

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 9th February, 2023 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## **Voting Members**

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr K. Dibble (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin  
Cllr L. Jeffers  
Cllr Marina Munro  
Cllr Sophie Porter

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr A. Adeola, Cllr Prabesh KC, Cllr Mara Makunura and Cllr S. Trussler.

Cllr Jib Belbase attended the meeting as Standing Deputy.

## **23. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st December, 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

The Chairman advised the Committee that Cllr Prabesh KC had been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Committee held on 20th October, 1st December 2022 and 9th February 2023. Under the Council's Constitution, Standing Order 4 (5) stated that 'if any Member shall be absent from three consecutive meetings of a committee, he or she shall cease to be a Member thereof, unless he or she shall in the opinion of the Committee show reasonable grounds for their absence.'

It was noted that the Chairman would contact Cllr KC to determine the reasons for his absence at these meetings and report back at the meeting to be held on 30th March, 2023.

## **24. FARNBOROUGH AIRPORT**

The Committee welcomed, Simon Geere, Chief Executive, and Mark Sanderson, Group Corporate Responsibility Manager, at Farnborough Airport, Tim Mills, (Executive Head of Property and Growth) and Richard Ward, (Environment and Airport Monitoring Officer) who were in attendance to provide presentations on the environmental and economic impacts of Farnborough Airport. This followed the publication of the Economic Impact of Farnborough Airport Report produced by Lichfields. In Addition, Luke Bonnici, Associate Director – Economics, Lichfields, joined the meeting online.

Mr Mills provided a background to the Economic Impact Report. It was noted that the previous Report had been published in 2009 and had been commissioned to inform the Rushmoor Local Plan. The current Report had been commissioned jointly by the Council and Farnborough Airport to update the previous Report; calculate the Airport's actual economic impact, as observed in 2019 (pre-covid baseline); and, revise how the economic impact of the airport might change as it increased its Air Traffic Movements (ATMs) and reached its current 50,000 ATMs per annum planning limit.

It was noted that the Report had been split into sections, also including an introduction and executive summary, as set out below :

- Section 3 - An overview of Farnborough Airport, its facilities and operations, and other economic activities based there, which were considered in the economic assessment – key points
  - The Airport occupied 7% of the Boroughs land area
  - Operations were restricted by planning conditions
  - Key infrastructure included a 1800m runway, a state of the art control tower, modern terminal building and hangar space. Considerable investment in infrastructure and facilities on the site was also ongoing
  - Over 70 tenants co-occupied the space, including Gulfstream, Flight Safety International and Farnborough International
- Section 4 - Definition of business aviation and an overview of the role Farnborough Airport played within the sector – key points
  - Farnborough was the largest UK business aviation airport
  - Business aviation had shown more resilience than commercial aviation during the pandemic
  - Farnborough was one of five “red list” entry ports in the UK
- Section 5 - An overview of the policy context and socio-economic conditions in the area – key points
  - Policy context which influenced current operations and future growth included, Government Policy, Sub-Regional Policy and the Local Plan
  - Socio-Economic characteristics of the local economy included, a resilient and strong local economy, stable employment levels with low levels of unemployment and dominant service sector/knowledge based industries
- Section 6 - Examination of the economic impact of Farnborough Airport and consideration of how this had changed – key points
  - Total employment in Rushmoor, both direct and indirect, estimated to be in the region of 1,735 FTE jobs (3.5% of the Boroughs employment), an increase of 44.9% since 2009
  - Total economic contribution, at Borough level, estimated to be in the region of £151.8 million, as increase of 63.2% since 2009
  - Total fiscal contribution of £2.04 million in 2022/23 and capital investment of £55 million

- Section 7 - The economic impact associated growth in ATMs (up to 50,000 movements per annum) – key points
  - The study set out updated projections for FTE jobs and direct GVA, based upon the Airport reaching 50,000 ATMs. Jobs were estimated to be between 4,125 and 4,260 and direct GVA between £187.3 million and £193.7 million
  
- Section 8 - The Airport's catalytic and wider community and economic effects – key points
  - Catalytic effects related to the wider role of an airport in attracting investment and businesses to an area, where no direct economic linkages are quantifiable, but gain/competitive advantage, may be made from a location near an airport
  - Local opportunities related mainly to the Airshow, through local employment opportunities and supporting skills development
  
- Section 9 - The overall conclusions for the study
  - Farnborough Airport played a key role in supporting the vitality and resilience of the Borough's economy through both the direct and wider (i.e., supply chain and induced) effects of the Airport's activities (i.e., both on-Airport and off-Airport). In addition to benefits associated with the clustering effect around aviation, defence and related industries across the sub-region
  - The Airport's overall impact, as annual ATMs increased to 50,000, was now anticipated to be higher than the impact estimated in the 2009 Study. Overall, total employment was estimated to be between 37.4% and 43.2% higher than identified in the 2009 Study. In addition, the Airport's economic output (i.e. direct GVA) was expected to be between 53.2% and 57.5% higher than identified in the 2009 Study

