

LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT

Minutes of meeting No. 126 of the Consultative Committee held on Monday 2 March 2026 at 2pm at Southend Airport

Present: David Osborn	Chairman (part-time)
Murray Foster	Deputy Chairman (part-time)
Jude Winstanley	CEO, LSA
Caroline Fitzgerald	Customer Service & Commercial Director, LSA
Jo Marchetti	Corporate & Social Responsibility (CSR) Manager, LSA
Lana Balmer	Independent Representative
Mike Davies	Independent Representative
Ray Howard MBE	Independent Representative
Councillor Jill Reeves	Essex County Council
Councillor Mike Steptoe	Essex County Council
Zhanine Smith (Officer)	Essex County Council (arrived circa 2.20pm)
Councillor Phil Shaw	Rochford District Council
Councillor Ian Ward	Rochford District Council
Councillor Simon Wootton	Rochford District Council
Daniel Kudla (Officer)	Rochford District Council
Councillor Robert McMullan	Southend-on-Sea City Council
Councillor Jane Norman	Southend-on-Sea City Council
Marshall Mhiribidi (Officer)	Southend-on-Sea City Council (left circa 3.15pm)
Paul Wilkins	Rochford Board of Trade
Ron Smithson	Southend Flying Clubs
Emma McDonnell	Secretary (Minutes)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cowan, Scott, Huntman, Bown, Garston and Buck, together with Les Sawyer, Jacqui Dallimore, Mark Hayward, Leanda Cable and Heather Cheesbrough.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

- 2.1 Although absent, the Chairperson welcomed on to the committee, Mark Hayward, easyJet's new Base Captain.
- 2.2 The Chairperson advised that with effect from this meeting, he would be stepping down as Chair of the committee due to health reasons. David commented that he had been Vice-Chair for a number of years prior to becoming Chair in February 2020 which was the start of the pandemic. The Chairperson went on to comment that really positive things were coming forward with LSA, and he extended his gratitude to members for their support.
- 2.3 On behalf of the committee, R Howard thanked the Chairperson for all his efforts over the years which, at times, had been challenging, particularly during Covid. J Winstanley thanked the Chairperson on behalf of the Airport for his many years of support and presented a thank you gift and wished him well for the future. The entire committee wished the Chairperson well for the future and thanked him for all his endeavours.
- 2.4 The Chairperson advised that a new Chair needed to be appointed and proposed M Foster who had been Deputy Chair for approaching 5 years and was always supportive and that a degree of continuity was helpful in terms of committee membership. At this point M Foster left the discussions.

- 2.5 The meeting was unanimous in their decision to appoint M Foster as the new Chairperson with immediate effect.

Murray Foster in the chair

- 2.6 The Chairperson thanked his predecessor for his kind words and encouraged him to remain in contact as it was a pleasure to engage with him on Airport issues as he has a breadth of knowledge. The position of Deputy Chairperson will be recruited externally through advertising, and the candidate will be independent and non-political. A few members of the committee, including the Chairperson, will carry out the interviewing process, and will put forward their proposal at the next meeting. **Action: MF 22/06/26.**

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 The Chairperson reminded members to declare any conflicts of interest at each quarterly meeting. Councillor McMullan declared that he holds a PPL and is a member of Seawing Flying Club, and Lana Balmer is married to an easyJet pilot based at LSA.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2025

- 4.1 The minutes were formally adopted with no amendments and can be uploaded in final form on to the LSA website. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Local Charities

- 5.1 J Marchetti advised that it was agreed not to hold a presentation event, however, the monies collated from airlines for NPR breaches had been paid to the three charities (Little Heroes ASD Support, Equal People Performing Arts and Raw Learning CIC) and photographs and quotations of thanks will be included in the Airport's Annual Report. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.2 Equal People Performing Arts is offering ACC members an invite to their next performance – the show is called 'Entertain You' and the performances are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday 8 April - matinee 2.30pm, evening 7.30pm

