

EDINBURGH AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

Minutes of the 193rd meeting held on Monday 10th August 2020 via Zoom.

Present

Robert Carr (Chair)
Janice Hogarth (Secretary)
Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive EAL
Gordon Robertson Communications Director EAL
Greg Maxwell Communications Manager EAL
Donald Spencer The Consumers Association
Lindsay Cole Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board
Kate Watt Ratho & District Community Council
Alexis Haramis Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
Cllr Dave Dempsey Fife Council
Cllr Tom Conn West Lothian Council
John Howison Cramond Community Council
Cllr Kevin Lang City of Edinburgh Council
Julian Slatter ABTA
Alan Mitchell Fife Chamber of Commerce
Adam Cumming Edinburgh Airport Amenities Group
Ken McNab SPAA
Cllr Carol Hamilton Scottish Borders Council
Dave Fyvie Police Services Scotland
Cllr Colin Davidson Sestran
Jim Grieve Sestran
Frazer McKinstry
Cllr Russell Imrie Midlothian Council

Observers

Andrew Watt & Liz Scobie - EANAB

Apologies

David Hull Kirkliston Community Council
Dr Sally Witcher Passenger Assist/PRM Service Users Representative
Sandy Leggett Air Traffic Services
Cllr Andrew McGuire West Lothian Council
Cllr John McMillan East Lothian Council
Sandy Smart STUC

1. Welcome

Robert opened the meeting and welcomed everyone on to this Zoom meeting.

2. The minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting in May were approved consisting of the slide presentation from Edinburgh Airport and a record of the attendees.

Robert also wanted to recognise the challenging time that EAL was going through adding that this was also particularly relevant for the 250 workers, their families and everyone else affected and involved in the current round of redundancies

3. Chief Executives Update (EAL)

There was an updated slide presentation from Gordon Dewar giving an overview and update on the current situation at Edinburgh Airport which was followed by a Q & A session.

4. Scottish Government Presentation by Professor Jason Leitch & Mr Gary Cox

Professor Jason Leitch talked about the previous 6 global health emergencies that had happened in the past and about how the Scottish Government were approaching quarantine. Data was coming from the Joint Biosecurity Committee and they were trying to employ a four nations approach. They were basing their figures for introducing quarantine on figures for Covid of over 20 per 100,000 and would introduce a quarantine of 14 days from arrival for all passengers at this stage to protect public health.

Professor Leitch was asked by Gordon Dewar about the possibility of a meeting to discuss testing to help reduce quarantine times and it was agreed to take this off line.

Ken McNab asked Professor Leitch for further background on the basis of how decisions were made relating to the quarantine and commented on the devastating effect that these were having on the total travel sector and the economy. Ken commented that testing was the only way forward and would take this up separately off line as well.

Mr Gary Cox outlined the concern for retaining many direct routes moving forwards. He highlighted that although Qatar had resumed flights into Edinburgh there were concerns of the return of flights for many long-haul destinations, in particular US routes as airlines reduce the number of aircraft in their fleets. Gary went on to talk about the role of Scottish Government and the creation of marketing packages to encourage airlines to commence a new route or resume existing routes. These were achieved in conjunction with Visit Scotland and had been very successful in attracting routes such as Doha, Boston, Dubai, Beijing, Chicago. He recognised that there would be a need to maybe review and revisit these packages and include European countries as well. The focus of the team would be on both long haul, and short haul routes important for business and/or inbound tourism

Gary talked about the challenges of routes for North America where airlines were looking to retire older aircraft and potential gaps before new aircraft were brought into service. Further analysis was being done and engagement with airlines was already taking place.

The impact of APD on recovery was well understood and for the time being Scotland remained part of the UK APD arrangements. Any development of a Scottish tax would need to have regard to environment impact and there was a job to do to better explain the progress being made by the sector to reduce emissions both in the air and on the ground. Gordon Dewar commented that EAL were in agreement with this and added that there was a definite need to showcase what has been done already via sustainable aviation.

Gary added that there was government resource and money being made available for route development and potentially to extend the packages on offer to airlines. There would however need to be a focus on which routes delivered the best economic impact.

Inbound passengers, domestic travel and outbound tourism are really important for any routes to survive and it was recognised that it was really important for support for airlines such as TUI and Jet2 to maintain their bases at Edinburgh Airport.

The Scottish Aviation Strategy (including Highlands and Islands) would be developed and subject to consultation which would include route development. This work was slowed down because of Covid but would resume again and would need to reflect the new post-covid environment and how the Scottish Government could best help restore air connectivity.

5 Other Matters Arising from Minutes

Robert thanked the airport and Janice Hogarth for arranging the recent visit to the airport to see the steps they had taken to create a safety of passage for passengers.

6. Review of Rolling Action Plan

- It was noted that the meeting with Michael Matheson had been postponed.
- Greg will follow up on the subject of intern selection but added there were none at the moment.
- Air Space Change – ICCAN had advised that this was currently on pause. It will be difficult to review information having effectively lost the last 6 months but there is a need to make sure it will work. The ICCAN process will marry with ACP.

John Howison added that it was not just a question of capacity but also the routing over Cramond. Gordon Dewar responded that nothing can be changed at the moment until the process is sorted out. Robert commented that more details on measurement and other measures would need to follow.

Lindsay Cole stressed that air quality and the effect on health also needed to be looked into.

- pick up and drop of – there was no change here although Gordon mentioned that with social distancing, there had been changes in demand for public transport as more people were using their cars to get to and from the airport.

7. EANAB Task Force Update

Kevin Lang gave an update on the progress of the Taskforce as Joint Convener. He advised on the current scoping of the creation of a wide-ranging remit in conjunction with the EANAB. He talked of reviewing the principle of their terms of reference and then getting individual views from both EANAB members and also other stakeholders.

The taskforce would consider national guidance from other airports and hoped to complete their findings by the end of the year.

There was a meeting scheduled for next week to create a list of questions which would be used in the consultation to be conducted face to face and also as a digital survey.

Kevin said that noise was obviously the main component and that EACC will be kept full updated on progress and the minutes will be posted on the EAL website.

8. AOCB

The meeting closed at 1215 and the next meeting will be held on Monday 9th November at the Edinburgh Marriott (dependent on relevant Government guidance on meetings at that time)