

London Southend Airport (LSA)

Meeting Notes from PRM Committee Meeting

6th October 2025 at 15.00 - 17:00

Airport Tour & Discussion – LSA terminal

Invited

PRM Chairs		
Older People's Community Mental Health, Dementia & Frailty	Spencer Dinnage Nancy Smith	Attended Attended
LSA		
Security Manager	Paul Moor	Attended
Airport Duty Manager	Richard Hodgson	
CSR Manager	Jo Marchetti	Attended
Airport Duty Manager	Leanne Dubovie	Attended
PRM representatives		
Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment (QTVI)	Beatrice Lordachi Lisa Curwood	Attended Attended
BSL Sign Language	Daniel Dominey	Apologies
Age Concern	Sarah Wilson	Attended
Dementia (early onset)	Clare Kelly – Peaceful Place	Apologies
Autism/ADHD (children)	Mikaela Clements – Little Heroes ASD	Attended
Autism (adult)	Dawn Avery – parent/author Keith Avery - parent Aston Avery – adult with autism	Attended Attended Attended
Mental Health	Sophie Cooper – SECE Mind	
Sunflower – Hidden Disabilities	Ruth Rabet	Apologies
Passenger – wheelchair user	Zec Richardson	Attended
Essex Therapy Dogs	Tina Jullings / Anne	Apologies
Airport Consultative Committee	Les Sawyer	Attended
Andrews Taxi	Tommy Watson	
CAA representative	Emily Kilby Andrea De Jesus (carer)	Attended Attended
easyJet Airline	Harvey Willis	Attended
Learning Disabilities	Joel Wall	Attended
RRAVS Voluntary services	Victoria Marzouki	Apologies
SAVS CEO	Anthony Quinn	Attended
CAVS	Tracy Harris	Attended
Carers First	Emma Summers	Attended
Age Concern	Sarah Wilson	Attended
Guide Dogs	Penny Heffren	Apologies

Welcome and introductions.

Following advice from the CAA, the role of PRM Committee Chair has been taken over by previous PRM Committee members Nancy Smith and Spencer Dinnage from Older People's Community Mental Health, Dementia & Frailty.

Jo Marchetti asked everyone to introduce themselves and explain what disability/community group they were representing.

Spencer thanked Jo for her past contributions to the PRM Committee.

Apologies noted above.

Terminal Tour

The tour began at the Taxi rank/bus shelter. Jo explained that the new Route 23A bus service began on 31/08/25 and now stopped opposite the passenger terminal. The new route connects Leigh on Sea (including the C2C rail station) to the Airport via Eastwood. Any PRM passengers disembarking can ask for assistance from the full-time staff in the taxi rank. The Airport will monitor usage of the bus to see if further PRM assistance measures are required as the passenger numbers grow.

Jo pointed out where the disabled bays were located in the short stay car park and explained the new pricing system. PRM passengers that require extra time (more than 5 mins) when being dropped off/picked up, may request extra time. Instructions can be found on the Assisted Travel page of the LSA website [Special Assistance - London Southend Airport](#).

Les Sawyer commented that the walking path from the taxi rank to the terminal was not covered and slower/PRM passengers may get wet in bad weather – other London Airports have a drop off that is under cover.

Jo reported that this had been a decision made by the bus company. Concern remained about the distance from the bus stop to the airport which is now much longer and the fact the new stop is not clearly for the airport.

Spencer Dinnage commented: X30 bus route. It was noted that the bus stop for the Airport had changed and this was not well sign-posted or announced by the bus company. Spencer had personally witnessed two older ladies miss the stop and supported them from Southend Victoria train station to return to the airport.

Sarah Wilson commented: The assistance button needs to be more prominent and nearer the parking machine as this is the first sign most people would go to.

Nancy Smith commented: Disabled Blue Badge sign is next to the bike shed and not visible from the pavement near the bus stop. Needs to be moved forward or to a more relevant spot.

The tour proceeded to check-in where Jo explained where passengers that pre-booked assistance should wait for an airport colleague. Jo recommended that passengers with sensory challenges/neurodivergent should wear the sunflower lanyards or use one of LSA's blue band to help staff identify them and provide extra time and assistance when going through security. The lanyards could also be worn by a family member.

Sarah Wilson & Nancy Smith: The lift – Not dementia friendly or helpful for people with visual and sensory problems or disturbances

Members were shown the check-in and security areas and invited for refreshments and discussion in the SkyLife lounge.