Thursday 9 April - matinee 2.30pm, evening 7.30pm

<https://www.chelmsfordtheatre.co.uk/event/mushroom-theatre-entertain-you#>

- 5.3 E McDonnell to send the information on to members via separate email. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.4 L Sawyer reported that he recently paid £15.50 for parking at the Airport, and was reimbursed £8 as only the £7 fee was applicable – he therefore wanted to know where the remaining 50p went. C Fitzgerald advised that this had been investigated – it was a single anomaly and was resolved at the time. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.5 In relation to the Airport carrying out a post-travel questionnaire via email, similar to easyJet, asking passengers questions such as "How did you get to the airport?", J Marchetti commented that to contact passengers directly post-flight, the Airport would need access to the passenger list (arrivals contact information) from easyJet which would breach GDPR regulation. LSA will therefore be carrying out the 'in-person' passenger survey (to run over a period of weeks and a cross-section) during the summer which will also be able to identify those passengers using the new 23A bus. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**

- 5.6 Cllr McMullan to provide Director of People at LSA with contact details in relation to potentially helping young adults who leave care with future employment opportunities at the Airport. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.7 Z Smith explained that she recently met with Stansted Airport College which offers young adults a unique opportunity to get onto the first rung of the career ladder within the aviation industry. The Stansted Airport Employment and Skills Academy offers a one-stop-shop for anyone interested in finding out about on-site vacancies. In addition, tailored aviation training programmes and apprenticeship schemes provide job seekers with the opportunity to effectively learn and gain the necessary skills to enable them to secure employment with one of more than 200 on-site employers. Z Smith to pass on relevant contact details to LSA as this could be mutually beneficial. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.8 Councillor Ward and Z Smith to liaise separately in relation to 1476 squadron (cadets) and apprenticeship schemes. **Cllr Ward and Z Smith to note.**
- 5.9 Details regarding Southend Boys and Girls Choir travelling to Barcelona from LSA in June/July had been passed to the Jet Centre in relation to a space for parents to see their children off. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**
- 5.10 Z Smith confirmed contact details had been passed on to J Marchetti in relation to any unwanted IT equipment as Essex County Council is providing a service to disadvantaged children. **Actioned – remove from minutes.**

6. CONCERNS ABOUT SOUTHEND AIRPORT PICK-UP/DROP-OFF (PUDO) CHARGES

- 6.1 For efficiency, the Chairperson moved this item forward under AOB. The Chairperson explained emails had been received from members regarding this topic and invited the forum for comments/observations/feedback.
- 6.2 As of March 2026, London Southend Airport charges £8 for up to 10 minutes in the Express Pick-up and Drop-off lane directly opposite the terminal. This barrierless service requires payment online within 24 hours of exit.
- 6.3 Councillor Steptoe reported that following the public announcement of the Express lane, there are ongoing resident concerns that the £8 charge is excessive for 10 minutes with the worry that it will increase enforcement issues in the nearby retail park, and cause congestion on the access road and roundabout. Members of the public are already using the retail park and McDonald's for drop-offs/collection, with concerns this will extend to surrounding roads in Rochford and Southend, and the effect it will have on local taxi drivers as the charge will inevitably be passed on to the customer.
- 6.4 With LSA looking to increase throughput of passengers, Councillor Steptoe stated that to encourage people to use the 'Express PUDO' and thereby relieve pressure on the retail park and surrounding area, the cost for such a short space of time should be less.

