

## QUESTIONS FROM THE LSACC FOLLOWING THE CEO REPORT COVERING THE PERIOD MAY, JUNE AND JULY 2020:

Cllr Daniel Cowan

1. “When can we expect a report on the overdue 2020 Noise Action Plan which will likely affect the number of properties that qualify for the 63dB noise insulation scheme and the 69dB compulsory offer scheme and is the airport company able to meet their financial obligations should the updated contours include a significant number of residential properties?”

Response from LSA: The latest Noise Action Plan was approved by DEFRA on 13/02/19 and is published on the LSA website <https://southendairport.com/corporate-and-community/noise#noise-action-plan>. Airport Noise Action Plans are reviewed every five years in accordance with DEFRA regulations, therefore the LSA plan is not overdue. The airport is required to produce noise contours every two years in accordance with the S106 which will show any properties that qualify for the 63dB noise insulation scheme and the 69dB compulsory offer scheme. The next set of contours required are for the 2020 summer period which has only just finished (15 June – 15 September). We would expect the contours to be completed within approximately two months of the end of the summer period and then they will be submitted to Southend Borough Council for approval before being published early next year. This is the usual timeframe for publication. Any new qualifying property owners will be contacted by the airport before general publication.

2. “When was the last time a mobile decibel reading point was utilised, where was it place, what were the findings and can we expect a mobile decibel reading point, as per the 3.8b of schedule 1 in the S106, to be placed at the flying club at the bottom of the gardens in Wells Avenue in the immediate future to address the concerns of residents regarding noise from, but not limited to, holding aircraft?”

Response from LSA: A comprehensive noise study was carried out by the flying club at the bottom of Wells Avenue. A full noise report was provided to Cllr Cowan and the residents at a meeting on 23/07/19.

3. “Where are residents able to submit complaints about fumes from aircraft and will this be made more easily accessible?”

Response from LSA: Aside from the specific noise complaints form, the airport also provides a general complaints form on the LSA website: <https://southendairport.com/contact-us/general-enquiry>.

4. “When will a dedicated, accessible, user-friendly, search indexed noise complaints page, such as those at Luton, Stansted, Gatwick and Heathrow be added to the website? What action has been taken to date on this issue?”

Response from LSA: Please refer to the minutes of 26 February 2020 ACC meeting and the CEO report emailed on 04/09/2020. Both documents provide updates on the purchase and installation of an online complaints system similar to that used by Gatwick Airport.

5. “What access do members of the public have to the ACC and will public attendance be considered for future ACC meetings in the spirit of transparency?”

Response from LSA: LSA is simply invited to the Consultative Committee meetings to provide updates and answer questions from members. Members of the public are represented by ACC members. The constitution of the ACC can be found <https://southendairport.com/corporate-and-community/noise#community-reporting> along with advice on how to raise questions to the committee.

6. "Complaints have risen exponentially since October 2019. This makes Southend airport the most complained about airport in the country (per 1000 passengers). What tangible actions are being taken to remedy this and what are the timeframes for implementation?"

Response from LSA: Noise complaints are discussed in detail at each ACC meeting. The ACC is regularly provided with comprehensive data and information relating to measures being implemented to reduce noise. Furthermore, this is also included in the airport's Annual Report which can be accessed online.

7. "Complaints reported to the ACC are often caveated with how many are from regular complainants. All complaints should be dealt with individually irrespective of their source or number and failure to do so is in contravention of 3.5 of Schedule 1 of the S106. Can we have a commitment that this will be the case moving forward?"

Response from LSA: The noise complaints handling service is approved by the ACC. Recent changes to the service due to the impact of Covid-19 were also approved by the ACC.

8. "Complaints registered outside of a perceived 'accurate timeframe' of the passing aircraft are discounted. As many complaints are about night flights disrupting sleep it is unrealistic to expect accurate time records. What will be done to ensure these complaints are not removed from the recorded figures?"

Response from LSA: At the February 2020 ACC meeting, Jo Marchetti explained that extra consideration was being given to night-time complaints and that any aircraft operation at least 30 minutes either side of a specific time was being allocated to the complaint, as it was understood that residents may not recall accurate times when woken from sleep - see minute item 11 (a).

9. "When will complaint investigations recommence with email or written reports to complainants?"

Response from LSA: See answer to Q4 above.

10. "What controls exist on the size, type, age and engine design of cargo flights, specifically those at night?"

Response from LSA: All aircraft are subject to vigorous and regular maintenance and safety inspections. Cargo aircraft are no different. The airport's night-time controls can be found: <https://southendairport.com/corporate-and-community/noise#night-flights>

11. "Why is it necessary to fly regularly at night when there is so little aviation, worldwide, during the day?"

Response from LSA: As it has been explained to the ACC previously, the logistics operation is part of a wider global network which operates 24/7.

12. "Given the lack of day flights, what guarantees can be offered to residents that night flights, especially cargo/ASL flights, will leave a minimum 6hr gap to help residents get some uninterrupted sleep?"

Response from LSA: Please refer to the Q&A's emailed to all ACC members on 03/07/20 which addressed this matter.

13. "The quiet grounds operation policy states that "aircraft should not be given clearance to start their engines until it is clear that take off can be achieved without delay". This is clearly not working as intended with aircraft regularly holding at C1, 40m from properties in Wells Avenue. Given the lack of air traffic there is no excuse for holding for any length of time at C1 so what firm commitment will be made that the holding aircraft are kept at C2?"

