

REDHILL AERODROME CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

NOTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT 10.00 A.M ON THE 15TH JUNE 2013 AT NUTFIELD VILLAGE HALL, MID STREET, SOUTH NUTFIELD

PRESENT:

Committee Members

Mr. T. Pollard (Chairman), Councillor. J. Blackmore, Mr. D. Butler, Councillor D. Chapman, Councillor Mrs. J. Cook, Councillor P. Glenn, Mr. J. Horne, Councillor Mrs. D. Vickers, Mr. A. White and Mr. P. Wright

Members of the public*

Jacqueline Chapman, Peter Forbes, Sue Ford, Carol Ledger, Stephen Rolph, Peter Talbot, Gwenyth Thomas, Councillor Helena Windsor, Deborah Winter and Richard Winter.

*Based on the signed attendance sheet.

1. INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He gave apologies from Paul Murray (Keep Redhill Airfield Green) and explained that Councillor Jim Blackmore would be representing local residents under item 3 of the Agenda.

He explained that the Annual Report had been circulated and any questions would be addressed under item 4 of the Agenda.

This would be Mr. Horne's last meeting as Chief Executive of Redhill Aerodrome Ventures Limited (RAVL). The Chairman thanked him for his services to the Committee and wished him well for the future. He acknowledged that the Committee had appreciated the straight forward and approachable communication style that Mr. Horne had brought to meetings.

2. ADDRESS BY MR. JON HORNE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF REDHILL AERODROME LIMITED (RAL)

As referred to above, Mr. Horne advised that he had accepted a new appointment as Chief Executive of Cardiff International Airport and was therefore standing down as Chief Executive of Redhill Aerodrome. He would, however, remain on the boards of RAVL, Redhill Aerodrome Limited and Redhill Aerodrome Trading Ltd.

He announced that, from the 1st August 2013, Ann Bartaby would take over as Chief Executive of RAVL. Ann currently worked for Terence O'Rourke Limited (RAVL's planning consultants) and would be leaving the company in February 2014. Mr. Horne stated that Ann had a background in aviation and had been a Director at Farnborough

Airport. He also explained that Ann had a good knowledge of the area having grown up in Bletchingley.

He acknowledged the fact that the planning application for a hard runway had been refused by both Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC) and Tandridge District Council (TDC) and advised that RAVL had not yet decided whether to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

Mr. Horne reported that the movements at the Aerodrome had seen a decrease in the last year. This was mainly due to the restricted airspace in place over south-eastern England for the duration of the Olympics, as well as the extended period of wet weather.

RAVL had, nevertheless, been working hard to improve business, as evidenced by the fact that the National Police Air Service and the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust had established bases at the Aerodrome. Mr. Horne explained that the Air Ambulance Trust was a registered charity (entirely funded from donations). It would be holding its fourth Air Aid Ball on Saturday 22nd June at the Aerodrome, including a flying display. RAVL were pleased to be supporting this fundraising event.

Mr. Horne commented on the 20% loss of rental income since Brake Brothers had vacated the site. It was hoped that the three hangers concerned would soon be occupied as discussions were underway with a haulage company who had expressed interest. Efforts were ongoing to improve the Aerodrome's facilities, as demonstrated by the opening of a new pilots' lounge by Aerospace Resources Ltd in Hanger Nine.

Mr. Horne concluded by thanking the Chairman, the Secretary and the Committee. He reflected upon the valuable roles undertaken by Aerodrome Consultative Committees in general and was pleased to have established a more open approach between RAVL and local residents. He hoped this would continue into the future.

3. ADDRESS FROM COUNCILLOR JIM BLACKMORE (REPRESENTING LOCAL RESIDENTS ON THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE)

Councillor Blackmore introduced himself and explained that he was a member of Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council as well as a representative of the Aerodrome Consultative Committee. He believed that most local residents wished the Aerodrome to continue to operate as at present but were opposed to its development as a business airport.

He referred to the fact that both the Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge District Council Planning Committees had voted 17-0 and 9-0 respectively to refuse the applications for a hard run way. He questioned why the owners of the Aerodrome had continued to spend significant sums on planning applications and consultant fees, in the knowledge that a hard runway would be contrary to the Local Plans of both authorities.

Councillor Blackmore also commented on Portsmouth Business School's independent assessment of RAVL's business case for the hard runway development (jointly commissioned by the two Planning Authorities). This had identified flaws in RAVL's argument that the existing business would become unsustainable without a hard runway.

