

North Yorkshire County Council**Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee****16 April 2014****Covering report
NYCC representatives on Airport Consultative Committee Reports****1. Purpose of Report**

This report asks the Committee to:

- a. Note the information in the report;
- b. Consider the reports of the North Yorkshire County Council representatives on the Airport Consultative Committees attached as Annex 1.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives an annual report from the County Council's representatives on the Airport Consultative Committees of Durham Tees Valley Airport, Leeds Bradford Airport and Robin Hood Airport.
- 2.2 The NYCC representatives are as follows:
 - Durham and Tees Valley Airport - County Councillor David Jeffels
 - Leeds and Bradford Airport - County Councillor Cliff Trotter
 - Robin Hood Airport - County Councillor Chris Pearson
- 2.3 Attached at Annex 1 are the reports for 2013/14.

3. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- a. Note the information in this report;
- b. Note the information in the reports of the NYCC airport consultative committees attached at Annex 1.

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Date: 2 April 2014
Background documents: None
Annexes: Annex 1: Reports of the NYCC representatives on the Airport Consultative Committees

Durham Tees Valley Airport Consultative Committee

2013 has been one of mixed fortunes for the Airport, which despite its name is in fact little more than a good Yorkshire batman's belt with a bat, from the North Yorkshire boundary.

In 2012 there were 166,251 passengers and 17,398 aircraft movements¹ (2013 figures were not available at the time of going to print.)

Undoubtedly the airport does suffer from its Big Brother neighbour, Newcastle but after months of doom and gloom, a draft Master Plan on its future has now been produced which spells out a more encouraging future.

I have attended all but one of the Consultative Committee's meetings and as such been able to make a contribution to the debates.

I pointed out at the last meeting that the Airport is quicker for me to reach (1.5 hours) than Leeds-Bradford Airport at two hours plus, which underlines its potential role as North Yorkshire's airport for those living in the northern and eastern parts of the county. I suggested that a campaign should be mounted to target the large number of people in its catchment area which may persuade more airlines to use the airport. Unlike Newcastle's it is easily reached with its close proximity to the A1, A19, A66 etc.

Underlining the need for more use-age to be made of the airport has come from latest figures which show it was £3.6 million in the red in the last financial year (Leeds Bradford was said to be double that figure).

Bad weather and a slow recovery in the UK economy were blamed for a 12 per cent drop in passenger number last year from 192,488 to 168,756. A decline in the domestic market triggered by the introduction of Air Passenger Duty was also cited.

The Master Plan has apparently been well received. The current international links are highly valued and well used by the business community, especially the Amsterdam service. There was also support for future expansion of the range of services and routes offered.

The long term plans envisages housing development of some 400 homes as an enabling development to facilitate investment in the aviation facilities but there was divided opinion in the public responses to this proposal. The concerns included how the proceeds of housing development would be invested in the airport and that pressure would be put on local infrastructure such as schools. There is potential for job creation at the airport according to the consultants who produced the Master Plan.

¹ Sources: UK AIP at NATS/Statistics from the UK Civil Aviation Authority

More than 2500 people signed a petition early this year calling on the Government to safeguard the Airport, urging that more flights should be diverted to Teesside and that the airport should offer more destinations, as an alternative to Newcastle Airport.

I have asked Robert Goodwill, the Transport Minister and MP for Scarborough and Whitby to visit the management of the Peel Group who owns the airport to discuss its future and how the Government might help, and this was appreciated by the management. At the time of writing this report I have not had a reply from Mr Goodwill. However with the potential development of the big potash mine near Whitby and the 2500 wind turbine farm 100 miles off the Whitby coastline, there could be some potential business for the airport. It is recognised that small airports such as Durham Tees Valley face an uphill battle, especially with it losing a number of its carriers and routes in recent years, due it is said to the rising cost of aviation fuel and an increase in tax on tickets.