Response from LSA: The wording in the Quiet Ground Operation Policy states 'In general, aircraft engines shall be operated so as to minimise noise when on the ground. Wherever possible, aircraft should not be given clearance to start their engines until it is clear that take off can be achieved without delay'.

The airport has recently investigated allegations of aircraft holding on C1 for longer than 5 minutes. Through listening to the ATC recordings, it was evidenced that ATC instruction to 'hold' and then 'vacate' C1 was less than 5 minutes in each case.

14. "What is the current percentage of cargo ATMs of total ATMs and if this exceeds the 10% quota what action is being taken to address this such as seeking an amendment to the S106?"

Response from LSA: Please refer to the Quarterly S106 compliance emailed with the CEO report on 04/09/2020. Due to the unprecedented impact of Covid-19, passenger flights have been greatly reduced. The airport is monitoring the percentage closely and has already raised this matter with Southend Borough Council. It remains to be seen whether the 10% target is exceeded by February 2021 (end of the current reporting period).

15. "What studies or assessments were carried out on the impact to nearby residents prior to runway extension and repurposing Charlie Taxiway, and can we have copies of these?"

Response from LSA: All of the studies and assessments associated with the runway extension planning application can be found on the Southend Borough Council website planning applications portal - search for planning reference SOS/09/01960/FULM. The Charlie taxiway has not been re-purposed, it was re-surfaced.

# QUESTIONS FROM THE LSACC FOLLOWING THE CEO REPORT COVERING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL 2020:

## Cllr Mike Steptoe

1. "I read in the paper and on Facebook that the times of the night flights have changed. Can you confirm the situation please? As a member of the ACC I would of thought we would of received communication on this."

Response from LSA: The cargo destinations have changed as have the associated schedules and they are very likely to change again; it isn't clear why the ACC should be advised of scheduled changes within the established operating hours.

## Cllr Meg Davidson

2. "Would it be possible for members of the Consultative Committee to have an update from Glyn about the night-time cargo flights? I see from the reports in today's Southend Echo that Southend Airport "declined to comment".

Before I communicate with local residents, I want to be sure that I have totally accurate information. It would be really helpful to be given the details of the changes to the cargo flight timings that have been made and whether this is a temporary measure or a long-term arrangement."

Response from LSA: See above. The schedule changed in early June as the destinations changed. It is very likely it will change again. This is not unusual – passenger schedules also change. An over emphasis on any specific and detailed change is unhelpful as it risks raising an expectation that short term changes will be permanent, which is more than unlikely, or that the operation will be precisely and always to schedule, which is simply unrealistic.

## David Osborn

3. In Cargo News it states:

"Southend Airport in the UK has reduced the number of cargo flights it handles each night following a campaign from the local community concerned about noise levels.

Until now, the airport had been handling two freighter arrivals and one freighter departure each night, which were believed to be carried out on behalf of Amazon.

However, councillor Daniel Cowan said that after an agreement was reached between campaigners, the airport and its "logistics partner" would no longer fly between 12.30am and 06.30am.

"This is a real victory for all concerned as it supports the airport's commercial partnership whilst also offering a longer period of uninterrupted sleep for those residents who have long been disturbed," Cowan said.

"It is important to note that this is a voluntary agreement between the airport and their commercial partner and the Section 106 agreement has not been changed."

According to Flight Radar, an ASL Airlines Ireland B737-400 freighter has been making regular calls at Southend Airport over the past week, operating between the UK airport and Rome, Madrid and Milan.

The flights started on October 11 as part of a two-year contract and have been operating seven days per week. To cater for the cargo, an existing hangar has been converted for the new logistics operator on the north of the airfield.

When the deal was first announced, Stobart Group, which operates the airport, said: “Stobart Group, the aviation, energy and civil engineering group, is pleased to announce it has signed an agreement with a global logistics customer to provide facilities and expertise to support the import and export of goods at London Southend Airport.

“The initial two-year agreement will see Stobart Group provide runway access and import/export facilities by converting existing hangarage on the north side of the runway, away from the south side based commercial passenger operations.”

Reports suggest the parcels are taken from the airport to Amazon distribution hubs in Basildon and Tilbury.”

How true is this report? Especially the quote: “**However, councillor Daniel Cowan said that after an agreement was reached between campaigners, the airport and its “logistics partner” would no longer fly between 12.30am and 06.30am”** .

Response from LSA: It is in several important respects inaccurate.

First, Southend Airport cannot have “reduced the number of cargo flights it handles each night” for the simple reason that it does not schedule flights, airlines do. The schedule change made by the airline was for operational reasons, reflective of different destinations and evolving customer needs.

Whilst it is true that the airport has received representations from local councillors and MPs regarding night flights, and has listened carefully to them, any inference that, “following” means “because of” is inaccurate.

There is no agreement of any kind between anybody and the airport that the airport “would no longer fly between 12.30am and 06.30am.” and never has been. This is completely inaccurate. In fact, there has never been any suggestion that such an agreement would or could be reached. What the airport continues to agree is that it will abide by the terms of its s106 agreement, which permit 120 night movements per month. It is accurate that the current schedule is unlikely (operational problems causing additional or off scheduled movements aside) to see anything like that number but it is also accurate that the schedule is very likely to change again, always within what is permitted by the s106 agreement.