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LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Friday, 26 November 2021

PRESENT:

Bob Swann, Chair

Councillor Caroline Ashton, Frodsham Council

Councillor Tony Brennan, Knowsley Council

Councillor Helen Collinson, Wirral Council (reserve)

Norman Elias, Passenger Rep

Councillor Liz Grey, Wirral Council

Councillor Michael Green, Lancashire Council

Keith Levin, LAGAUA

Jordi Morell, Independent Passenger Rep

Alex Naughton, Combined Authority

Steve Pearse, Friends of Liverpool Airport

Councillor Michael Roche, Sefton Council

Councillor Malcolm Spargo, Hale Council

Conor Williams, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce

Councillor Bill Woolfall, Halton Council

Liverpool Airport

Andrew Dutton, Head of Environment

Christina Smith, Head of Customer Services

Robin Tudor, Public Relations Manager

Secretariat

Mike Jones, Secretary

41 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:

Michell Cameron Liverpool Chamber (Conor Williams in attendance as Deputy);

Councillor Chris Ellams, Helsby Council;

Councillor Yvonne Graves, Halewood (Andrew Hesford too);

Therese Irving, Wirral Older Pensions Parliament (WOPP);

Julie Kay, WOPP;

Simon Osborne, National Trust;

Councillor Steve Parish, Warrington Council;

Anthony Rice, Disabled Persons rep;

Councillor Lynn Riley, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

42 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of personal interests.

43 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair announced that he and the Secretary had attended the annual conference of Airport Consultative Committees, UKACCS, which had been held online on 18 and 19 November. Minutes from the meeting would be presented to the next meeting for noting.

He had noted that the Department for Transport guidelines to Consultative Committees were being reviewed, and in advance of that the UKACCS organisation would conduct a survey, planned for December 2021 to January 2022, about thoughts for changes to guidelines and the work of the Committees. Since this was before our next meeting it would be circulated and comments collated by the Secretary for our response.

44 **MINUTES**

Resolved: That

(1) the minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 17 September 2021 be agreed; and

(2) the minutes of the Noise Monitoring Sub-Committee held on 22 October 2021 be received.

45 **MEMBERSHIP**

The Secretary announced two membership issues to note:

- Halebank Council had decided not to appoint anyone to the Consultative Committee
- Liverpool City Council had not made any appointments to outside bodies since lockdown had begun and following one resignation as a Councillor and two Councillors losing their seat, all three representatives were no longer able to represent the Council. As a result, there was no representatives of Liverpool Council on either the Consultative Committee or the Noise Monitoring Sub-Committee.

Members expressed concern at the lack of representation from Liverpool Council as it was the largest Council and a shareholder in the Airport and asked that a reply be sent requesting an appointment.

46 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present and no questions had been submitted in advance.

47 **QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT**

Robin Tudor talked through the Airport's quarterly report, which was for two months (September and October) rather than the usual three as the previous report was extended to include the main Summer period. The most significant change had been the easing of travel restrictions which had included the

traffic light system of countries to which travel was allowed and compulsory, and expensive, multiple PCR testing. Most industries had restrictions fully lifted in July but aviation was still effectively locked down until October. September was 60% down on passenger numbers from 2019 and October was 53% down. The next review of restrictions was early in 2022 and lobbying for easing continued.

Airlines continued to develop new routes, whilst popular ones included Malaga, Alicante and Palma. Belfast/Dublin/Derry were likely to remain strong in Winter as Mediterranean holiday destinations declined. For freight, it was hoped that the granting of Freeport status in the Liverpool City Region would boost freight travel in the longer term.

The flexi furlough scheme had ended and staff had returned to work with a welcome barbecue, and most people were back in the office. Most retail venues had reopened although there were still staffing issues with people dropping off with Covid reducing opening hours.

The Government had reduced Air Passenger Duty for domestic flights which would encourage airlines to look at domestic flights as it was a deterrent but it would not change until April 2023 and the Airport welcomed lobbying from constituent authorities to reduce it.

When asked if the Airport was consulted on new routes, Robin replied that the airport worked closely with all airlines to explore new route opportunities with some suggested by the airport based upon local research/market demand and others by the airlines for operational reasons and with a wider understanding of European markets.

Resolved – that the quarterly report for September and October 2021 be received.

48 **CUSTOMER SERVICES UPDATE**

Christina Smith provided details from Customer Services for the July to September 2021 period. The number of contacts remained similar to 2019 despite lower passenger numbers. Uncertainty over the travel rules maintained the contact numbers as there had been 50 rule changes since lockdown began in March 2020. Changes in rules and resulting changes in flights and car parking was the overriding issue. Car parking was generally about 45% of contacts, 35% was connected with airlines or documentation, some of which concerned potential future changes which could not be answered.

The proportion of passengers requiring assistance remained high, the second highest in the UK, and the Accessibility Forum had met.

The Airport website was to be relaunched and was being purged of outdated pages. There was no telephone contact number on there as it was proving difficult to secure staff resources for sufficient time to allow it to be answered.

Resolved – that the customer services update for July to September 2021 be noted.

49 **AIRSPACE CHANGE PROCESS**

Andrew Dutton updated the Committee on the airspace change process. It remained paused whilst the Airspace Change Organising Group worked to get other Airports up to the same stage.

50 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to report.

51 **MEMBERS ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION**

There were no other declared issues for discussion which had not been noted elsewhere in the minutes.

52 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

53 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting was the annual general meeting on 10.30 am on Friday 18 February 2022.