

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Agenda for the meeting to be held on Monday, 7th July 2014 at 7.00 p.m. at The Town Hall (Room 123), Wandsworth High Street, SW18 2PU

MEMBERS

Chairman

Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds – Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (Cremorne Ward)

Users' representatives

Capt Ian Field
Capt Michael Hampton
Capt Robin Renton
Capt Paul Watts

Residents' representatives

Wandsworth

Mr. David Brown (Battersea Reach Residents' Association)
Mr. Seth Stiles (Bridges Wharf Residents' Association)

Hammersmith and Fulham

To be confirmed

Kensington and Chelsea

Ms. Eryl Wrage

Local Authority Representatives

Hammersmith and Fulham

Councillor Larry Culhane (North End Ward)

Kensington and Chelsea

Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds (Cremorne Ward)

Wandsworth

Councillor Wendy Speck (Latchmere Ward)
Councillor Rosemary Torrington (Thamesfield Ward)

Refreshments

Sandwich refreshments will be available for members of the Consultative Group in the Committee Room (Room 123), prior to the meeting.

Contact:

Martin Newton (Secretary to the Consultative Group),
Administration Department, Wandsworth Borough Council, The Town Hall, London SW18 2PU Tel: 020 8871 6488 Email: mnewton@wandsworth.gov.uk

30th June 2014

AGENDA

1. **Minutes - 25th November 2013**

The Consultative Group are asked to confirm that they approve the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 25th November 2013 (Attached – Paper A).

The draft minutes were circulated to all members of the Consultative Group and to all on the circulation list for Consultative Group papers, and have been published on the Council's website.

Upon approval, the minutes will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

The Chairman will then invite members to raise any matters arising from the minutes.

2. **Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels**

Colin Stanbury will update the Group on the latest position regarding monitoring of helicopter noise levels.

3. **Information on Helicopter Movements**

Summary information on helicopter movements at the London Heliport in Quarters 4 of 2013 and 1 of 2014, provided by the Heliport Manager, Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached - Papers B and C).

4. **Noise Complaints**

Information on noise complaints received by the London Heliport in Quarters 4 of 2013 and 1 of 2014 and on the action taken in response by the Heliport, provided by Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached – Papers D and E).

5. **Residents' Concerns - Altura Tower**

To consider, at the request of Seth Stiles, the details of concerns raised by some residents of Altura Tower, Bridges Court Road, SW11

The residents in question live with a view directly down on to the heliport and operations are generally not a problem except for a few certain helicopters that present significantly more noise and odour nuisance than most, and they have kept records and will be happy to provide details as to which helicopters these are. Further they note that there have been a few instances of

operations that appear to be well outside of the norm in terms of engine run-times and operating hours and they would appreciate some explanation of these, and again they can be specific.

The residents have suggested that parking certain helicopters on the side of the heliport away from the Altura Tower would go some good distance towards mitigating some of this impact.

They further note that some helicopters seem to run their engines right up to, and occasionally beyond, the 5 minutes allowed, while others shut down quite quickly after landing, and they would like to know more about why this seems to be so variable.

In specific detail, the following points have been made:-

“Helicopter noise:

How are the newer helicopters noise levels assessed? We have noticed that recently the noise and their operation times from helicopters’ motor running while stationary have increased. When the running time is approaching the five minutes limit time the engines are shut down. Many crafts shut down their engines more or less immediately upon landing, while the majority wait for a few minutes before the five minutes limit is reached. And this has nothing to do with the time difference between landing and take off times. Particularly the frequent visiting Sikorsky S-76C helicopter, operated by Premiair Aviation Services and with the registration number G-URSA, is extremely noisy.

We understand the “noise” test level is measured at 150 metres and at right angles to the craft’s flying path/direction and a limit of 81 DBA is allowed. This may be an appropriate measuring method in an open field but seems to be inadequate when the landing/take off operations and craft ground movements are very close to Altura Tower. The size of the whole helipad is much less than 150 metres square.

Air Quality:

Although we understand that refuelling operations are allowed, we have noticed there are a few helicopters that produce excessive exhaust fumes making it extremely uncomfortable, not to mention unhealthy, for us residents, in Altura Tower facing the Helipad. We have pointed this out to Mr Simon Hutchins who was totally unaware of the problem. There is one particular helicopter that stands out more than the others. This is the Air Ambulance with registration marking G-EHMS. As emergency operations cannot be stopped or helicopter substitution with a newer craft be enforced, we request that this craft is not parked underneath Altura Tower but as far away as possible, if not on the landing area (H). Refueling has been noticed to take place in the “H” area so it is not a matter of distance.

Additional Disturbance (One off):

On 11th June 2014, approximate time of first arrival 09:25 hrs, a Military

(RAF) helicopter landed with motors running for more than five minutes just to pick up seven or eight persons, reportedly VIPs, arriving by diplomatic registered cars. As the five minute limit passed the helicopter had to be sent away and re-called when its passengers finally arrived. Uniforms (trousers only) were visible and military helmets were worn by most men. It took them more than five minutes before all boarded and the helicopter took off. Noise levels were far in excess of what we have experienced, not surprising considering the very large helicopter size. This flight is not considered an emergency by either the Police, Fire Brigade or Air Ambulance Authorities and should not have been allowed to use a civilian heliport. They should have used Heathrow or even more appropriately, Northolt airports. We query if military operations had been approved by The Borough Council.”

6. **Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees**

To consider the recently published and updated DfT Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees (ACCs) (Attached - Paper F)

Last December the DfT published draft guidelines for ACCs and, following consultation with LHCG members, the Group’s response to the draft was submitted in February (Attached - Papers G and H). As part of the submission the opportunity was taken to promote the Group’s previously approved bid for section 35 designation for the Heliport.

The DfT has stated that both main additions to the Guidelines - the five principles and the suggested code of conduct for committee members - were generally well received by most of those who provided feedback. The guidelines have been updated slightly in response to specific comments received. It was generally agreed by respondents that best practice should be shared between committees although this could sometimes be difficult in practice. There was almost unanimous agreement by respondents that Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 should be retained. In light of this response, the Department has no plans to change the legal status of committees, although it may look at updating the list of designated airports in the near future.

There were a range of views regarding the admittance of the public to meetings and a number of valid reasons why it might not be ideal for committee meetings to be made public were raised. While the Guidelines continue to encourage committees to open their meetings to the public, the DfT consider that this is a decision that should be made by committees themselves after giving appropriate consideration to the local context.