The Committee discussed the Report and raised a number of queries, relating to;

- When would the ATMs reach 50,000 – it was noted that in 2019 they were 31,561 and by 2022 they were about 33,000. The Airport was not in a position to predict when the 50,000 would be reached
- Noise level monitoring – it was advised that there were currently two fixed noise level monitors at each end of the runway, with mobile units utilised in other locations. It was noted that overall complaint levels relating to noise, were considered to be low
- Hiring and increasing skills locally – It was noted that the Airport held Generation Aviation Careers Days, apprenticeship programmes (four per year) and were in liaison with Farnborough College of Technology regarding aviation specific educational courses.
- Relocation of aviation companies to Rushmoor – it was noted that when a company relocated some employees relocated with the company and others were employed locally

- Farnborough Airport Consultative Committee (FACC) – it was recognised that the Consultative Committee needed to improve engagement with the community
- Environmental Impacts – Farnborough Airport’s operations had been carbon neutral since 2018 and a role model in the industry. Current initiatives included solar, hydrogen, electric vehicles and green fuel

The Chairman thanked Mr Mills for his presentation and asked Mr Ward to provide his presentation on Air Quality.

Mr Ward advised that it was the Council’s responsibility to review and assess air quality. There were seven key pollutants, of which the main pollutant of concern in Rushmoor was nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) – emissions from traffic. Through the Section 106 Agreement, the Council monitored air quality in and around the Airport. It was advised that as part of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) scheme Rushmoor monitored 20 general sites, 13 sites in and around the Airport and six sites on the A331.

The Committee reviewed data on emissions which showed a decrease at all key sites in and around the Airport up to the start of the pandemic in early 2020. It was advised that emissions had risen slightly once ATMs had recommenced but were still considerably below the target levels. In addition, it was noted that the A331 site readings had dipped during the pandemic but were now, generally, back to pre-pandemic levels.

The Committee discussed the presentation and raised a number of queries, including:

- Particle PM<sub>10/2.5</sub> – it was advised that the main contributors of PM<sub>10/2.5</sub> particles was users/vehicles. The Airport was not considered to be a large contributor to PM<sub>10/2.5</sub> particles
- Offsetting – it was advised that most of the Airport’s offsetting was carried out abroad
- Airport emissions – it was noted that most of the emissions from the Airport related to ground services
- Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) – It was noted that the Airport used JetA1 biofuel

Following discussion, it was formally proposed that a Task and Finish Group should be set up to look closer at the economical and environmental impacts of the Airport on the Borough. It was suggested that this should be picked up at the next Progress Group meeting, at which a way forward could be determined.

The Chairman thanked Mr Ward for his presentation and asked Mr Geere and Mr Sanderson to make their presentation.

As a flagship employer in the Borough, it was noted that the Airport was committed to driving prosperity in the region, by doing so, Rushmoor had recorded a 6% increase in annual GDP growth compared to a national average of 1.8%. It was also noted that employment during the pandemic had remained resilient, resulting in no redundancies and all furloughed monies being paid back to the government. In

addition, continued investment in the Airport could result in more jobs and further growth.

It was noted that over the last 10 years the Farnborough Airport Community Environment Fund had awarded over £700k in grants to enhance community areas and facilities within a 5km radius of the Airport. Following a discussion, it was requested that the terms of reference for the fund should be reviewed, possibly to open the funding pot to all Wards in the Borough.

It was noted that a significant number of employees lived within a 10 mile radius of the Airport and in 2022 the Airport was certified with 'Great Place to Work' – the global authority on workplace culture. It was advised that, where possible, local recruitment was preferential and recently a former Farnborough Sixth Form student had been recruited as an apprentice; this tied into a commitment to attract and inspire talent from all backgrounds in the Borough.

It was noted that there was a dedicated sustainability team at the Airport who managed the impact of noise, air quality, carbon emissions, waste recycling, biodiversity and wildlife management through an ISO 14001 certified system. It was advised that in 2022, having measured the carbon footprint, the Airport had launched a Net Zero Roadmap to Net Zero by 2030 – the aim of which was to reduce emissions, within both direct and indirect control of the Airport, by 91% by 2030 or earlier. It was also noted that new ways to supply and create sustainable energy sources were being considered, from solar power to Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). Following an emissions reduction pathway would enable the Airport to reduce a wider scope of emissions, which included aircraft movements up to 3,000 feet, by more than 40% by 2035 or sooner.

The Chairman thanked Mr Geere and Mr Sanderson for their presentation and for taking the time to come and talk to the Committee.

## 25. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current Work Plan and was advise that the next meeting, scheduled for 30th March, 2023 would include a presentation on the management of damp and mould in the Local Housing Sector and the annual reports of the Council's Cabinet Champions.

It was noted that a combined letter, from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board, had been sent to Hampshire County Council regarding a range of highways issues that had been raised by Members. An update would be provided at the next Progress Group.

The meeting closed at 9.31 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)