

LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Friday, 18 September 2020
10.30 - 11.40 a.m.

Present:

Bob Swann, Chairman
Cllr Caroline Ashton, Frodsham Council
Cllr David Baines, St Helens Council
Cllr Tony Brennan, Knowsley Council
Michelle Cameron, Liverpool & Sefton Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Norman Elias, Passenger representative
Cedric Green, North Cheshire Rail Users' Group
Cllr Michael Green, Lancashire Council
Cllr Stan Hill, Halton Council
Julie Kay, Wirral Older People's Parliament
Cllr Christina Muspratt, Wirral Council
Alex Naughton, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority inc Merseytravel
Simon Osborne, National Trust
Steve Parish, Warrington Council
Tony Rice, disabled persons
Cllr Lynn Riley, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Liverpool Airport
Robin Tudor, Head of Public Relations
Andrew Dutton, Head of Environment
Secretariat
Mike Jones, Secretary
Katy Brown, Assistant Secretary
Alexandra Davidson, observing

18 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:
Alan Ascott, ARCH
Cllr Chris Ellams, Helsby Council
Therese Irving, Wirral Older People's Parliament
Keith Levin, LAGUA
Cllr Julie McManus, Wirral Council (Councillor Christina Muspratt attending on her behalf)
Steve Pearse, Friends of Liverpool Airport

19 **DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of personal interests.

20 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

21 **MINUTES**

Resolved - That

- (1) the minutes of the Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee meeting held on 21 February 2020 be agreed as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**
- (2) the minutes of the Noise Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 July 2020 be received and noted.**

22 **MEMBERSHIP**

The Committee's Constitution requires members to be contacted if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings.

The Secretary reported his enquiries for non-attending representatives and recommended potential actions. It was noted that Wirral Transport Users Association did not have a suitable person available to act as their representative. It was also noted that the representative for Speke Estate, Larry Dack, had withdrawn in January 2018 due to illness and had passed away in December 2018. There was not another obvious equivalent organisation to get a replacement from so the Airport would make enquiries via South Liverpool Housing for nearby organisations to represent Speke, which was the closest residential area to the Airport.

Resolved: That

- (1) Wirral Transport Users Association be removed from the membership list; and**
- (2) Speke Estate be removed from the membership list if no replacement representative can be found.**

23 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

24 **QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT**

Robin Tudor presented a business report, highlighting the considerable challenges faced by Liverpool and all other UK airports, due to the huge reduction in passenger numbers due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report highlighted the level of business over the first 6 months of the year. In February 2020 the airport began to experience the effects of the stopping of flights to and from Italy which was one of the first countries in Europe affected by the pandemic. There was then a 'domino' effect of other countries, including Spain and France, which resulted in a dramatic decline in flights, and the international lockdowns in March almost completely closed global aviation. Locally there were 877 passengers in a period where almost 450,000 would be expected. The terminal building was closed as a cost saving and practical measure as there were only two flights a day, which were to the Isle of Man for mainly medical reasons, and there were no retail outlets open. The XLR Executive Aviation Centre was used as a suitable alternative. It was noted that easyJet were parking aircraft at Liverpool despite closing some other bases around the country.

The Government's furlough scheme, where the Government paid 80% of employee's wages, had been a huge benefit and 65% of airport employees had been furloughed as well as those not employed by the airport but related to passenger flights, including security, handling agents and retailers. The remaining staff concentrated on recovery and making the building Covid secure, including erecting screens at check-in desks, installing sanitiser stations, enabling social distancing, comprehensive cleaning regimes and supplying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

In June there was a partial return with easyJet and Ryanair, and there was optimism about the rest of the Summer, but the issue of quarantining people returning from a changing list of countries served to confuse and deter air travellers, resulting in a 65% reduction for the Summer, with load factors of 50%. Some areas have done well though such as Turkey who had flights around 90% full.

The effect on retail outlets was significant too and as flights began to return, few retail facilities were initially open. By August more units reopened, though opening hours were reduced by some including the ASPIRE Lounge. The Eat Out to Help Out scheme had been popular. Car parking revenues were also much lower than normal and this challenging situation was likely to remain during the Winter.

From 1 January 2021, there would not be any tax-free goods at airports, although duty free would be available for UK passengers travelling to Europe. As a consequence, some retailers in the Departure Lounge who offered goods for sale without the tax and so cheaper than the high street would no longer be able to do so after the end of 2020 and were likely to bring a further significant reduction in much needed income for the Airport.

There was a reduction in winter schedules although there were also some new routes. If the Airport could survive Winter and there were improvements in the way Covid was dealt with it may give confidence for Summer 2021 and enable the Airport to move out of the difficult times.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority had recently helped with the airport's refinancing.

Members discussed the report and the situation and offered possible solutions for additional financial support. Robin noted that there were some passenger COVID-19 testing schemes ready to be introduced and trialled at other airports to help reduce the quarantine periods for returning passengers from many countries, but without Government backing such testing has been unable to go ahead.

Robin then mentioned that the Airport Transport Forum had not met since lockdown in March. It had been looking to publish the updated Airport Surface Access Strategy, which aims to improve public transport access to the airport from all around the region and had been signed off by the Combined Authority. A Forum meeting was planned for 15 October. The Strategy would still be published stating that it had been written before lockdown so was more aspirational as capacity and public transport providers were all impacted. The principles in the Strategy were still relevant.

25 **AIRSPACE CHANGE PROCESS**

Andrew Dutton presented some slides showing comparisons between particular weeks in 2019 and the same weeks in 2020, showing the dramatic reduction in flights between April and July. August and September looked busier but many were private general aviation flights utilising the quieter airspace.

Andrew then updated members on the Airspace Change process, which had begun in February 2018. It had now reached stage 3 of the 7 stage CAP1616 process overseen by the Civil Aviation Authority, the documentation associated with the ACP is viewable on their Portal (<https://airspacechange.caa.co.uk/>). Stage 3 of CAP1616 included a public consultation which began on 13 January 2020 and was extended to 27 April. The consultation received just under 1,000 responses which were being categorised. The aim was to publish the summary via the portal and the responses would then be considered before the next stage was decided.

26 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to note.

27 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to deal with.

28 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee was confirmed as 20 November 2020 on Teams.