The main changes that have been made to the Guidelines in response to the feedback and comments the DfT received have been the acknowledgement throughout the document of the vital role committees play in protecting and enhancing the experience of passengers who use the airport, as well as the addition of a section on the role of committees with regards to complaints about airport operations. The DfT has also included a section on disputes involving committees, although this stops short of setting out any formal

dispute resolution mechanism as suggested by some respondents.

With regard to the LHCG's bid for the Heliport to become a designated airport under Section 35, the DfT has confirmed (in April) that it has been agreed with the Minister that the work involved in updating the list of designated airports, which would include the possibility of adding new ones to the list such as London Heliport, should begin to be scoped out. There is no timeline for the process at this stage, but that should become clearer in the next couple of months once the DfT has a better idea of the necessary steps that would need to be taken.

7. Any Other Business

The Chairman will ask members of the Consultative Group whether there are any other matters they wish to raise.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The Consultative Group are asked to determine the date of their next meeting.

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THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of The London Heliport Consultative Group held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Monday, 25th November 2013 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT

Residents' representatives

Mr Illtyd Lewis
Mr Seth Stiles

Local Authority representatives

Councillor Condon-Simmonds (In the chair)

Users' representatives

Capt Ian Field
Capt Michael Hampton

Observers, advisers and officers

Mr Simon Hutchins (The London Heliport)
Mr David Solman (Greater London Authority)
Mr Steve Mayner (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Colin Stanbury (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Martin Newton (Wandsworth Borough Council)

Minutes - 20th May 2013

On item 1, the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2013 were confirmed and signed as correct.

There were no matters arising.

Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels

On item 2, Colin Stanbury reminded members that the previous arrangements for fixed point monitoring of noise levels at the heliport had now ceased and said that he had been in discussions with Dr Stephen Dance, Lecturer in Acoustics at South Bank University, regarding options for some alternative noise monitoring.

Dr Dance told the Group that, using data gathered from different locations, it was possible to measure and predict with the use of software the noise levels arising

from use of the heliport. South Bank University had undertaken noise level measurement previously for Defra, and for rail and road movements, with associated modelling and prediction of propagation sound. Although the heliport operation was different, with prescribed flight paths, the standardised software could still be used to monitor noise levels. Dr Dance said that constant logging of noise levels could take place by way of a relatively small device fitted outside of a window on the façade of a building, at first floor or above, and within 5m of an IT router which would be wired to the device by a thin cable. He suggested that these be installed in a few suitable locations, including in the position where the previous monitoring equipment at the heliport had been placed. Dr Dance said that data logged by the devices could then be analysed by PhD students at South Bank University.

Mr Stanbury thanked Dr Dance for attending the meeting and outlining what could be done and suggested that further technical discussions take place in relation to the number of devices to be used, their location and the cost of the project. He reminded the Group that some members had previously offered to have a device installed at their residence.

Dr Dance said that it was likely that the cost of the monitoring could be carried out from funding available to the University from a previous EU bid for associated work. The Chairman asked that Mr Stanbury and Dr Dance continue their discussions on the proposed monitoring in conjunction with the heliport.

Information on Helicopter Movements

On item 3, the Group noted the statistical data relating to movements in quarters 2 and 3 of 2013.

Simon Hutchins commented that, in terms of numbers of movements at the heliport compared with corresponding months in 2012, June, August, September and October had been busier, whereas July had seen fewer movements.

The item was then received as information.

Noise Complaints

On item 4, members had before them the data on noise complaints received by the heliport in quarters 2 and 3 of 2013. It was noted that, although the numbers of complaints had increased over the previous 2 quarters, these figures related to the spring and summer period when the number of movements would be higher.

The report was then received as information.

Sightseeing Trips from the Heliport

On item 5, the Group considered Simon Hutchins' report on sightseeing trips from the heliport, noting that these statistics are reported to the CAA under the 'local movements' category and that 300 movements had been recorded in that category in quarters 2 and 3. Mr Hutchins confirmed that he was unaware of any complaints received relating to the sightseeing trips.

Mr Hutchins said that he was unable to put forward a view as to the future development of the service. The number of trips depended on favourable weather and were likely to decline during autumn and winter months when there were fewer tourists, although it was evident that the trips were popular with users wishing to travel from a more central location rather than an aerodrome outside or on the edge of London.

Update on Section 35 Status

On item 6, Steve Mayner updated members on section 35 accreditation for the heliport.

Mr Mayner explained that the DfT were of the view that the current arrangements that the Group operated under were satisfactory and that there was no need for statutory underpinning by designating the heliport under section 35. Mr Mayner informed the Group that this meant, however, that the LHCG were often not consulted on matters of importance to it and he suggested that a further meeting with the DfT, including resident representatives on the LHCG, would be useful to convey the Group's previous view that the designation of the heliport under section 35 would be a positive move.

The Group re-affirmed its previous view that section 35 designation should be actively pursued and agreed that a meeting be arranged with the DfT with officer advisers and residents' representatives in attendance.

Planned Consultation on Airspace Arrangements in London

On item 7, Colin Stanbury referred to the circulated letter from the CAA on planned consultation on airspace arrangements in London.

Mr Stanbury said that the first consultation relating to the London Control Zone Airspace Re-Classification, with proposals developed by NATS, had a deadline date of 24th December. The requirement for a change was driven by the EU and were seen as neutral and essentially administrative. He informed members that no adverse effects relating to fuel burn would be likely and overall the changes should be positive.

Capt Field confirmed that meetings had taken place regarding the proposals which would not alter anything relating to day-to-day helicopter operation. Air traffic controllers would have more flexibility in choosing flight paths, operating heights for helicopters and routing, which were more restricted over London at present, with the result that noise levels may be dissipated. He said that British Airways had initially been critical but were now satisfied with the proposals. Mr Hutchins also put forward the view that there appeared to be a lot of support for the re-classification.

Mr Stanbury then referred to the second consultation relating to the London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP), with a deadline for comments of 21st January 2014, and said that these proposals were an extension of earlier consultation with a view to making better use of airspace around London by more precisely directing air traffic. He told members that these proposals affected the heliport in terms of its relationship with Heathrow traffic but that there should be no adverse impact on the heliport. Mr Stanbury said that he had hoped that Jim Walker from the CAA would

have been able to attend the meeting to explain the proposals in more detail but unfortunately that had not been possible. Discussion then ensued, at the conclusion of which Capt Field confirmed that he had not been made aware of any negative comments on the LAMP consultation.

Following discussion, concern was raised at the level of detail provided by the CAA on these matters and the Group agreed with Mr Mayner's suggestion that a letter be sent to the Chief Executive of the CAA regarding the Group's need for more comprehensive information on proposals that had an impact on the heliport in future.