However, hopefully its fortunes will turn round in the next few years because the airport does, believe the Peel Group, have a future which could be of benefit to North Yorkshire's economy as well as that of County Durham and the Tees Valley.

David Jeffels
NYCC representative

Robin Hood Doncaster Sheffield Airport Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee meets at Robin Hood Airport on a quarterly basis. The committee is comprised of airport representatives; the local MP; the Mayor of Doncaster; District, Borough and County Councillors; Town and Parish Councillors, plus an *ex officio* member who chairs the meetings.

Besides the normal welcome, minutes and matters arising the committee receives the airport director's verbal report, the airport noise report, the marketing plan and various sub-committee reports.

Development plans

The Committee receives regular updates about the development plans of the airport including the airlines' operations.

Ownership of the airport changed back from Peel Airports to the Peel Group in December 2012. This meant that 2013 was essentially a year of re-establishing the Airport and establishing who the Airport should be serving.

As part of the ownership changes control of security at the airport returned back under the control of Robin Hood Airport. Security for Robin Hood Airport had previously been provided virtually via Liverpool John Lennon Airport. A new management structure has been introduced.

Airlines operating out of the airport include Ryanair, Thomas Cook, Thomson, Wizz Air, First Choice, Flybe and Links Air. The low cost airline market is the key target market the Airport recognises that it needs to deliver to. The Airport has suffered with the withdrawal of Easy Jet but is actively looking for another operator.

Robin Hood Airport provides flights to over 30 destinations around the world. Both Thomson and Thomas Cook have added extra capacity to their 2013 flying schedules and Wizz Air has signed a 5 year agreement with the Airport and introduced flights to the Latvian capital of Riga. Links Air has launched new routes to Belfast City and the Isle of Man.

Cargo is a growth area for the airport, with cargo traffic increasing by 8% in 2013. The airport's cargo terminal consists of 55,000 square foot of operational space and is equipped with a full range of equipment and facilities to handle a wide range of aircraft. Robin Hood Airport has one of the longest runways in the country and can easily accommodate heavy cargo aircraft to transport goods to and from local industries.

Work is now under way on the Finningley and Rossington Regeneration Route Scheme (FARRRS), a direct link road to the airport from Junction 3 of the M18. The road will reduce journey times for passenger and cargo operations from Sheffield by up to 15 minutes. This will bring an additional 0.5 million passengers within a 30 minute drive of the Airport and an additional 1 million within a 60 minute drive, taking the total catchment to over 6.2 million.

The Committee has been kept abreast of the Airport's marketing plans. Marketing is high on the agenda and the marketing budget has been increased by 50% for the 2014/15 financial year. A new airport website was launched at the end of March 2014. The airport is aware of the need to engage with the wider catchment area i.e. Sheffield and North Nottinghamshire to ensure that the public are aware of what the Airport has to offer – and members on the Consultative Committee are keen to ensure that this is the case.

The airport is anticipating passenger numbers for 2014 to be in the region of 720,000 (in 2013 passenger numbers were approaching 700,000 passengers, with over 11,000 aircraft movements¹). In the next five years the Airport wishes to double passenger numbers.

In conclusion, whilst activity at Robin Hood Airport in 2013 was below original expectations, it was not a bad year overall, with cargo operations increasing, access to the airport being improved, passenger numbers holding up and increased interest from new operators.

Noise monitoring

The Airport Consultative Committee has set up a sub-committee to get to grips with the technicalities of noise monitoring.

The number of noise-related complaints plateaued in 2013, although there was an increase in contacts with individuals (with a small number making multiple complaints).

Air Passenger Duty

The Committee continues to be concerned about the level of air passenger duty (APD) that passengers are forced to pay, which has risen by 470% since 2007. The Chancellor announced in his 2014 Budget that the Government would be reforming APD. Consequently from April 2015 all long-haul flights will carry the same, lower, band B tax. However the reductions planned for long-haul flights will not benefit those holidaymakers looking to take trips closer to home (journeys of up to 2,000 miles). Band B tax will also increase by a modest amount in two stages, the first rise being in April 2014 and the second rise being in April 2015.

