

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CAMBRIDGE CITY AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Held as a Virtual Meeting by Teams  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 10.30am**

**Present**

Mr John Bridge, Chairman  
Mr Terry Holloway, Secretary  
Reverend Stuart Wood  
Mr Allan Coatsworth  
Mr Trevor Lewis  
Mr Kevan Craske, Cambridge Airport  
Mr Ian Walker  
Mr Angus Runciman  
Councillor Robert Dryden  
Mr Robert Bourden  
Councillor Caroline Hunt  
Mr David Kynaston  
Mr Mark Easterfield  
Mr David Smith  
Mr Charles Jarvis

**Representatives of Local Councils in attendance**

Councillor Nicky Massey  
Councillor John Williams  
Councillor Mike Davey  
Councillor Haf Davies

**In attendance**

Mr Richard Howe, Marshall of Cambridge  
Ms Sarah Oakes, MADG  
Mr Mark Hasted, MADG  
Mr Anthony Cooke, Cambridge Airport

**Members of public in attendance**

Mr Matt Howard  
Mr Adrian Stokes  
Mr Felipe Franciosi  
Mr Jeremy Hunter  
Mr David Rowe  
Ms Sue Wells

No representatives of the media were present, but an invitation to the meeting link had been issued.

### **Item 1 – Apologies for Absence**

No apologies had been received for absence.

### **Item 2 – Opening Remarks by the Chairman**

- 2.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting as well as a number of local councillors and local residents who were attending because of their interest in the recently installed radar at the Airport. The Chairman mentioned that this topic would be discussed under Agenda item 5.
- 2.2 The Chairman mentioned that a meeting by Teams was the only way to hold the meeting because of Covid, noting that although such meetings are not easy, he would do his best to make it interactive.
- 2.3 The Chairman noted that there had been a lull in aircraft noise due to lockdown between March and July which had caused noise complaints to rise to a higher level than usual when flying week started in July; he added this would be discussed under Agenda Item 6.

### **Item 3 adoption of minutes from the last meeting**

- 3.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were noted and formally adopted.
- 3.2 Although the planned meeting for May 2020 was not held because of Covid, it was noted, that instead, a report had been circulated by the Airport Director which had invited comments and questions; none were reported.

### **Item 4 matters arising from last meeting**

- 4.1 The Airport Director agreed to pursue the topic of air pollution with the MADG Environmental Team and said that he would report back at the next meeting. In connection with this, a subsequent request was made during the meeting for air pollution reports to be reinstated.
- 4.2 There were no other matters arising that would not be covered in subsequent agenda items.

### **Item 5 Report from Cambridge City Airport General Manager.**

- 5.1 Kevan Craske, the Airport Director, reported that Covid had impacted adversely upon aviation activity in the UK, and that in comparison with 2019, aircraft movements at Cambridge City Airport were down by 93% in April, 83% in May and 64% in June. He reported that there had been an increase in movements in July as a result of a large demand when flying recommenced after the relaxation of government restrictions.

- 5.2 Mr Craske commented that the Airport had remained open throughout the lockdown period in order to support the Government with a variety of Covid support measures and that government guidance for the safety of airport employees, as well as visitors to the Airport, had been rigorously applied. This support for the Government had included ongoing maintenance on British military aircraft and assistance with the design and manufacture of a “modern iron lung”. The Airport had also remained open to support its other customers which included 17 international customers on the C-130 aircraft.
- 5.3 Mr Craske reported that this Covid support had also included the provision of an aircraft hangar, in conjunction with the Local Council, for possible use as a temporary emergency morgue; he added that fortunately the use of this facility had not been required.
- 5.4 Mr Craske reported that throughout the period of lockdown the skills of the airport team, and in particular those of the Air Traffic Controllers, had been maintained in order to continue to maintain the usual exceptional standards of safety.
- 5.5 Mr Craske had reported at the last meeting that the Airport was investing in a new radar which would improve safety in the local area, as well as continuing to invest in other vital airport assets on the airfield. He underlined that safety is the number one priority for the Airport and briefed the Committee that the Airport programme to make safety critical improvements involved the replacement of some ageing equipment included: the new radar; a new instrument landing system including a new GP mast; a new DME and mast; a new VHF direction finder; improved ATC communication tools; a new air traffic management system, which includes a flight data management system and ATIS. It was noted that this was a significant list of improvements which would all enhance safety.
- 5.5.1 The slides used by the Airport Director to illustrate his briefing about safety enhancements are attached to these minutes.
- 5.6 Mr Craske reported that the new radar had been installed and that, together with Mr Richard Howe, MD of the Marshall Property Company, he had been present at a meeting held earlier in the day to discuss with some local councillors and some local residents the impact of the new radar, which included some minor noise, its appearance and some visual effects caused by light reflecting from the radar when the sun is low. He added that these matters had given concern to some local residents; he confirmed that the Airport was actively engaging with them and was responding vigorously to the issue.
- 5.6.1 Mr Craske reported that an urgent “Independent Review” had been agreed by Marshall which was being commissioned to review the original decision-making process which placed the radar where it is. He added that this “unconstrained review” was being headed by an independent Senior Executive from within Marshall who had not been involved in the original decision process, and that some expertise external to Marshall from a Consultant was also being brought in to assist with the Review.
- 5.6.2 It was noted that it was hoped that a “first draft” of this Review would be completed prior to Christmas.