(Post meeting note:- Confirmation received from CAA that the proposals subject of the consultation are 'owned' by the airspace change sponsor concerned, in this case NATS. As the CAA would be required to make an independent regulatory decision as to whether these changes would be approved, it would be inappropriate for it to provide in-depth briefings on the content and impact of, or provide any opinion on, any proposal, as this could compromise its regulatory impartiality and lead to legal challenge against any decision that the CAA make. Any specific briefings on proposals would need to come from the sponsors themselves.

The CAA will, however, undertake to advise sponsors at an early stage in the Airspace Change Process that the Group is keen to participate in consultations where there is a likely impact.)

Any Other Business

On item 8, and in relation to his role as an operator, Capt. Hampton confirmed that his pilots were always mindful of the requirement to reduce helicopter noise and were very much on the side of residents in trying to mitigate any disruption to the locality.

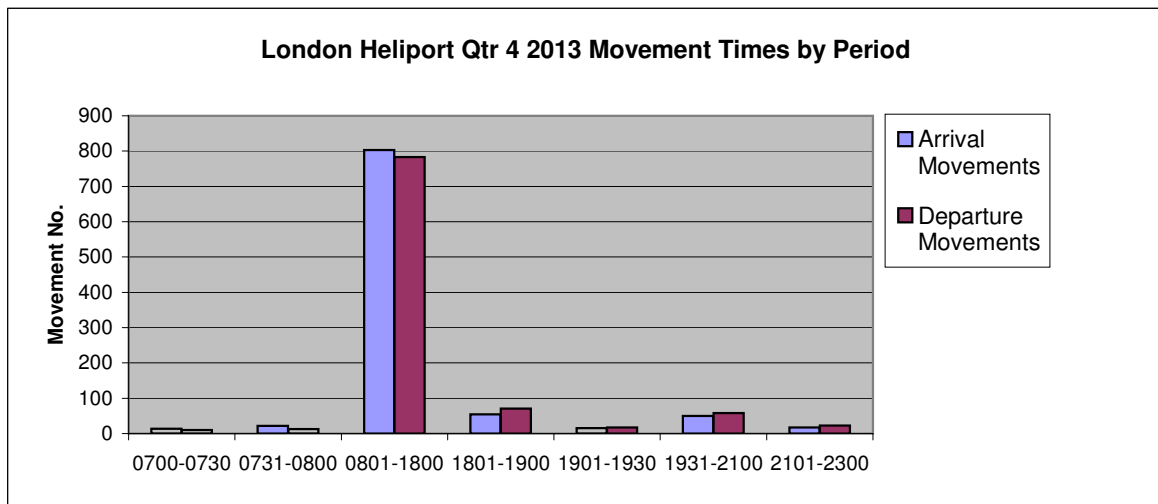
Date of Next Meeting

On item 9, the Group agreed to meet again on Monday, 16th June 2014.

The meeting ended at 7.32 p.m.

Qtr 4 2013 Movement Time Breakdown

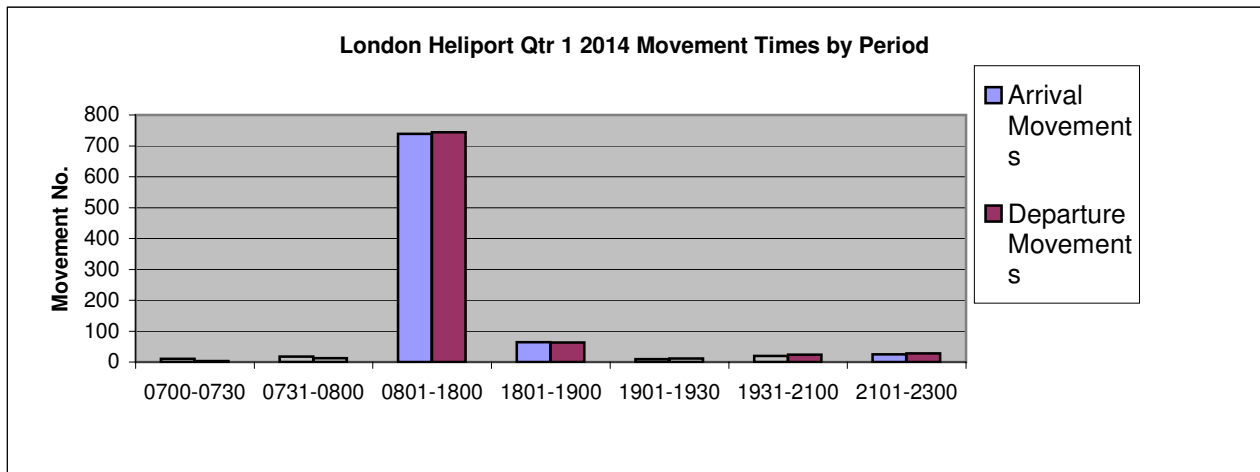
Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	14	10	24
0731-0800	22	13	35
0801-1800	803	783	1586
1801-1900	54	71	125
1901-1930	15	17	32
1931-2100	50	58	108
2101-2300	17	23	40
Total	975	975	1950



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Qtr 1 2014 Movement Time Band Breakdown

Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	10	3	13
0731-0800	18	12	30
0801-1800	739	744	1483
1801-1900	64	63	127
1901-1930	9	11	20
1931-2100	20	24	44
2101-2300	25	28	53
Total	885	885	1770



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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Oct – Nov 2013

Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken
016/13	9/10/2013	1230-1300	1300	Complainant had been disturbed by helicopter for over half an hour by a helicopter circling/filming. (Old Brompton Road, SW5 0LF)	Complainant was concerned it appeared to be a single engined aircraft. Aircraft confirmed as twin-engined on an approved non-standard filming flight.	Complainant only wanted to log a complaint due to concerns over a single engine helicopter flying over a built up area.
017/13	03/11/2013	Seasonal	N/A	General observation movement/activity levels and associated noise compared between Autumn and Summer. (Waterside Point, nr. Albert Bridge SW11 4PD)	No investigation necessary. In line with seasonal expectations of movement levels and how people affected.	No action. (N.B. Over-flights along heli-routes a factor as well as Heliport activity)

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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY

