

Minutes of Extraordinary Cabinet

11 September 2019

Present:

Councillor I.T.E. Harvey, Leader and Council Policy co-ordination
Councillor A.C. Harman, Deputy Leader and Finance
Councillor M.M. Attewell, Community Wellbeing and Housing
Councillor R.O. Barratt, Environment and Compliance
Councillor J.R. Boughtflower, Corporate Management
Councillor O. Rybinski, Economic Development, Customer Service, Estates
and Transport

In attendance: Councillors C. Bateson, V.J. Leighton, R.W. Sider BEM and R.A. Smith-Ainsley

2625 Disclosures of Interest

Cllr Ian Harvey declared that he had met representatives from Heathrow Airport Limited and the Arora Group, in relation to the Heathrow West option, at the highest levels but had received no benefit from those meetings.

2626 Heathrow - Response to Airport Expansion Consultation - Key Decision

The Leader advised that he would deal with all the items on the agenda together as they related to the same matter.

He invited Councillor Leighton, as Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to address the meeting on the recommendation from the extraordinary meeting held on 3 September 2019. The recommendation was set out in a supplement to the agenda.

Councillor Leighton reported that in discussing the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) work programme with her Vice-Chairman, Councillor McIlroy, following a meeting in July, he was very clear that he wished O&S to scrutinise what was likely to be the most important issue Spelthorne was ever going to face. She agreed at that time to identify a date for a meeting specifically to consider this. At the July Council meeting, the Leader asked the Committee to be involved in considering the Council's response to Heathrow's consultation and two motions on the Council's policy stance were referred to Overview and Scrutiny. The Committee had looked at all the issues in the round and having received presentations, detailed information on the component parts of expansion and discussed the viable options for each issue that the expansion proposals raised, agreed the recommendations now before the Cabinet.

She explained that in the past the Council had supported the third runway in principle due to the positive economic benefits it would bring to the Borough

and employment for its residents. This support had always been subject to caveats that environmental and noise concerns needed to be mitigated to the Council's satisfaction and that the Wider Property Offer Zone be extended into the Borough to satisfactorily recompense its residents. She said the Committee was dismayed that despite all efforts not only did the 10 demands seeking mitigation of those concerns remain unaddressed but also that the latest unexpected proposals would be potentially far worse for communities. The recommendation from the Committee had expressed this and that future support for any proposals must be conditional upon the Council's concerns being met.

The Council had received a petition containing over 400 signatures calling on the Council to engage with the Stanwell, Stanwell Moor and Ashford North communities and to actively oppose Heathrow's Airport expansion plans. An explanatory letter from the petition organisers and the Petition statement was contained within a supplement to the agenda.

In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, the matter had been referred to the Cabinet for consideration. The Leader invited Paul Jacobs, on behalf of the petitioners, to address the Cabinet on the Stanwell's Green Lungs petition.

Mr Jacobs called on Spelthorne Borough Council to overturn its support for expansion at Heathrow, due to its plans for open green space in Stanwell and Stanwell Moor and the resulting negative environmental impacts this would bring to those communities.

The Leader responded to the petition with the following statement:

"Historically, Spelthorne Council has supported Heathrow and the principle of a new North West runway, due to the wider economic benefits it brings to the borough. In December 2016 I put forward a motion in support of the principle of expansion at Heathrow, which was agreed by the Council. The Motion read:

"Mindful of the massive, positive, economic impact that a vibrant and viable Heathrow has on the economy of Spelthorne, and in particular the 3,600 families who rely directly upon it for their income, this Council warmly welcomes the recent Government announcement of the third runway. We are of course mindful of environmental and noise concerns and will work with Heathrow and other stakeholders to ensure those are mitigated."

The petition from Stanwell's Green Lungs is asking a number of bodies and organisations to "actively oppose" what the petitioners call the "detrimental plans" being put forward by Heathrow around expansion. It is also asking for the Council to "engage with the Stanwell, Stanwell Moor and Ashford North Communities". Unfortunately, I am not able to speak on behalf of others such as the Home Office, but I can speak on behalf of Spelthorne Council. I can confidently say that over the past three years we have actively engaged with those communities who will be most directly affected by the expansion, as proposed in its current form. Presentations, along with question and

answer sessions, have been held both here at the Council Offices and in Stanwell Moor and Stanwell on a number of occasions. During the most recent Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation we issued over 7,000 leaflets to those areas most affected to raise awareness. Our Community Development Manager has been working hard with local communities to understand their concerns to feed into this Council's response. There is Councillor representation on the internal Heathrow Expansion Working Group to ensure community views are fed in to all Council responses. We also set up our own email account so that residents could feed their comments directly into us as well as to Heathrow on their expansion plans. I am confident that we have actively engaged with our communities and listened to what they have said.