- 5.6.3 In response to a question about the feasibility to relocate the radar from where it is, Mr Craske said that at this point there was no commitment to move the radar and that the purpose of the Review was to validate the original decision. Mr Craske added that the position of the radar on the airfield was made on the basis of safety and that in putting it in place the Airport had complied with all legal processes under permitted development.
- 5.6.4 In response to a further question, (during which the questioner said that no one would question the requirement for safety) which asked why initial consultations had not been more clear or had considered the environmental impact, Mr Craske commented that these specific questions would be considered as part of the Independent Review.
- 5.6.5 In response to a further question, (during which the questioner offered an opinion that the radar had been deliberately located away from the housing development) which asked if the radar was too large for Cambridge, Mr Craske commented that the radar is not just serving the needs of Cambridge Airport and that the main reason for its height is to enable it to see above the level of the hangars and other buildings.
- 5.6.6 Councillor Nicky Massey said that she would hold Marshall to account to ensure that the impact upon residents had been considered. She added that she would like to know details of the external Consultant being used and the detailed timeframe for the conduct of the Independent Review. In response, Mr Craske said that he did not have those precise details but would provide them when they were available.
- 5.7.7 The Reverend Stuart Wood commented that he felt the Airport Consultative Committee had been kept in the dark in terms of the size and dimensions of the radar.
- 5.7.8 In response to a question about an observation he had seemingly made to a local friend quoting him as saying: *“he had no idea why the radar was put where it was”*, Terry Holloway said that disappointingly he had been misquoted and that what he had actually said was along the lines of: *“he was not involved in the Marshall business any longer and was unaware of where the radar was being located”*.

## **Item 6 Cambridge City Airport Flight Evaluation Unit Report**

- 6.1 Mr Ian Walker presented the noise statistics, which had been circulated in advance. It was noted that the peak of complaints was made during July when flying recommenced following the lockdown. It was noted that they had diminished subsequently.
- 6.2 Mr Walker confirmed that the Airport continued to respond to all complaints and that explanations were being provided to all those who complained. It was noted that a number of complaints originated from within Cherry Hinton because aircraft predominantly take-off to the west. Mr Walker added that the Airport had reviewed circuit heights in an effort to reduce noise over Cherry Hinton but had concluded that an increase in circuit height would not be helpful to residents.
- 6.3 Mr Walker commented that many of the complaints refer to noise outside of the Cambridge Airport Zone and he noted, in particular, that many complaints made by Fulbourn residents were in connection with aircraft which had no connection to Cambridge City Airport.

- 6.4 It was noted that some noise complaints were in connection with light aircraft, and Mr Craske commented that the Airport Management Team was working with all airport users in efforts to minimise noise.
- 6.4.1 In response to a comment that a “stunt plane” had been particularly noisy during the summer, it was confirmed that measures had been taken to minimise such a nuisance in the future. It was also noted that many similar aeroplanes performing aerobatics locally did not originate from Cambridge City Airport.
- 6.5 In response to a question about the number of flights, Mr Craske said that there had been a progressive reduction in the number of movements which now were around 20,000 per year. Of this total, around 200 movements per year were C-130 aircraft.
- 6.6 It was noted that some complaints had been received about the noise from aircraft conducting essential ground run testing; an observation had also been made about the smell of burnt jet fuel in connection with ground running. Mr Walker commented that tight controls were exercised over aircraft ground running, which could only be conducted at specific times. He also added that under certain weather conditions aircraft ground running was not permitted in the new engine running facility. It was further noted that the new engine running facility was being used to good effect for the majority of ground running but Mr Walker added there were some occasions when aircraft needed to remain on the runway for a prolonged period, of around 10 minutes, for vital pre-take-off checks to be completed prior to “test flights” being conducted.
- 6.7 There was enthusiasm from a local resident to help the Airport to resolve noise complaints about various non-flying noise more quickly, and Mr Craske agreed to examine how complaints about “manufacturing noise” could be better dealt with by Marshall.

### **Item 7 Any Other Business**

- 7.1 There was no other business.
- 7.2 In closing the meeting, the Chairman commented it had been a longer than usual meeting and he thanked all those attending for their participation and contributions.

### **Item 8. Confirm proposed dates for 2020 meetings**

- 8.1 The following dates were confirmed for 2021:

Wednesday 19th May 2021

Wednesday 17th November 2021

(Secretary’s note: In the absence of an attendance list, I did my best to record details of those who were present. If I have missed anyone off or misspelt any names in the attendance list, I offer my apologies. Please let me know if any amendments are required.)