Jan – Mar 2014

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Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken
01/14	05/01/2014	08.00	27/1/14 letter from Justine Greening MP on behalf of constituents	Complainants disturbed by helicopter hovering overhead (Elborough Street, Roehampton SW15 5EW)	The Heliport had no flights until 09.20 that morning. Likely to have been Police Helicopter operating in the area searching for a “vulnerable” man reported missing per MPSASU Twitter page but not confirmed.	Letter reply posted to Ms Greening and complainant sent copy of reply by email. Suggested they contact local Police Station (Earlsfield) to ask if they requested Met Police assistance and to check MPS twitter site. .
02/14	05/01/2014	07.30 – 08.40	06/1/14 forwarded by LHCG Sec. from Wandsworth Council web site	Complainant had been disturbed by helicopter hovering over his house for extended period. (Southfields, SW15)	The Heliport had no flights until 09.20 that morning. Likely to have been Police Helicopter operating in the area searching for a “vulnerable” man reported missing per MPSASU Twitter page but not confirmed.	Complainant advised by via Wandsworth Council email to contact their local Police Station (Earlsfield) to ask if they requested Met Police assistance and to check MPS twitter site.
03/14	09/01/2014	03.30- 03.50	09/1/14	Complainant was disturbed by noise of a helicopter circling over her house in the night. (Courtfield Gardens West, Earls Court, SW7)	The Heliport was not open and the last flight had been at 12.30pm on the previous afternoon. Met Police Twitter site indicated that they had been attending an incident in that area at the time & armed robbers were apprehended.	Complainant advised by email that Heliport was not open and given link to the Met Police Twitter site. The complainant thanked us for our reply and the link for future occurrences.
04/14	27/03/2014	1640	27/3/14	Complainant rang concerning noise and disturbance at night during various days of the week in recent times and low-flying helicopter at time of complaint. (Ratray Road, Brixton, SW2 1BD)	No traffic in this area notified to heliport that day. There have been recent aerial railway surveys work and Met Police Air Support Unit activity.	Rang complainant to advise her of the findings. Advised to consult local Police Station or MPASU Twitter in case of future night-time disturbance.

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Department
for Transport

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Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees

April 2014

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Contents

Purpose of these guidelines	4
1. The Basics.....	5
What are Airport Consultative Committees?	5
Legislative and Policy Context	6
The Role of Committees	8
The purpose and benefits of consultation	9
2. Principles for Airport Consultative Committees	10
Independent	10
Representative	10
Knowledgeable	11
Transparent.....	12
Constructive and Effective	13
3. Effective Committees.....	15
Set Up	15
Preparation.....	18
Proceedings	20
Complaints	21
Disputes	22
4. Sharing Best Practice and Knowledge.....	23
Sharing best practice	23
Sharing knowledge	23

Purpose of these guidelines

1. The Government expects all aerodromes¹ to communicate openly and effectively with their local communities and users of the airport about the impact of their operations. Airport Consultative Committees (ACCs) are a well-established way in which airports can engage with key stakeholders in the local area and beyond.
2. These guidelines are intended to assist those involved in establishing, running and participating in airport consultative committees. While the Government recognises that each airport consultative committee should work in a way that best suits the local circumstances within which it operates, this document sets out some particular principles and standards that committees can use to ensure they operate in an effective and constructive way.
3. These guidelines are intended to be applicable to all aerodromes with a consultation process, not only those designated under Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 (see paragraph 1.2). We recognise the differences in circumstance between individual aerodromes and that arrangements and procedures for one committee may not be appropriate for another. Committees should determine how best to apply these guidelines for their specific circumstances, however, we expect that the basic underlining principles (as described in section 2) will be applicable across all committees.
4. The guidance is also intended to be useful for not only aerodromes that have, or intend to, set up a consultative committee, but also those who sit on the committees and other parties with an interest in the consultative procedures of airports.
5. These Guidelines supersede the previous version published by the Department in December 2003.

¹ In these guidelines 'aerodrome' applies to any aerodrome, irrespective of the size of operation. The term 'airport' is used interchangeably in this document.

1. The Basics

What are Airport Consultative Committees?

- 1.1** ACCs are structured forums that provide an opportunity for the exchange of information between aerodromes and interested parties. They make recommendations to the aerodrome management and other bodies when appropriate as well as being a place where there is an opportunity to reach common understanding between interested groups about the nature of the aerodrome operation in the hope that issues can be resolved amicably.
- 1.2** There are 51² aerodromes throughout England, Wales and Scotland that are designated under section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 to provide "facilities for consultation". The Aerodromes Designation (Facilities for Consultation) Order 1996 as amended (SI 2002/2421) provides the list of airports that are designated. Separate arrangements exist for the designation of airports in Northern Ireland, namely Article 20(1) of the Airports (Northern Ireland) Order 1994.

² The Government is aware that the list of airports in *The Aerodromes Designation (Facilities for Consultation) Order 1996 (SI 1996/1392)* as amended (SI 2002/2421) currently includes airports that are no longer in operation.

Legislative and Policy Context

Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 (as amended)

- 1 This section applies to any aerodrome which is designated for the purposes of this section by an Order made by the Secretary of State.
- 2 The person having the management of any aerodrome to which this section applies shall provide:-
 - a. for users of the aerodrome,
 - b. for any local authority (or, if the person having the management of the aerodrome is a local authority, for any other local authority in whose area the aerodrome or any part thereof is situated or whose area is in the neighbourhood of the aerodrome), and
 - c. for any other organisation representing the interests of persons concerned with the locality in which the aerodrome is situated,
 - d. adequate facilities for consultation with respect to any matter concerning the management or administration of the aerodrome which affects their interests.
- 3 The reference in subsection (2)(b) above to any local authority includes in relation to the area of Greater London a reference to the Mayor of London acting on behalf of the Greater London Authority.

- 1.3** The Government considers that the best means of ensuring fair treatment of the different categories of statutory consultees is through a consultative committee formed for this purpose. This provides an opportunity for the aerodrome to consult relevant groups simultaneously as well as allowing those groups to engage with each other directly.
- 1.4** However, the Government would not expect the absence of statutory designation to be a barrier to effective consultation, as it should be a matter of good practice at airports.
- 1.5** The Aviation Policy Framework states that:

*"The Government expects all airports and aerodromes to communicate openly and effectively with their local communities about the impact of their operations."*³

Users of the aerodrome

- 1.6** These will vary depending on the specific aerodrome in question. For many airports, passengers are obviously among the most central user groups, along with the airlines that carry them and the other associated services. Consultative committees are well placed to ensure passenger interests are represented and communicated to the airport. At the largest airports, having a passenger-focused sub-group might be appropriate to consider these issues in detail.
- 1.7** As far as possible, a full range of users of the airport should be represented on committees, or at least their views taken into account. This may include, but is not limited to, passengers, airlines (or their representative associations), retailers, training schools, freight companies, ground services, as well as those involved in any general aviation operating from the airport.