ACTION LOG



Southend Airport
PRM Action Log.xlsx

Airport Update provided by Jo Marchetti

- Eastern Airways launched a new route to Newquay on 3rd April.
- The latest stats from the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) have confirmed that London Southend is the UK's fastest growing airport. Passenger numbers have more than doubled in just four months – 106% increase between January and April 2025.
- We have added 12 holiday routes to this year schedule, operating across Europe and North Africa. Summer sun holidays to Marrakech, Tunisia. City breaks to Barcelona, Pisa.
- London Southend Airport has been selected as a finalist for UK & Ireland Airport of the Year at The Travel Industry Awards 2025
- According to aviation data experts RDC, London Southend has outpaced its fellow major airport competitors when it comes to extra seats on offer for summer 2025. *“The standout result was the 173% increase in seats delivered at London Southend this summer. To put that into perspective, of nearly one million extra seats added across all London airports between April and October 2025, almost half – around 460,000 – are at London Southend.”*
- In May, London Southend announced a new partnership with Green Motion: Car & Van Rental, marking the highly anticipated return of on-site [car rental services](#) at the airport.
- Green Motion offers a wide range of vehicle choices, including lower-emission internal combustion engine (ICE) models and hybrids, supporting both affordability and sustainability.
- New Route 23 bus service will commence 31/08/25 and will stop outside the passenger terminal.

PRM news

- The Airport hosted easyJet's *Fearless Flyer Experience* in May. The Experience Flight is exclusively for course participants (and their companions) and offers a one-hour round-trip as the final part of the Fearless Flyer course for nervous passengers.
- The number of Therapy Dogs has increased with the increase in flights. Great passenger feedback.
- In June The CAA's Airport Accessibility Performance Report 2024/25 is now available online [CAP 3117 Airport Accessibility Performance Report 2024/2025](#)
- This year, London Southend received a 'good' rating. Four airports (including London Southend) were downgraded from 'very good' to 'good' as their PRM Committee was chaired by an airport employee.
- Autism familiarisation visit 08/07 – feedback below:
 - *Thanks again for all your input today. It was exactly the positive experience we had hoped for, and it was amazing she made that recovery after such a rocky start. I'd like this to be shared anonymously wherever you may use it. Following our daughter becoming overwhelmed with anxiety on boarding a plane at London Southend Airport a year and a half ago, leading to us having to disembark before take-off, we had a private tour of the airport today, organised and personally conducted by Jo. We were hoping that a walk-through of security and the airside spaces might help lower her anxiety ahead of travelling from the airport in the future, and we found the tour to be a hugely positive experience. Jo was extremely patient and sensitive when our daughter became highly anxious after we arrived. She was able to reassure her and we were able to go on to successfully complete the whole tour, meeting the airport's friendly staff, and visiting the shops and cafe. Jo spent considerable time with us, getting to know my daughter, and making her feel 'seen'. As a result of this and armed with the advice Jo gave us about the special assistance available to customers with additional needs (including those, like my daughter, who are neurodivergent and have associated sensory sensitivities), we hope we will be able to make a successful trip from the airport in the near future.*
- In July, LSA attended the Aviation Accessibility Task Group meeting, hosted by the DfT. The Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish group report is available on the Gov.uk website [Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group report – GOV.UK](#)
Questions about independent Chairs for the PRM meeting were raised, as guidance was not clear.

- 21/07 Invitation to apply for the role of Independent Chair for the PRM Committee

The role of the PRM Committee Chair:

- Chair the meeting (2 meetings per year in March and October – currently one includes an airport tour, the other is a round table meeting, also available online)
- Set the meeting dates
- Set the agenda

Secretarial support will be provided by LSA:

- Distributing information on behalf of the Chair – if required
- Assist with setting dates – checking availability for airport tours and meeting rooms
- Taking notes

- 12/08 Appointed independent Chair to the PRM Committee

All PRM Committee members were invited to apply for the position of Chair. Applications were received from two members of which one pulled out.

The successful application from Nancy Smith and Spencer Dinnage who represent Older Adult Mental Health, Dementia & Frailty Service, South East Essex, Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) was supported by five other members with zero objections.