The Consultative Committee has been keen to ensure that in partnership with other regional airports (UK Airports Group), Robin Hood Airport continues to lobby government about the importance that regional airports bring to the UK economy, and the negative impact that APD has for these airports.

County Councillor Chris Pearson NYCC representative

¹ Sources: UK AIP at NATS/Statistics from the UK Civil Aviation Authority

Leeds Bradford Airport Consultative Committee

The consultative committee meets at Leeds and Bradford Airport 4 times per year. There are 25 people sitting on the Committee representing their local area.

Business progress reports

The Committee receives regular updates about the development plans of the airport including the airlines' operations.

The Financial Year 2013/14 has been a record year for the Airport seeing it achieve 3.3 million passengers¹. It received the industry award of 'Best Airport under 6 million passengers' at the Airport Operators Association Awards in October 2013 and Winner of 'Best UK Airport' at the Travel Weekly Globe Awards in 2014.

Leeds Bradford currently provides flights to 29 international destinations, two worldwide connections (Amsterdam and London Heathrow) and six UK/Irish destinations. 11 airlines operate out of the airport.

Monarch opened an operation base at the airport in March 2013. Meanwhile, Thomas Cook Airlines closed its base there. Thomas Cook holidaymakers are being carried by Monarch. In 2013, BMI Regional also ceased all flights from Leeds/Bradford. The airport is looking for a replacement airline to operate the Brussels route.

Flights to Pakistan with PIA are extremely well utilised making it an important service for the region. British Airways passengers can connect through to Heathrow Terminal 5 from Leeds Bradford.

Jet2.com will operate a limited number of three and four night package breaks in 2014, and has also extended its range of flights to New York at certain points in the year. In late March 2014 Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) launched a direct service to Copenhagen. Ryanair will be introducing a three times weekly service to Girona Airport, Barcelona.

Aircraft noise and flight tracking

Another regular item on the agenda is about aircraft noise and flight tracking. The airport is investing in new noise and tracking keeping software with new noise monitors installed in late March 2014.

In the summer period (May to October 2012) only 4 aircraft had exceeded the night time target noise levels. The percentage of planes departing off-track was 11% on runway 32 and 3.3% on runway 14. Tracking complaints had however reduced. The total number of night time movements had increased by 108, but 39% of these were between 0600-0700hrs.

¹ Sources: UK AIP at NATS/Statistics from the UK Civil Aviation Authority

In the winter period (November 2012 to April 2013) there were 775 night time aircraft movements, representing an increase of 12% compared to the previous winter. However this was well below the 1200 permitted movements. Also 60% of the total related to flights between 0600hrs and 0700hrs. There were 9 flights outside the night time target noise levels compared to 21 in the same period in the previous year. Flights off track increased slightly to 16% on runway 32. Aircraft can be off-track due to a number of issues including weather avoidance.

The Consultative Committee has for several years desired to get the night time hours officially changed to stop at 0600hrs instead of 0700hrs to be more in line with other airports.

The 2013 noise and track keeping and night time aircraft movements will be presented to the June 2013 Consultative Committee.

Harrogate train line

The Consultative Committee receives regular updates on the plans to electrify the railway between Leeds, Harrogate and York. Members of the Transport, Economy & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be aware that the project has moved a step further with the submission of a full business case to the Department of Transport. The improved frequency and speed of trains that electrification would bring is likely to further aid the growth in passenger numbers using Leeds Bradford Airport.

Tour de France

The airport in conjunction with West Yorkshire Police and the TdF Hub 2014 Ltd. is implementing a communications strategy to ensure that passengers and staff are provided with the latest information with regards to traffic management, road closures and access during the event.

County Councillor Cliff Trotter
NYCC representative