Local Authorities

- 1.8** Local Authority members have an important representational role on behalf of their constituents, particularly when they represent communities close to or affected by the airport's operations. They should represent the full range of issues relevant to their authority, including planning, economic and environmental interests. Membership on a consultative committee may also enable local authorities to better consider how the airport features in local authority plans and policies through the knowledge gained by being represented on the committee.

Others with an interest

- 1.9** The third category of Section 35 refers to any other organisation representing the interests of persons concerned with the locality in which the aerodrome is situated. While both the size of the locality and the type of organisation will vary according to local circumstances, this category would include community organisations such as local environmental groups and residents associations, local business and enterprise groups as well as tourism and consumer bodies.

³ Aviation Policy Framework, 2013, pg 68

The Role of Committees

- 1.10** Committees are made up of representatives from the three "categories" mentioned above - users of the airport, local authorities in the vicinity of the airport and other organisations from the community surrounding the airport that have an interest in the operations and management of the airport.
- 1.11** They should promote greater understanding both to the surrounding community about airport operations and to the airport operator about the impact of those airport operations and any proposed operations. Topics discussed at meetings can vary widely, but often include environmental issues, airport development, updates on airport operations, an overview of any passenger service issues and surface access.
- 1.12** The nature of consultative committees and, indeed, of "adequate facilities for consultation" will depend upon the type and scale of the aerodrome and is likely to be site specific.
- 1.13** Committees should recognise the wider role of the airport as an important local employer and influential driver in the local economy, as well as considering the local environmental impacts of an airport, including noise.⁴ They can also play a vital role in protecting and enhancing the passenger experience at airports.
- 1.14** While committees are not dispute resolution forums and they do not have any executive or decision-making power over the aerodrome, they can facilitate constructive discussion and help resolve differences while maintaining an overview of trends. They also do not prevent interested parties from raising concerns directly with the airport.
- 1.15** Although the committees do not have any executive power, they should be holding airports to account by monitoring the implementation of commitments made by the airport and challenging their performance when necessary. For example, the Government expects committees to monitor the implementation of airports' commitments made under statutory Noise Action Plans, where relevant. They also have a role in protecting and enhancing facilities for passengers.
- 1.16** While many committees operate to fulfil a legislative requirement, there are examples of committees being set up at airports that are not designated under section 35 which

⁴ Aviation Policy Framework, 2013, pg 68

demonstrates the value committees can have in helping various interests reach a common understanding of the impact of airport operations.

The purpose and benefits of consultation

1.17 Consultation has many benefits for the local community, the users of airports, local authorities and aerodrome operators. For example, it can:

- enable aerodrome operators, communities in the vicinity of the aerodrome, local authorities, local business representatives, aerodrome users and other interested parties to exchange information and ideas;
- enable aerodrome operators to identify, take account of and monitor trends, perceptions and potential challenges that may arise over time with specific groups of interests;
- allow the local community and users of the airport to influence the aerodrome operator's decision-making process in areas of mutual interest and increases the effectiveness of decisions by drawing on local knowledge and expertise;
- minimise unnecessary and costly conflict;
- allow the concerns of interested parties to be raised and taken into account by the aerodrome operators, with a genuine desire on all sides to resolve any issues that may emerge;
- allow the local community, users of the airport and other interested parties to better understand the aerodrome's operations;
- complement the legal framework within which the aerodrome operates;

1.18 However, consultation is not intended to:

- detract from or constrain the responsibility of the aerodrome owner and/or operator to manage the aerodrome;
- prevent interested parties from raising concerns directly with the aerodrome, or through other channels.

2. Principles for Airport Consultative Committees

- 2.1** We recognise that committees vary widely in size and scope as do the specific operating procedures and arrangements and what works for one aerodrome will not necessarily work at another. However committees do, at their heart, have a similar role and purpose and thus can operate to a common set of principles.

Independent

- 2.2** While the onus is on airports to provide facilities for and (usually) fund airport consultative committees, it is important that they are and they are perceived as being independent from the airport in order to maintain the confidence of all interested parties. Committees should be free to say what they think on issues. Committees should, as far as possible, be transparent about how and why they are funded, and chairs should be appointed through an open and transparent process.

Representative

- 2.3** Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 specifies the categories of bodies or organisations that should be consulted and it is important that a committee comprises an appropriate range of views that is representative of those affected by, or involved in, the operations of the airport.
- 2.4** Committees could also consider the need for independent representatives, who are not affiliated with any organisation, when it comes to representing passenger interests.

The size of a committee

- 2.5** While the exact size of the committee will depend upon local circumstances, the committee should be a manageable size. Where there are a number of organisations that have a similar interest in the operations of the airport, thought should be

given to ways in which those interests can be appropriately represented without making the committee unwieldy.

- 2.6** Although personal experience can be useful, members should represent the views of their wider organisation (unless they have been appointed as independent members of the committee), consulting with other members of the organisation before meetings and feeding back afterwards.

Making sure the mix is appropriate

- 2.7** There must be sufficient representation from each of the three discrete groups identified at section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 to ensure that the views of that group are adequately expressed. There should be fair and equitable treatment of the different categories with no one interest dominating the committee, however it is more important to ensure that there is a representative balance of interests rather than to attempt equal numeric representation. Subject to ensuring adequate representation for each group, each committee has discretion to decide on the scope and level of representation based on local circumstances and practice.
- 2.8** The groups represented will vary between aerodromes: the users at an airport with a mixture of commercial air transport and general aviation (GA) flights may encompass a wider spectrum of interested parties than either a major airport or a small GA aerodrome. The scale of interest from the local community and local authorities is also likely to be more significant at larger aerodromes as the positive and negative impacts are likely to cover a wider geographic area.

Ensuring organisations are representative

- 2.9** It can sometimes be difficult to judge whether a community organisation is truly representative of the community they claim to represent. Organisations should be clear about who they represent, as well as their aims and objectives. Ideally organisations represented on the committee should have a written constitution and documented membership to help secure the legitimacy of representatives.

Knowledgeable

- 2.10** While it is not expected that members themselves are experts on every subject the committee discusses, members should seek to gain a general understanding of the issues involved

and should have a more in depth knowledge of the area they represent. All members should take an interest in the issues being discussed at meetings and be prepared to seek advice from others (such as officers from across the different organisational interests in the case of local authority representatives).

Specialist expertise

- 2.11** It is often useful, especially at the larger airports' committees, if members are permitted to be accompanied by technical advisers (for example, elected council members may be supported by officers). Such advisers should not, however, intervene in committee proceedings unless invited to do so by the Chairman.
- 2.12** Depending on the size of the aerodrome and the subject matter for consideration, the committee could consider appointing an appropriate consultant having aviation and/or other relevant expertise to act as a specialist adviser to the committee as a whole.

