

Decision Maker: Development Control Committee

Date: 17th November 2011

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Key

Title: **DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE FRAMEWORK FOR UK AVIATION: SCOPING DOCUMENT**

Contact Officer: Matthew Nunn, Deputy Manager
Tel: 020 8313 4893 E-mail: matthew.nunn@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Bob McQuillan, Chief Planner

Ward: All wards

1. Reason for report

This report is to inform the Development Control Committee of the recent Government publication '*Developing a sustainable framework for UK Aviation: Scoping Document*'. The aim of the scoping document is to define the debate as the Government develops its long term policy for UK aviation. An initial response has been made to the Government.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members note the report.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A. Government Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Planning Division Budget
 4. Total current budget for this head: £3.3million
 5. Source of funding: N/A
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Government has committed to producing a sustainable framework for UK aviation to replace the existing “*The Future of Air Transport*” White Paper, published in 2003. The Government is doing this in various stages. The first stage is the scoping document; the second stage is the publication of a draft policy for public consultation; the final stage is the adoption of a framework, expected to be in 2013.
- 3.2 The purpose of the scoping document to ‘define the debate’ as the Government develops its long term strategy for UK aviation. The scoping document covers a broad range of issues including the following: an overview of aviation’s key contributions to the economy and its importance to the connectivity of the UK; an overview of the Government’s policies and current work on tackling climate change, including encouraging sustainably growing the aviation sector whilst significantly reducing its overall climate change impacts; an overview of aviation and the local environment, including noise and air quality.
- 3.3 This Council, via the Chairman of this Committee, has responded by letter to the first ‘scoping stage’ of the Government’s formulation of a new framework for UK aviation. The response noted that the development of the Government’s aviation policy is still at a very early stage, and the Scoping Document seeks to define the debate in order to develop a long term policy for UK aviation rather than formulate firm policy proposals at this stage. However, the Council’s response stressed that it is crucial that a balance is struck between recognising the social and economic benefits of aviation, whilst minimising any harmful environmental impacts, including the adverse effects on amenities of local residents affected by airport operations.
- 3.4 The Council’s response acknowledged that London Biggin Hill Airport clearly has a role to play in the local and regional economy. However, it stressed its operation must be subject to environmental considerations, including protecting the Green Belt within which it is located. It was noted that in 1994, this Council entered into a 125 year lease of the airport to Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL). It further noted that the lease requires BHAL to manage the airport in accordance with certain obligations and controls on the operation and development of the airport. This includes various operational clauses as well as restricting the number of aircraft movements to 125,000 per annum. The Council response emphasised that any future aviation policy cannot override or alter the terms of the lease between this Council and BHAL. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix A.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report is in accordance with the Council’s ‘Building a better Bromley’ Plan.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial, Legal and Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Listed above