- 6.5 Councillor Wootton said residents are frustrated by what they see as an excessive charge, disproportionate to the cost of providing the service. While acknowledging it is a commercial decision and not unique to airports, he noted customers have little choice but to pay. As a strong supporter of the Airport and its benefits, he emphasised the need for community responsibility towards residents in Southend and Rochford. He asked what consultation was undertaken with residents before introducing the charge and whether LSA would consider reducing it to discourage parking in local streets and retail areas. He also suggested a bus interchange at the Airport as part of a more sustainable approach.
- 6.6 Councillor Ward proposed a drop-off grace period as a more welcoming and proactive approach. He argued the charge is counterproductive, risks reputational damage, and gives the impression of prioritising revenue over service quality.
- 6.7 L Balmer was advised that the PUDO charges had been in place for a year, with the 'Express' lane introduced only this month. She wanted to understand how much LSA's PUDO was generating in terms of revenue. Other airports' PUDO charges are as follows:
- London City Airport: £8 (5 mins)
 - Gatwick Airport: £10 (10 mins)
 - Bristol Airport: £8.50 (10 mins)
 - Heathrow Airport: £7 (10 mins)
 - Luton Airport: £7 (10 mins)
 - Stansted Airport: £7 (15 mins).
 - Southampton: £7 (20 mins).
 - Leeds Bradford: £8 (announced for March 2026)
- 6.8 L Balmer said a balance must be struck to avoid alienating local residents who use the Airport.
- 6.9 J Winstanley thanked members for their comments, stressing the Airport's commitment to the community despite challenges such as noise and pollution etc. Until around nine months ago, LSA offered free 15 min pick-up/drop-off (PUDO) in Long Stay 3 (LS3) alongside a paid PUDO offering in the Short Stay car park opposite the terminal. However, the Airport is forecast to make a further £4.5 million loss this year. The Airport supports almost 400 staff and a much wider local economy, with passenger numbers rising, alongside increased business rates and minimum wage costs, he must ensure the Airport remains financially viable, hence the decision to remove the free PUDO option in LS3 based on passenger and car parking data. When comparing with other airports, LSA does not have off-site parking options and invested heavily in a rail station just 100 paces from the passenger terminal.
- 6.10 J Winstanley said maintaining free parking was simply no longer sustainable. While the decision wouldn't be popular, the vast majority of the nearly one million passengers annually report a positive experience, with LSA benchmarking strongly across the easyJet network for customer satisfaction. Parking revenue is modest but contributes to sustainability. Over the past six months, he has reviewed funding models to secure the Airport's future. Data indicates the PUDO fee is meeting its objectives, though he acknowledged it may be expensive for some. He argued the charge is proportionate in the context of holiday travel and noted passengers have alternative transport options, including rail and bus links.
- 6.11 Regarding displacement parking in nearby streets and the retail park, J Winstanley commented it is for the retail park and local authorities to determine any additional restrictions. Councillor Norman responded that the issue is impacting residents and urged the Airport to listen. J Winstanley confirmed he was present to hear and respond to concerns.

- 6.12 Councillor Steptoe advised that Rochford District Council has two traffic wardens for the area and to ask residents to pay for parking permits would be unacceptable.
- 6.13 P Wilkins noted that long-term parking in local streets by passengers avoiding fees is an ongoing issue, exacerbated by the Airport's growing popularity. He stressed this is separate from the PUDO fee, which is unlikely to have impacted longer term parking on residential roads.
- 6.14 J Winstanley acknowledged the PUDO fee is emotive and that some are unhappy, but said this does not make the Airport responsible for wider parking issues. He valued the constructive discussion, confirmed feedback would be taken seriously, and will continue engaging with bus operators and councils. Ensuring the Airport's viability remains paramount, with PUDO fees a small part of the overall model.
- 6.15 J Marchetti added that the Airport engages regularly with bus operators through the Airport Transport Forum, with dedicated routes dependent on passenger demand. The X30 pulled out of the Airport during the pandemic and now stops on Eastwoodbury Crescent on the Airport boundary. A return to the Airport forecourt would be decided by the operator.
- 6.16 R Smithson suggested there may be merit in setting a more modest fee to differentiate the Airport.
- 6.17 Z Smith highlighted the Transport Liaison Group as a forum for ongoing discussion and reminded members of officer attendance to address local concerns. She noted some communities offer discounted rail commuter parking to manage 'fly parking.'
- 6.18 Councillor Steptoe asked if anything could be done for taxi drivers who are potentially losing business due to the fee. C Fitzgerald commented that Andrews and AC (LSA's official taxi service providers) receive a discounted rate in return for a revenue share. Independent taxi drivers can apply to Andrews/AC to receive this discount. The PUDO fee is passed to passengers who should be made aware of the additional fee at the point of booking.
- 6.19 C Fitzgerald confirmed that passengers with reduced mobility (PRM) can use the intercom at car park entry/exit points if extra time is required and would not be charged additional fees in such circumstances.
- 6.20 C Fitzgerald to review LSA's website to ensure all parking fees are clear and there is no ambiguity.
Action: CF 23/03/26.
- 6.21 J Marchetti advised that the Airport works closely with the LSA PRM Committee and will look to see if there are any improvements to be made in this respect. PRM access is regularly discussed with the Committee, who have not raised concerns about the process to ask for extra time for the same minimum charge.
- 6.22 Councillors Steptoe, Wootton and Ward thanked the Airport for listening. Councillor Wootton noted that 'one size does not fit all' and described the discussion as positive.
- 6.23 J Winstanley said managing change for an expected 930,000 passengers this year will be challenging, and that what worked previously may no longer be suitable. He welcomed the feedback as part of the Airport's continued development.
- 6.24 The Chairperson concluded that the discussion had been constructive.
- 6.25 Councillor Ward to speak separately with J Winstanley in relation to freight operations. **Cllr Ward to note.**