Transparent

- 2.13** Committees should be as open and transparent as possible about the issues they discuss and the conclusions they come to.
- 2.14** The wider local community and airport users should be made aware of the existence of the consultative committee and its role in relation to aerodrome operations as well as how to contact at least the Secretary of the committee.
- 2.15** The existence and role of the committee, as well as members of the committee and the organisations they represent, should be easily accessible to the community online through a section on the airport's own website or on a dedicated website. If the committee has its own website, the airport should provide appropriate signposting from its website. The website should also include a schedule of the committee's meetings as well as minutes of the meetings themselves.
- 2.16** Committees may also wish to explore different ways of communicating with interested parties (such as through social media or e-newsletters) that could provide opportunities to engage more effectively with the people they represent.

2.17 Committees are encouraged to open their meetings to the public, unless there is a legitimate reason why it is inappropriate to do so. The manner in which the public are admitted to attend meetings should be decided by the committee according to local circumstances.

Balancing confidentiality and transparency

2.18 There may be times where the committee wishes to discuss matters that are confidential in nature. This can be handled in a variety of ways, from closing part of the meeting to the public to discussing confidential matters in a separate meeting (such as a steering group or a sub-group).

Examples of the ways in which committees open to the public

- Some committees allow the public to attend every meeting, although they are not permitted to ask questions.
- Other committees allow the public to attend meetings and ask questions in advance, to be answered during the meeting.
- One committee has one meeting open to the public per year.

Constructive and Effective

2.19 The wide variety of issues that consultative committees can get involved in, and the passion that some of those issues can invoke in people have the potential to lead to unproductive meetings. As far as possible, the committee should take a constructive role in issues, taking the opportunity to influence matters where appropriate. As the committee does not have executive powers, its role is more along the lines of a “critical friend”, to offer advice and encourage the airport to act on its advice by pointing out things that are working well, as well as being objectively (as far as possible) critical of areas where the airport could make improvements.

2.20 Airport managers should take the opportunity to engage with the committee at an early enough stage of future plans in order for the committee to take a constructive role in advising the airport and where the airport can take advantage of the specific knowledge and expertise committee members have. The airport management should be willing to be influenced by the discussions and opinions of the committee in order to make the process of consultation meaningful. The airport is expected to take the committee’s views into account when

making decisions on matters about which the committee has been consulted.

- 2.21** The airport should be clear about areas where decisions have already taken place or where the committee's views cannot influence the situation.
- 2.22** When the views of the committee are expressed in response to being consulted, the presence of any significant minority opinion should be made clear, as well as those areas where there is agreement.
- 2.23** Committees could consider setting up an annual work plan that identifies priorities to help ensure work and discussions remain focused or publishing a short annual report detailing what has been achieved by the committee in the past year.
- 2.24** To ensure committees remain effective they should periodically review both their terms of reference and their membership. As part of this review, committees could also consider seeking feedback on their work from those they represent.

3. Effective Committees

Set Up

Funding

3.1 The funding of committees is one issue that has the potential to be seen as compromising the independence of committees, as for many committees the administrative costs are covered by the airport. While there is little evidence that this is the case in practice, and as it is the airports that are legally responsible for providing facilities for consultation, committees should be transparent about how and why they are funded and seek to demonstrate how independence is achieved despite the financial ties.

Chairs

- 3.2** One of the most important ways in which committees can ensure their independence is by appointing a chair through an open and transparent process, with the involvement of the committee itself. The chair should not be closely identified with any sectional interest. Thought should also be given to a term limit for chairs (for example, two terms of a maximum of five years), or at least reviewing the chairmanship periodically.
- 3.3** It is important that consultative committees have an effective chair who is able to gain the respect of the other committee members and should have the ability to draw together a wide range of views into a coherent conclusion.

Secretariat

- 3.4** The Secretary should not be closely identified with any sectional interest.
- 3.5** A properly resourced secretariat should be appointed to ensure the effective working of the committee. A local authority (ideally, not a planning authority for the airport) may be suitably placed to carry out this function although other arrangements (such as an independent secretary) could also be appropriate. The necessary secretarial support will depend upon the size of the committee and the volume and nature of

the business handled. The duties of the secretariat should include:

- prepare minutes of the committee and distribute them to all members;
- issue notices of meetings of the committee and to place on the agenda any matters that are proper for the committee to consider;
- circulate relevant documents;
- publicise the output of the committee and maintain the committees website (where airport is not responsible for this)
- assist the committee on policy and technical issues, where appropriate.

Airport management

3.6 It is essential that the airport management participate fully in the committee proceedings by offering items for the agenda, attending meetings and by providing relevant information on the operation of the airport, answering questions and responding to points raised by the committee. Those attending on behalf of the airport should be at an appropriately senior level (for example CEO or Managing Director).

Frequency of meetings

3.7 The consultative committee should meet at least three times a year, unless the committee is satisfied that fewer meetings would suffice. This ensures committees can respond to issues in a timely manner and in a way that adds the most value. Members should be given as much notice as possible as to the time and place of meetings.

Venue

3.8 Unless otherwise agreed by the committee, the management of the aerodrome should arrange adequate facilities for meetings (as they have the legal duty to provide the facilities), having regard to travel convenience of members from the whole catchment. Venues should be accessible by public transport where reasonably possible.

Terms of reference

3.9 The terms of reference of the committee should be sufficiently widely drawn to allow it to consider all matters arising from the management and administration of the aerodrome. The exact terms of reference will be at the discretion of the committee but would be expected to cover existing and proposed facilities and services at the airport (especially those concerning passengers), input into environmental monitoring of the aerodrome, surface access, responses to formal consultation papers issued by government and other regulatory authorities, and consideration of the economic, social and environmental impact of airport operations.

Example items to include in the terms of reference:

- To foster communication and build understanding between the airport and its users, local residents and the business community.
- To stimulate the interest of the local population in the development of the aerodrome.
- To consider and comment upon the impacts of the airport's administration, operation and development in relation to:
 - The environment
 - Surface access issues associated with the airport
 - Employment
 - The local, regional and national economy
 - The circumstances of local communities and their residents.
- To protect and enhance the interests of users of the aerodrome, particularly those of passengers.
- To consider and, if appropriate, comment upon any factual and consultative reports, from Governmental and other sources, that are material to the future character, operation and development of the airport.