He continued by explaining that the financial information supplied by the Aerodrome was provided only under a 'Commercial in Confidence' cover and not made available to the public. Reigate and Banstead Council had agreed to accept the financial information on these terms but Tandridge Council had declined.

He emphasised that both Planning Authorities' reasons for refusal included noise, despite the measures to mitigate noise impact since the previous application.

Councillor Blackmore also referred to residents' concerns about the disturbance caused by police helicopters. He acknowledged the value of the National Police Air Service but observed that much of its helicopter activity from the Aerodrome seemed to be routine. In this respect, he expressed interest in knowing the reasons for recent noise complaints, and what proportion of these was attributable to Police helicopter movements. He hoped that the National Police Air Service would send a representative to future Committee meetings.

He reminded residents that they could complain via the noise-line, and questioned the fact that although the complaints information was available on the aerodrome's website, the facility to complain online was only available via the contacts page.

Councillor Blackmore thanked Mr. Pollard for his continued efforts as independent Chair.

4. QUESTIONS / VIEWS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Questions / views from the audience	Responses from Jon Horne and Philip Wright
What is the current method for recording flying movements and did helicopter hover training movements record each time the helicopter touched down?	The method has not changed in the last twenty years. A take-off and landing was recorded as two separate movements. Helicopter hover training sessions were recorded as one take off and one landing. Each touchdown and lift off are not separately recorded as movements.
How many flying days were lost due to a flooded runway?	Exact figures were not to hand, but these were reported to the committee at each meeting. It was suggested that approximately 3-5 months can be lost depending on the weather.
Where does rental income appear within the Aerodrome's accounts?	It appears within the consolidated accounts for RAL / RATL, together with income from flying. RAVL is the holding company and doesn't trade.

What was the current land valuation?	No recent valuation had taken place. It is unlikely to have changed significantly.
Following the news that Bristow Helicopters are taking over the Search and Rescue Services, what is the likely impact upon Redhill Aerodrome and will there be an increase or decrease in air traffic?	Bristow are still based at Redhill Aerodrome with a significant administrative operation, but it has no flying activities there anymore. The management team at Bristow are not aware of the Search and Rescue contract having any operational/flying impact upon their presence at the Aerodrome at this time.
When do you think there will be a decision on an appeal?	A decision will be made within a number of weeks.
Have the Police Helicopters changed their flying routes? Concerns over helicopter flying 8 times over one house.	Police Helicopter pilots are entitled to use shortest routes although the Aerodrome is working with them to improve their understanding of areas over which flying should be avoided in non-emergencies. Each pilot is given a briefing pack and it is hoped that, with more regular crews, the pilots would work towards minimising disturbance to local residents. The National Police Air Service have been invited to attend Committee meetings.
If there is no Air Traffic Control Service outside of the published hours, how are the Air Ambulance and National Police Air service movements recorded?	All movements are still recorded. Both services are required to provide reports to ATC each morning.
Are there any plans to move to a 'twenty four hour' Air Traffic Control Service?	No. Staffing costs would not make this viable. However, an absence of Air Traffic Control does not result in ' <i>absolute free for all</i> '. Pilots have operating protocols to observe and it's in their interests to have regard to the environment.
Concerns raised over pilots training at night and not following the correct circuit.	Pilots are required to undertake six monthly flying exercises, both during the day and during hours of darkness. At Redhill, this involves circuit flights around the airfield. Ideally such activities take place during the winter so that 'after dusk' procedures can occur during the late afternoon / early evening. However, some pilots have to undertake these exercises during the summer months, thereby requiring much later flying for the 'night time' testing.

It appears that the helicopters spend a considerable amount of time 'ground running'.	Often the helicopters, particularly the Police, may start their engines while waiting for further information. They may also be stood down at the last minute.
Clarification sought over the comparative frequency of training flights for Police / Ambulance helicopters.	The training requirements are the same for both. However, greater Police crew turnover has resulted in more training activity compared to the Air Ambulance.

5. CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman said Goodbye to Mr. Horne and looked forward to working with his successor. He expressed thanks to the Redhill Aerodrome Consultative Committee for their support over the year and to Julie Porter and Vince Sharp who provided secretarial support to the Committee on behalf of TDC.

He also thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10.43am.