7. FASI ACP (FUTURE AIRSPACE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION) (AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL)

- 7.1 On behalf of S Petrie, E McDonnell provided the following update: the Airport will continue to work with UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) to deliver the Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) for LSA. At this point in time, UKADS is still being finalised and LSA is waiting to be onboarded and then it will continue with the project. S Petrie to provide update at the June meeting if appropriate.
- 7.2 R Howard reiterated that he has lived on the west side of Canvey Island his entire life and, as someone with a strong interest in aviation, is very familiar with the traditional flight routes and paths over the area. He commented that since the Future Airspace Strategy, aircraft now appear to be approaching from all directions, which he finds concerning.
- 7.3 **Post meeting update from S Petrie to R Howard:** *There haven't been any changes to the way aircraft route into and out of Southend Airport. Our aircraft continue to take off following Noise Abatement Procedures (climbing straight ahead for 2.5nm / 1500ft before turning) and Rules of the Air and inbounds from the South West are established on final approach around 8nm from the airfield. All under the control of Southend ATC. Aircraft operating into London City and Biggin Hill will also be seen overhead Southend, as well as using the point merge facility, which routes arriving aircraft down the River Thames. When flying overhead Southend and routing over Canvey, the aircraft are under control of NATS and will be 4000ft or higher. Speaking to our ATC team this afternoon, they have anecdotally confirmed that they have noticed a slight increase in aircraft routing overhead Southend in the last few weeks but have said there is no specific reason they are aware of and that aircraft are just being tactically vectored onto their final approach, as permitted under the existing airspace structure. In summary, all of the aircraft that you see operating into either LSA, London City or Biggin Hill are all under air traffic control and are adequately separated either laterally or vertically. I hope this gives you the reassurance that you need."*

8. CEO REPORT

- 8.1 The Committee reviewed the report covering the period November 2025 to January 2026. This report is published separately on the LSA website and should be read in conjunction with comments/questions below. No questions were submitted in advance of the meeting from members.
- 8.2 The Chairperson commented that it would be taken as 'read' and J Winstanley summarised some principal points:
- 720,000 passengers (Jan-Dec 2025) – likely to grow another 30% this year
 - Very happy with customer satisfaction scores
 - Jet centre revenue is up significantly
 - Safety performance improved
 - Recruiting for the summer
 - Overall the Airport is on track, growing fast, employing more people and safer
- 8.3 Regarding the S106 Operational Review, following consultation with the ACC and CNF, the final draft plans were approved without amendment by SCC's Development Control Committee last week. Final sign-off is awaited, after which LSA can formally adopt the updated plans.

8.4 The following questions/comments were raised during the meeting:

8.4.1 In relation to the Middle East conflict, J Winstanley advised there is currently no significant operational risk and potentially an uplift in bookings, although fuel prices are expected to rise.

8.4.2 Following a review of 12 applications for a new charity partner, the top five were put to a staff vote. Havens Hospice was selected as the Airport's new charity partner for the next two years.

8.4.3 There were only two, not three, non-compliant flights in relation to NPR breaches for the Q4 period, (one was found to be under the 5700kg threshold for the rule); both involved visiting, non-based aircraft. The CEO report will be updated accordingly.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 The Chairperson advised that future meetings will aim to include keynote speakers from organisations closely linked to the Airport, with Essex Police scheduled to attend the June forum.

The following meeting dates for 2026, starting at 14:00 at the Holiday Inn Hotel, to be noted in members' diaries:

Monday 22 June

Monday 21 September (please remove 14 September from your diaries)

Monday 23 November

The meeting ended at 15:45

Signed: _____ Date: _____