
SUBJECT:	Aviation Update Report
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team - Director of Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils responded to the Government's consultation on the Draft Aviation Policy Framework in October 2012. This is a follow-up report outlining what has occurred since then for information purposes only.

2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1. The future of aviation in the South East could have an impact on the health and well-being of residents by affecting air quality, levels of noise pollution and the flora and fauna of the District. This could have a direct impact on the Council's corporate aim of delivering Health and Wellbeing.
- 2.2. The Government has stated that Councils must safeguard land which may be needed to develop infrastructure for airports, including that needed for surface transportation. This has a direct impact on the local plan and therefore the following corporate aims: a Thriving Economy and Sustainable Environment and indirect impacts on both Health and Wellbeing and Cohesive and Strong Communities.

3. Background

- 3.1. One of the Government's primary objectives is to achieve long term growth, with the aviation sector being seen as a valued contributor to this aim. The Government supports the growth of the aviation sector within a framework which maintains a balance between the benefits of aviation and its costs, in particular climate change and noise.
 - 3.2. Following consultation on the Draft Aviation Policy Framework, a final Framework was published in March 2013. This update briefly outlines the changes made to the Framework following consultation in section 4 below.
 - 3.3. The Government set up an Airports Commission in autumn 2012, chaired by Sir Howard Davies. This Commission has been tasked with submitting a report to the government by the end of 2013, identifying and recommending options for maintaining the UK's status as an international hub for aviation and immediate actions to improve the use of existing runway capacity in the next 5 years. A final report is to be submitted to the government by summer 2015 assessing the environmental, economic and social costs and benefits of various solutions to increase airport capacity.
 - 3.4. Recognising that proposals to expand aviation capacity in the South East will not be published until after the next general election in 2015, the Parliamentary Select Committee on Transport conducted their own inquiry to examine the Government's aviation strategy. This inquiry focused on aviation capacity in the UK, and the report was published on 28th May 2013 and 3rd June 2013. It was considered by the Department of Transport on behalf of the Government and responded to via a report published on 22nd July 2013. Highlights are included within this update in section 5 below.
 - 3.5. Following publication of the Select Committee for Transport's report, interested parties published their own views for expansion of air capacity, with the Mayor of London's "Why the UK needs a new hub airport" booklet championing a new hub to the east of London and
-

London Heathrow Airport publishing “A new approach”, outlining plans for a fourth runway in addition to the proposed third runway.

4. Aviation Policy Framework update.

- 4.1 The Aviation Framework response was sent in October 2012 by both Chiltern and South Bucks Councils. In March 2013, the Government published a report summarising the changes to the Framework following consultation together with the final Framework, which supports the HS2 link to Heathrow. The main areas of change to the Policy are outlined below.
 - 4.2 The executive summary now refers to the Airports Commission, outlining how the Commission will interact with the Framework.
 - 4.3 The evidence in support of the growth of aviation was enhanced following consultation response information.
 - 4.4 Fifth freedom rights (the ability to pick up passengers in a country other than the airline’s host country and carry them to a third country) and unilateral access to UK airports for bilateral partners has also been confirmed. The Council’s response warned against fifth freedom rights as they could have the effect of introducing older, noisier and more polluting aircraft, for instance by increasing the proportion of African and South American owned aircraft (which tend to be older aircraft types) calling into the UK on their way to a third country. Additionally, Luton currently has no significant controls over night movements. Therefore if the fifth freedom rights are put into play, then there is significant potential for noisier, heavier, less efficient aircraft at Luton with no control on their operating schedule.
 - 4.5 The Framework includes reference to rail links, particularly the new link between the Great Western Main Line to Heathrow and support in principle for the High Speed Rail Heathrow spur.
 - 4.6 All comments contained in the consultation relating to expansion of capacity have been referred to the Airports Commission.
 - 4.7 Climate Change impacts remain similar to the original draft, with added information on what airports are doing to mitigate the impact of climate change, including a new biofuel plant at Heathrow by 2015. Since then, there have been two developments: the European Commission has proposed a “freeze” on international emissions for one year, emissions targets will only apply to intra-European flights during that time, to allow more time for an international deal on emissions to be made; the Government has deferred its decision on whether or not to include aviation emissions in national carbon emissions until 2016.
 - 4.8 It was noted that it is not possible to tax aviation fuel due to international obligations, including Air Service Agreements with over 150 different countries and the 1944 Chicago Convention.
 - 4.9 The chapter on noise and other local environment impacts has been simplified and shortened. It confirms existing noise regulations. There was no consensus on the average daytime noise levels with local airports and businesses supporting the status quo and local authorities and environmental groups supporting the lowering of this level. The final Policy confirms existing levels but calls for better monitoring so that trends can be assessed. Further work is to be carried out in this area, either by the Department for Transport, its Aircraft Noise Management Advisory Committee, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) or the Airports Commission.
 - 4.10 The Framework calls for airport compensation schemes which have been in place for some years to be revisited, to ensure they remain reasonable and proportionate.
-

