

ETC AVIATION COMMITTEE

Bullets for meeting with SDC Planning and Environment Committee 24.9.13

- Thank you for making space for us tonight.
- You have been asked to make recommendations on the various long term airport capacity options which the Davies Committee are considering. However, Noise is absent from your agenda *over the 27th of a Consultation Process*
- GAL have published plans to expand the existing one runway operation from 30-45mpa. A second runway pushes the numbers to 95mpa
- Conceivably with the sheer size of the increase, and the congestion in the skies above us, areas which are currently not affected by noise, may well become so. For those currently overflowed, the position will worsen in either context.
- While no decisions on flight paths have been taken, it cannot be assumed that only the communities in the south of the constituency will be affected in the future.
- So being involved in an open process of consultation is of fundamental importance. However the rejection of SDC's and TWDC's application to join GATCOM is an example of an unrepresentative process.
- These concerns formed part of our response to Davies which I hope you found useful. We have had great support from Sir John Stanley who has written to Sir Howard and the Sec of State and Greg Clark on behalf of TW. We have received a supportive letter from your MP, Michael Fallon and we would really like to see SDC similarly engaged on Noise related issues.
- In addition to representation, our submission to Davies also featured other shortcomings of the current process viz
 - flight concentration versus dispersal of routes. This has been adopted by Davies without challenge and without reference to trade-offs for those affected.
 - the lack of regulatory controls eg minimum height levels and noise levels for landing aircraft,
 - the need for a system to replace airport Noise Action Plans and Airport Master Plans which are published by airport operators and whose performance is measured by themselves without penalty for failure to achieve their own noise targets.
 - the need for noise data to be independently obtained and be based on better coverage/measurement. It makes no sense for the DfT to quote from noise contour maps which show Marsh Green, Cowden and Hever to be outside the night noise contours at which annoyance can be expected when 70% of landings directly overfly these parishes. Something doesn't add up, credibility is lacking.
- Let me say a few words about night flights. Gatwick, is permitted a 24 hour operation which is currently under utilised but even so in summer, scheduled flights are landing every 6 minutes (between 11pm and 5 am). The present regime is quite unfair. Two runways will make that intolerable.
- Whilst expansion at Gatwick may widen the halo effect of economic benefit to the Eden Valley, the negatives, as Mr Leslie has argued, are all

too clear and such concerns were voiced at public workshops in Edenbridge and Tunbridge Wells where noise was the key issue and minuted by GAL.

- Even KCC have argued for improvements in the noise environment as a condition of airport expansion with compensation for those affected by landing as well as take off noise.
- Airport Consultative Committees eg Gatcom, which is funded by the airport operators themselves and rely on voluntary agreement, are unrepresentative, and therefore not fit for the purpose the Government places on them to resolve “local” issues such as described in this paper..

Conclusion

- we are not Nimby, but we are Green Belt and surrounded by AONB's which need to be protected. Minorities have rights and these rights need to be balanced by a system which is truly independent, open and transparent. The present system does not do that and we have reminded Davies of that.
- irrespective of whether Gatwick are awarded a second runway, there are practical measures the industry can and should be seen to be doing for their existing operations with meaningful penalties for failure.
- Basically a policy of *laissez-faire* is unfair.
- We have said that increased capacity achieved by more Night flights, by flight concentration and without greater regulatory supervision to protect the rural community, is unacceptable, especially as trade-offs have been conveniently set aside in the Aviation Policy Framework.
- Davies Commission represents one maybe final opportunity to reset the imbalance.
- In SDC's response to Davies which you are required to make by 27th September we urge you to endorse our paper on Noise.

VHRKing on behalf of Edenbridge Council
24.9.2013