Chairman asked whether or not the ACC should write to Yorkshire Forward seeking a response on what was being done to promote the benefits of air freight movement as opposed to other alternatives. **It was agreed that a letter to Yorkshire Forward would be worth sending**

The Committee thanked Neville Dearden for his report.

Action: Chairman

5 ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT – PROVISION OF DIRECT BUS SERVICES

Further to a discussion that took place at the last meeting of the Committee, the ACC considered a report which had been submitted to the last meeting of the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority on 2 November 2006.

ROBIN HOOD AIRPORT DONCASTER/SHEFFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
8/12/06

Whilst the Committee welcomed the PTA's consideration of this issue, it was felt that some of the figures in respect of travel times between Doncaster and Sheffield were worst case scenario and little mention was made of the benefits such a bus service might provide in respect of employment opportunity.

The Committee agreed to request the Air Transport Forum to take up this issue and report back to the ACC periodically.

Action: Chairman

6 HEALTH IMPACT GROUP – 6 SEPTEMBER 2006

The Committee noted the minutes of the last meeting of the Health Impact Group held on 6 September 2006.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the schedule of dates of meetings for 2007 would be circulated shortly.