It is clear from the 173 page detailed technical response which is on this Cabinet agenda that the Council has a number of issues around the current proposals for an expanded Heathrow. These have been distilled into a series of 80 detailed actions that we expect Heathrow to respond to positively at a technical level. Overview and Scrutiny, as you have just heard, have set out a number of high level strategic demands. This includes those areas that the petitioners have raised around loss of green space through the creation of a Southern Parkway and two substantial construction sites which will be in situ for a generation.

In a large number of areas information is scant or entirely absent, which means we are not in a position to make informed judgements on a number of key issues such as transport impacts (and how they affect our residents). We are not convinced that Heathrow have fully engaged with all those affected in a meaningful and transparent way. This reflects the views we have heard from our residents, and we will continue to make these points to Heathrow.

Heathrow is an important driver economically for businesses and jobs in Spelthorne. The airport currently generates 72,000 direct jobs, with an additional 114,000 in the supply chain. It is a significant employer in the borough with around 6.9% of the borough's total workforce working there. This increases to just over 25% in Stanwell North.

With expansion, the expectation is that the number of jobs will increase by around 26,800 to 99,500. These roles will require different skills sets, offering careers (with progression opportunities) rather than simply a job.

An expanded Heathrow would deliver an additional 5,000 apprenticeships. Many of these would be brand new posts. Others would include the upskilling of existing staff. We need to ensure that our residents are given a guaranteed opportunity to access these apprenticeships.

We have the UK's biggest 'port' on our doorstep. In 2017, £106bn of UK goods travelled through Heathrow – more, by value, than Felixstowe and Southampton combined (£96m). 33% of all UK long-haul goods by value travel via Heathrow. Gatwick by comparison is 0.23%. Without increasing the connections to additional cities around the world, the UK may lose its place

in the world as the 5th largest economy as other nations compete for markets to increase trading opportunities.

The future prosperity of the UK is important for all of us. With a third runway, estimates by the Government and the Airports Commission put benefits to passengers and the wider economy would be between £61 billion to £211bn over 60 years, This will be critical in helping the UK to increase the share of the market with the rest of the world beyond the E.U and help to maintain and create jobs as well as increasing prosperity.

Locally, Spelthorne is home to major worldwide brands such as BP, Shepperton Studios, Netflix and Wood Group amongst others. Proximity to Heathrow is undoubtedly a pull factor. These companies bring opportunities for our residents to access quality jobs. An expanded Heathrow will also give local businesses the chance to access their substantial supply chain.

I entirely agree with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's conclusion that the expansion as currently proposed is not the right one for our communities. What is not without doubt though is that Heathrow needs a third runway due to the economic benefits that it will bring.

Turning now to the two other matters raised in the petition. As a Council we have clearly stated on a number of occasions that the Immigration removal Centre must not be located within this borough. The current Airport Expansion Consultation shows the IRC located in the London Borough of Hounslow, but we understand that the final location will be determined by the Home Office, based on their requirements. We wrote to the Home Office last year and set out in the strongest terms possible why the IRC must not be in our borough. We will continue to push to ensure that this stays the case.

As regards Oak Leaf Farm, Surrey County Council have currently allocated the site as one with potential for all types of waste treatment. They are not formally proposing thermal treatment but have said that it is a possibility. As a Council, we are objecting to the potential scale of use on the site. Councillors wrote to Surrey County Council at the end of their formal consultation back in March 2019 stating that the Council will not accept incinerator or thermal waste treatment on this site. Officers from the Council will be appearing on 17 and 18 and 24 and 25 September at the Inquiry into the Minerals and Waste Plan to ensure our objections are set out very clearly in front of the independent Inspector.

Resolved not to take the action requested in the petition for the reasons stated.

The Group Head for Regeneration and Growth advised Cabinet that the detailed technical responses at Appendix 3 had been reviewed by a team of external legal experts with a view to bolstering the legal references in that document. The document before Cabinet would therefore be subject to further minor alterations in relation to the technical details.

The Cabinet considered the report on the response to Heathrow's airport expansion proposals together with the appendices including the covering letter (which was tabled at the meeting), key issues and benefits, and detailed responses.

The Leader made the following statement in relation to the Council's response to the consultation and the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

“Over the summer, Heathrow have been consulting on their current Airport Expansion proposals (including their preferred masterplan). This has provided some more detail around what the expansion would look like, and how it would take place. However, despite the substantial volume of material produced for the consultation, there remains a wealth of information, detail and strategies that are missing, or not yet available. In many cases, this will only be submitted with the application for Development Consent which is far too late.