- 4.11 There has been no change to general aviation and helicopter movements, and none towards the regulation of environmental impacts.
- 4.12 Chapter six, relating to planning, has been clarified as some responses suggested that it could include more information on what elements of aviation and planning policy are reserved or devolved across the UK. There is also a more explicit reference to the status of the Aviation Policy Framework in the planning system, as some consultation responses suggested that this was not clear.

5. Transport Select Committee Aviation Strategy report and Department of Transport's response - highlights.

- 5.1 Both the Select Committee and the Government agree that growth in demand for air travel is "inevitable". The Select Committee wish to bring forward a decision on increasing air capacity, the Government believes this needs careful consideration hence the establishment of an independent Airports Commission.

- 5.2 The Select Committee recommend reductions in emissions via less stacking of aircraft and "cleaner" ground transportation. The Government say that stacking is being looked at by National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and will be reviewed by the Airports Commission, whilst other emission levels comply with European Union regulations.

The implication of changes to stacking remains critical to both Chiltern and South Bucks and therefore the Councils will monitor developments closely.

- 5.3 The Committee recommend against a new hub airport to the east of London and a split hub airport, proposing instead that Gatwick have a second runway and Heathrow have 2 further runways. The Government's response is that it does not wish to pre-empt the work of the Airports commission, which is looking at the long term future of air capacity, due to be published after the next general election on 2015.

- 5.4 The Committee recommended that aircraft noise be reduce through development of quieter aircraft and taking out older, noisier aircraft earlier. The Government response was that an agreement in February 2013 means that all aircraft certificated after 30th December 2017 must meet a new standard for noise, this together with the Aviation Policy Framework's proposal that airports should consider using differential landing charges to incentivise quieter aircraft. The Department for Transport has asked the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to investigate the use of these charges and the CAA will be publishing their findings later this year.

- 5.5 The Select Committee recommend that the Government develop a coherent strategy to improve road and rail access to the UK's major airports. As part of this, an assessment should be made of the surface access requirements from the growth of aviation, and in particular, the changes to surface access infrastructure that will be necessary if Heathrow expands. Also, the Select Committee recommended that Heathrow be allowed to expand, including ensuring that the High Speed 2 rail network serves Heathrow. The Government's response was to defer this until after the Airports Commission reports in 2015.

- 5.6 It is recommend that the Civil Aviation Authority immediately review existing flight paths and landing angles to reduce noise pollution, especially over London.

Chiltern and South Bucks Councils will therefore continue to monitor and respond to both the Future Airspace Strategy development and London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP).

6. Resources, Risk and Other Implications

Financial	- there could be financial implications if it is decided to lobby the Airports Commission.
Legal	- the Aviation Policy Framework places a duty onto planning authorities to safeguard land required for future airport expansion, including surface links. With so much uncertainty around rail links to Heathrow and the possible expansion of Heathrow and Luton airports, it is unclear as to the extent of this duty and how it can be executed.
Risks	- there is a risk that the Government's Aviation and Airports Policy will threaten the Councils' objective of delivering a sustainable environment. Should Heathrow expansion go ahead it increases the likelihood of the Heathrow link to the High Speed 2 railway being built.
Equalities	- the impact on residents is likely to affect everyone without targeting any particular group.
Environment and Health implications	- the Government's Aviation and Airports Policy could increase noise and air pollution, which may adversely impact on the environment and health of SBDC's residents.

7. Summary

7.1. Policy Advisory Group members to note this report.

Officer Contact:	Laura Campbell, SBDC Policy Officer, 01895 837236 Ben Coakley, CDC Principal Strategic Environment Officer, extension 01494 732060
Background Papers:	Aviation Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aviation-policy-framework Parliamentary Transport Committee report and Department for Transport response: http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/aviation/ Airports Commission web site: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission/about