- LSA in contact with 'Ability Works' for a group of young adults with autism and learning disabilities to visit our People Team at the airport and learn about the roles on offer.
- Guide dog puppy visit planned for 13/10 and 03/11
- Autism familiarisation tour planned for Buddy on 28/10

Passenger numbers

- Flights have increased by over 100 per week
- Statistics from the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) confirmed that London Southend is the UK's fastest growing airport. Passenger numbers have more than doubled in the four months – January to April 2025.
- With 25 destinations (24 EZY & 1 Eastern Airways) now on offer passenger numbers continue to grow, peaking at 90k for the month of August, Sept slightly lower at 81k. 6 Winter routes include Finland, Berlin, Grenoble, Barcelona, Lanzarote and Austria.
- PRM pax numbers always increase at this time of year with the older community visiting warmer climates in Spain, a popular second home destination.
- Target for 750,000 pax Jan to Dec 2025.
- Next year expect to welcome around one million passengers. Our ambition and our plan is to build that towards 3 million passengers by 2030

Employment

- We have grown employee numbers by 52%.
- We have 17 roles live for our final numbers of new colleagues, mostly for Food & Beverage roles however also includes Technical Services, Ramp, ATC and Surface Access. - 7 roles live – ATC and the rest F&B - London Southend Airport
- Since January 2025 we have successfully onboarded 167 new colleagues across the business – mostly for Food & Beverage, Ramp, and Security. This has increased our headcount from 252 (Dec 24) to 374 (July 25) (excluding the hotel) – total headcount currently is 368
- 87% of airport colleagues currently live in an SS postcode area. – 86.96%

Community Impact

- The airport will continue to sponsor and support local events and good causes in 2025. Sponsorships for 2025:
 - Essex Cricket Club
 - World Cup-on-Sea charity Football match at SUFC

- Lazydays festival
 - LSA v RunFree charity Football match at SUFC
 - Strictly Air Ambulance – Essex & Hert Air Ambulance
 - Havens Hospice - Southend half marathon
 - Rochford Parish Council – Festive lights
 - SECE Mind – Mental Elf run.
- Head of Air Traffic Nicole Park and Jo Marchetti took part in a year 12 mock interview day at King Edmund School.
 - Jo Marchetti hosted a familiarisation tour for a mother and 10yo who was neurodivergent. The young girl had tried to take a flight in 2023 but were off-boarded the aircraft after she became extremely upset. The tour gave the girl a new positive experience and we hope they will be able to fly from LSA again soon.

Discussion:

- Les Sawyer – Reus airport. Long walk from aircraft to terminal. Harvey (EZY) said she would investigate this. It was a fairly new destination and there should be buses.
- Joel asked about the new biometrics system coming in for passports. Paul explained that on your first entry to another airport you would likely have your face scanned, fingerprints taken and details stored. New system is being rolled out gradually [EU Entry/Exit System – GOV.UK](#)
- Harvey (EZY) explained that EasyJet crews received autism training.
- Mikaela from Little Heroes asked about the possibility of tours for their families, Jo explained these are currently on an ad hoc basis and would be reviewed on individual request basis at present.
- The busier time of year for PRM passengers was discussed and it was agreed that May and September were particularly heavy months shouldering the summer period.

Feedback on terminal facilities

- Curtain in Quite Area too busy – would be better in plain material
- Hand dryer in disabled toilets too noisy for neurodivergent children. Could have hand towels as an option.
- Sanitary bins only in the baggage reclaim men’s toilets – should be in all men’s toilets in departures.

Passenger PRM feedback since last meeting (March 2025)

One PRM passenger complaints received.

Family traveling with 12yo child in a wheelchair. Child was wearing headphones and watching his iPad when arriving at security. Not wearing sunflower lanyard and no prior advice regarding sensory issues. LSA security assumed the child had physical disabilities and asked for the iPad and comfort items to be placed in the tray for screening. The mother removed the items, and the child quickly became distraught. Security staff tried to get the items back quickly, but the child had become aggressive and upset. The family were offered a private room as the child still needed to be security screen by hand as he wanted to remain in his wheelchair. The child was very overwhelmed and LSA offered to open a separate lane for him to be screened. Other LSA staff arrived with a sensory toy (from easyJet) and helped to calm the child enough to be hand searched. The family were then taken to the Quite Area of departures and offered some refreshments and time to decompress. The family then proceeded with their flight.

A few days later the family made a formal complaint about their treatment in the security area.

A full investigation was carried out, including a review of the CCTV. The results of the investigation were shared with the family, and no further communication was received.

Learnings – LSA to make a social media video to help advice neurodivergent passengers (or parents of) how best to prepare for security, encouraging them to wear the sunflower lanyard or make staff aware of sensory issues before arriving at the screening area.

AOB

Meeting ended at 17.30.