This means that we have not been able to fully assess the impact of Heathrow's current expansion proposals on the borough or our residents. Our response has therefore had to focus on what we do know, whilst at the same time highlighting the deficiencies.

There is the risk that fundamental issues remain unconsidered and unresolved without the opportunity for Spelthorne (and others) to have meaningful engagement in this process. This would represent a flaw in Heathrow's consultation and we intend to raise it with the Planning Inspectorate when asked for our views on its adequacy if further consultation does not occur.

The Council has always been consistently clear that expansion cannot be at the expense of local communities or the environment. Cabinet do not intend to change from this stance. It is clear from the detailed technical response on the agenda this evening that our environment and our communities, and particularly Stanwell Moor and Stanwell Village, will be affected by the proposed expansion as currently proposed. We are clear that our northernmost communities will be newly impacted by the expansion.

Heathrow must ensure that Stanwell Moor and Stanwell Village are properly compensated via the Wider Property Offer Zone. This is one of the requirements recommended by Overview and Scrutiny which I will shortly propose that Cabinet endorse.

There is however an alternative proposal on the table called Heathrow West, which could potentially have a lesser impact on the borough. It could also be built within a shorter time frame (reducing the impact on our communities). This scheme is at an earlier stage of development, but, as recommended by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I agree should nevertheless be explored in more detail to see if it is a viable alternative.

Despite our issues with Heathrow's current expansion proposal, it does not automatically follow that there should be an in principle objection to the creation of a new northwest runway per se. In contrast to the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I suggest it is important to distinguish between the principle and the detail.

Resolved that Cabinet:

1. Can only re-affirm the Council's support for a third runway and appropriate and proportionate expansion, subject to the following:
 - a) We endorse the 16 requirements as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (set out below);
 - b) We expressly reiterate our demands that our impacted communities be properly compensated via the Wider Property Offer Zone scheme; and
 - c) We seek to further explore the Heathrow West proposal and to ascertain if this is a viable proposition.

And

2. Agrees the covering letter in appendix 2 and the detailed responses as set out in the updated appendix 3 subject to further clarification of the technical details, as part of our consultation submission to Heathrow.

The 16 requirements recommended by Overview and Scrutiny Committee which Cabinet endorses are:

1. Third runway, with capped growth of 740,000 Air Traffic Movements (ATM's) per annum by 2040, with no early release of 25,000 ATMs pa before a third runway is operational
2. That the expansion should include Heathrow T5X and T2 only, with further consideration given to the Heathrow West scheme
3. That any increase in car parking must be at the Northern Parkway or along Bath Road only
4. There must be no Southern Parkway, no Truck Park, no HGV filling station or associated lorry movements to the Crooked Billet, and Heathrow need to move new and re-aligned roads further away from Stanwell Moor
5. Deliver a genuine 'world class' integrated compensation and mitigation package, including Wider Property Offer Zone for Stanwell Moor and part of Stanwell village
6. To provide enhanced multi-purpose community halls for Stanwell Moor and Stanwell village as a positive legacy for the communities
7. Commitment to deliver 1,500 new apprenticeships for local colleges within the borough (Brooklands College in Ashford)
8. Controlled Parking Zones for Stanwell Moor, Stanwell village, and Ashford north of A308 and other areas as deemed appropriate by the Council – to be in place by the time the third runway is operational and to be funded in full by Heathrow
9. Southern Light Rail (SLR) to be built before the third runway is operational, and for the Council to work positively with Heathrow to ensure that they deliver
10. No Construction sites at CS10 or CS11 operating 24/7 365 days a year north of Stanwell and Stanwell Moor

11. Deliver continuous improvement and enhanced mitigation to neutralise air quality impacts to below legal limits on local communities
12. Comply with the Committee on Climate Change Further Ambitions Scenario (in order to deliver a reduction to 30 million tonnes CO2 in 2050)
13. Deliver continuous improvement by actively and directly reducing noise levels for aircraft and the airport (using 2013 baseline)
14. Night flights to be banned for 8 hours overnight, except for emergencies (World Health Organisation guidelines)
15. Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) must be outside the borough and
16. Protect Staines Moor in perpetuity and ensure no changes to the River Colne upstream which might have an adverse impact on the biodiversity of the SSSI.

Reason for decision

As the borough which is probably most heavily impacted by the proposed expanded airport, it is critical that Cabinet makes sure that its views are fed into this formal consultation process (which is the last one before Heathrow submit their Development Consent Order). The Council needs to ensure it protects the quality of life of its residents, and makes Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) fully aware of the Council's requirements.

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