Sub Groups

3.10 Some committees (particularly at the larger airports) may find it useful to form sub-groups to deal with specific issues or areas. This allows more detailed discussions to take place regarding specific issues (such as those encountered by passengers) between interested members of the committee. It also may allow those not directly represented on the committee to be involved in an issue that affects them, for

example some passenger sub-groups include independent passenger representatives who do not sit on the main committee. Sub-committees should report back to the main committee on issues discussed and any actions being taken. The need for sub-groups will depend on the scale of activities and the local circumstances of the particular airport.

Examples of sub-groups

- Passenger or user experience group: can monitor passenger facilities and procedures, identify any gaps in services or issues arising from passenger experiences and make recommendations for improvement. They can also provide a passenger perspective on airport developments, particularly at the design stage.
- Noise and track keeping group: to oversee the airport's production of statistics, information and complaint handling relating to aircraft noise and assist the airport to improve the impact of aircraft noise on the community around the airport.
- Committee Steering Group: can be formed from a representative selection of members from the main committee to give preliminary consideration to new or major issues and make recommendations for the agenda of the main committee as well as deal with urgent matters on behalf of the main committee.
- Ad-hoc groups: committees could consider convening a temporary sub-group to deal with specific issues that arise, such as changing the committee's terms of reference or dealing with a new airport development.

Preparation

Agenda and Papers

- 3.11** If possible all members should make available to the committee (through the Secretary) at as early a date as possible details of any matter of concern to that member which he or she wishes to raise at a meeting of the committee. Provided that a matter is within the terms of reference, it is recommended that all committee members be able to propose agenda items for discussion. However, there may be times where a case can be made not to accept an item, for instance if it involves an issue that has been discussed fully at a

previous meeting where there is no new information and further discussion would not be constructive.

- 3.12** Papers should be circulated well in advance to allow representatives to prepare fully and obtain technical advice if necessary. The secretariat will need to ensure that the circulation of papers does not breach copyright, privacy or data protection.

Items for Discussion

- 3.13** The issues that committees discuss will vary from meeting to meeting and from aerodrome to aerodrome, some will be standing items on agendas while others will be in response to ad hoc issues that arise. There should be an appropriate balance of issues discussed at meetings.

- Updates from airport management on operations at the airport, including passenger numbers and new services, runway utilisation, complaints, noise and track keeping
- Updates from local authorities on local plans and policies that may impact upon the airport
- Community noise and local air quality monitoring
- Passenger service issues
- Noise insulation schemes
- Surface access
- Airport development
- Airspace changes⁵
- Noise Action Plans⁶
- Responding to consultations
- Community initiatives
- Updates from any sub-groups

⁵ Airport Consultative Committees are listed as one of those who should be consulted with on airspace changes where there is potential for significant detrimental impact in the 'Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority on environmental objectives relating to the exercise of its air navigation functions'

⁶ Where relevant.

Proceedings

Participation

3.14 Members should be given guidance on how the committee works as well as the standards of behaviour expected of consultative committee members. To ensure the effective operation of the committee it may be considered useful to have a commitment from all members, including airport management, the Chair and the Secretary, to participate actively in the work and discussions of the committee. To help with this, we have included a suggested Code of Conduct that can be used and adapted by committees to ensure members understand what is expected of them.

Code of Conduct

Respect: Committee members should treat each other with respect and courtesy at all times.

Commitment: Committee members should dedicate sufficient time to prepare for and attend meetings, including seeking advice and views from others in their organisation where appropriate.

Conflicts of Interest: Members should identify and declare any conflicts of interest (actual, potential or perceived), particularly where members do not represent an organisation.

Participation: Members should participate fully in meetings. They should listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind while contributing constructively to discussions. Actions assigned to members should be fulfilled in a timely manner and progress reported back at the next meeting.

Openness and Accountability: Members should be open and accountable to each other and the organisations and communities they represent about their work on the committee.

Confidentiality: Members should respect the status of any confidential issues they discuss.

Discussion

3.15 During meetings it is important that members should be given adequate opportunity to represent the views of those whom they represent and that no organisation or one group should dominate proceedings. Chairs should ensure discussion is on

topic while members should make their point in a concise and constructive manner.

Voting

3.16 It is expected that matters would be resolved by consensus. In general, the Chairman should avoid taking votes on matters other than those relating to the membership of the committee and its sub-groups.

Minutes and Actions

3.17 The minutes of the meeting should be concise, but representative of the issues and views discussed. Committee publications should reflect the range of views and advice and/or recommendations to the airport operator put forward by members and should not merely reflect the majority viewpoint on any issue. Actions should also be recorded and followed up on at subsequent meetings.

Complaints

3.18 While the airport should have an agreed formal procedure for recording complaints about aircraft noise as well as passenger service issues, committees are well placed to monitor trends or patterns of complaints (both noise related and from customers), to consider specific issues (for example how the airport responds to persistent complainants), and to monitor the airport's ongoing performance in dealing with complaints. The number, and for noise complaints general location, should be made available to the committee.

3.19 Passenger complaints could be reviewed by a passenger services sub-committee if the committee has established one.

3.20 Airports might suggest that complainants, if dissatisfied with the airport response on a matter of wider interest, could contact the committee to raise the matter for discussion. However, it should be remembered that the consultative committee is not an arbiter of last resort, and its recommendations are not binding on the aerodrome. So, it should not be the committee's function to investigate individual complaints as a matter of routine.

Disputes

3.21 Disputes involving members of the committee or the working of the committee should be handled within the committee in the first instance. While the Department wishes to see committees work effectively, it is expected that in the majority of instances a solution should be found at the local level. It is the airport that has the ultimate statutory responsibility for ensuring the three discrete groups identified at section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 are consulted equally and therefore has an interest in ensuring committees are working effectively.

4. Sharing Best Practice and Knowledge

Sharing best practice

- 4.1 The sharing of best practice and information between consultative committees is strongly encouraged. For committees at larger airports, the [Liaison Group of UK Airport Consultative Committees](#) (UKACCs) is an ideal way to do this.
- 4.2 For committees at smaller aerodromes, sharing best practice on an informal and ad hoc basis may be appropriate. To facilitate this, committees should ensure their contact details are available on their websites.
- 4.3 All committees are encouraged to welcome members of other committees who wish to see examples of other committees in action by observing meetings. Committees should also consider working together on issues of common interest by sharing information or ways of handling specific issues.

Sharing knowledge

- 4.4 Committees should also work with other organisations on issues where they have specific expertise to offer. This could include working with Local Authorities to inform Local Plans; the CAA on consumer issues through its Consumer Panel; or with the Department for Transport on specific policy issues.
- 4.5 When responding to consultations as a committee, the response should show where there is agreement between the different interests represented on the committee as well as the range of views held on an issue.
- 4.6 It is recognised that the Department, CAA and NATS should also proactively engage with consultative committees on issues of common interest.

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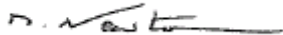
14th February 2014

Dear Ms Goodwin

**London Heliport Consultative Group – Submission on Guidelines for Airport
Consultative Committees**

I attach a copy of the submission of the London Heliport Consultative Group to the DfT consultation on guidelines for airport consultative committees.

The Group is firmly of the opinion that London Heliport should be formally designated under Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 and has taken the opportunity to make the case for designation as part of its submission. Jane Ellison, MP for Battersea, and Richard Tracey, London Assembly Member for Wandsworth and Merton, fully support the Group's bid for 35 designation and have already written to you direct to confirm this. The bid is also supported by the Leader of Wandsworth Council, Councillor Ravi Govindia and the Leader of Hammersmith and Fulham Council, Councillor Nicholas Botterill (see letters attached).

**Martin Newton**

Secretary to the London Heliport Consultative Group

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Response of the London Heliport Consultative Group to the Department for Transport draft guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees.

The London Heliport opened in 1959 and is located on the River Thames in Battersea, Lombard Road, SW11. It is the capital's only CAA-licensed heliport and caters for both business and leisure customers, as well as the emergency services including the Air Ambulance and Police Air Support units.

The London Heliport Consultative Group was established in 2006 and comprises councillors and resident representatives from the boroughs of Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea as well as the Heliport operator and its users.

The LHCG has considered the details of the consultation document on the update of the guidelines for airport consultative committees and has the following comments and observations to make on the main questions set out in the covering document to the draft guidelines and also some examples of best practice.

Do you agree the principles described in chapter 2 provide a common basis for all consultative committees to work to? Are there any additions or alternatives that should be considered?

Yes. The LHCG already meet the principles in chapter 2 in the guidelines in relation to Independent, Representative, Knowledgeable, Transparent and Constructive and the Group consider that these principles provide a common basis for all committees to work to. As stated above, the Group comprises councillors and resident representatives from the Heliport's locality, as well as the Heliport operator and user representatives. The Chairmanship is rotated annually between the local authority representatives, the Group consider standing items at each meeting on noise monitoring, numbers of helicopter movements and complaints received, and members are encouraged to submit other relevant items for discussion. Meetings are open to the public and agendas and minutes available on a website. Specialist independent knowledge is provided at each meeting by a consultant aviation expert. The Group has contributed to DEFRA research on helicopter noise and is currently exploring new noise monitoring arrangements.

Do you agree that a code of conduct would be a useful way to ensure members participate constructively in the work and discussions of the committee? Does the draft code adequately reflect what should be expected of committee members?

Yes – the code of conduct would be a useful addition to the guidelines and particularly helpful for new members of committees, adequately reflecting what should be expected of them.

Can you suggest some ways in which best practice can be best shared between committees? Do you agree that committees are well placed to work with other organisations on areas of common interest?

The encouragement for smaller airport committees to share best practice and knowledge on an informal and ad hoc basis is supported as committees are well placed to inter-act with other relevant agencies on common interests. A representative from the CAA regularly attends the Group's meetings and the LHCG has established links in the past with Redhill Aerodrome Consultative Committee on matters of common interest relating to helicopter noise in the Epsom and Sutton area, including representatives of the Group visiting Redhill, and was grateful to receive details of that aerodrome's Operators' Memorandum. Similarly, details of any specialist noise measurement initiatives that are planned to be carried out on behalf of the Group in respect of operational activity at London Heliport are likely to be considerably useful to other committees and organisations. As the LHCG is – as far as we are aware - the only dedicated heliport group of its kind in the UK, the Group's activities and experience gained will be of significant interest to industry observers and the general public and documents relating to its agendas and meetings are freely available on the website to ensure this information is accessible to all interested parties.

Do you feel the layout of the document is user friendly and easy to understand? Are there any areas of the text you think need clarifying?

Yes – the document and its contents are easily understandable and user friendly.

Do you agree that section 35 remains a useful way of ensuring different interests concerned in the operation of an airport are consulted in a fair and equal manner?

Although it is considered that the LHCG has been successful in tackling a number of local issues primarily relating to complaint handling and operations monitoring since its establishment in 2006, the Group has previously put forward the view and still considers that the Heliport should be designated under Section 35 for a number of reasons. The Group firmly believe that Section 35 designation would provide the appropriate formal recognition of the Heliport's importance and build on and strengthen the sustainability of the current arrangements, helping to ensure that the Heliport is meaningfully consulted on all future aviation matters affecting it, increasing its status and acknowledging its role as the only Heliport in London in terms of its place in the UK airport infrastructure (with the LHCG the only committee of its kind), and providing the opportunity for aviation officials to be invited on a regular basis to the Group's meetings and for a greater level of communication and a more thorough briefing for members on relevant issues.

The Group is particularly concerned that recently there has been a number of consultation papers released on issues of interest to the Group, but the LHCG has not been formally consulted on these papers. In some cases, the Group has only become aware of these consultations through other discussions. At its most recent

meeting in November 2013, the Group was grateful to receive a brief written summary from the CAA on both the London Control Zone Airspace Re-Classification and the London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) Phase 1a consultations, but in both cases would have preferred to have been formally consulted on these matters. The Group was also surprised to learn at its meeting of the Air Navigation Guidance document - which refers to consultative groups and CAA – as this was the first many of the Group's members had heard of this document, the LHCG again having not been formally consulted on the contents.

The Group is unable to understand the decision not to review the list of 51 airports and aerodromes currently designated bearing in mind that some are no longer operational. A review of this list would complement the Government's stated intention to remove unnecessary 'red tape' wherever possible and also encourage the recognition/inclusion of the Heliport in the Section 35 list instead of non-existent operations.

The Group has received letters in support of its bid for Section 35 accreditation for the Heliport from Jane Ellison, MP for Battersea, whose constituency includes the Heliport, as well as from Councillor Ravi Govindia, Leader of Wandsworth Council and Councillor Nicholas Botterill, Leader of Hammersmith and Fulham Council. Copies of these letters are included with this submission.

Jane Ellison and Richard Tracey, London Assembly Member for Wandsworth and Merton, have also written direct to Tamara Goodwin at the DfT with their support.

Would it be possible to achieve these objectives in a non-statutory way – for example by the use of best practice alone? Are there any areas where a statutory approach imposes unnecessary or disproportionate costs?

The Group's experience to date leads it to the conclusion that in this case the objectives of the guidelines are best met by statutory underpinning.

London Heliport Consultative Group

14th February 2014.

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