

COUNCIL MEETING

29TH JUNE 2015

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR WRITTEN REPLY

1. From Tim Fisher to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Could the Council provide an update on the Waste4Fuel site in St Mary Cray. When do they expect the site to be clear? And who will be paying for the clean up?

Reply:

Whilst the legal process remains incredibly frustrating and slow, the current impasse ultimately remains in the hands of the Environment Agency and the landowner to determine between themselves.

The current position remains that the Environment Agency served a Notice under section 59 of the Environment Act 1990 on the land owner on 8th April 2015, requiring them to reduce the remaining stack to 5,500 tonnes by 10th August 2015 or face the prospect of the Agency doing so themselves and pursuing all associated costs through any means possible.

Whether it remains possible for the owner to achieve this financially, or indeed whether they are minded to do so at all or instead challenge the EA through the Courts, still remains to be seen; we will hopefully know and I am cautiously optimistic that we will discover which, before that date is reached.

It remains impossible to predict with any certainty when the site will finally be cleared, or who will pay for it, until the outcome of the process described above has run its course.

2. From John Kaufman to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

Is the council aware that many 'Business aeroplanes' in use at Biggin Hill include 100+ seat jets (A319/Boeing 737 and others) which have a luxury internal 100+ configuration but create an enlarged and more intrusive noise 100+ footprint than smaller aircraft normally considered 'business' jets?

Reply:

Business aviation is ultimately defined not by the specific jet but by the purpose the jet is used for.

3. From John Kaufman to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

The Princess Royal (PRU) is directly under the flight path at a point where aircraft are flying at very low level creating considerable noise. Were the management of the PRU consulted regarding increased noise and extended flying hours? Did the Council consider fully the adverse effect of extended hours and the increasing use of heavier, noisier aircraft on both the hospital operation and seriously ill patients.

Reply:

I refer to previous answers about the same question.

4. From John Kaufman to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

Does the Council consider that a borough-wide opinion is sufficient to allow these sweeping changes to operational hours? The 'Man on the Clapham Omnibus' would certainly not think they were. It is as if an option poll on the third runway at Heathrow gave equal weight to the opinions of the residents of Hackney and Hounslow. Bromley residents in the most affected areas gave a very clear no to these suggested amendments.

Reply:

Consultation responses are always helpful and always need to be considered alongside other factors.

5. From Richard Barnes to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

Does the lease with BHAL now require aeroplanes using BHA to meet the latest noise standards in the ICAO document (2001) Chapter 4 and will it require them to meet the latest Chapter 14 standard due for adoption in 2017?

Reply:

The Airport will need to comply with noise standards/requirements required by legislation and/or the lease. Proposals to vary the lease are currently under discussion and include proposals to reduce the noise levels created by the Airport.

6. From Richard Barnes to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

Is the Council aware of the CAA document Managing Aviation Noise (2014) in which at Chapter 2, Context, it refers to '.....exposure to noise, particularly at night, is linked to long term health issues.....' and if so, is the Council willing to expose LBB residents to such risks?

Reply:

Yes the Council is aware, the same chapter refers to the CAA commissioned study too and we will absolutely make sure that the Airport follow any CAA guidelines where applicable as will the CAA no doubt.

7. From Bruce Anderson to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

Is the Council aware that the noise monitoring system proposed by BHAL, which averages measurements over the requested Hours rather than individual planes/flights as monitored by the current system, would allow individual planes/flights to generate noise currently judged unacceptable to local residents, without breaking the terms of the proposed contract?

Reply:

Unacceptable noise is very much a matter of individual perception. Measurements need to be objective, clear and transparent. The proposed system will give a number of noise parameters for each "event" which will include maximum level, duration, Leq (average noise level for the length of the event) and SEL (the equivalent noise level if all of the acoustical energy were contained in a one second event). The monitor also makes a recording of each event which may be replayed. In addition to this information, the equipment is continuously logging the background noise levels and this may be used to produce Leq values for any period. The proposed system also includes radar information so the noise contour can be related to the aircraft position in three dimensions and to its speed. This has never before been possible and can only be implemented with the full co-operation of the Airport.

Note - There is no current system as the Council has not conducted any noise monitoring for at least five years following a lightning strike which irreparably damaged the equipment.

8. From Bruce Anderson to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

Given the requested extension of Operating Hours into residents' rest time, creating noise at a time that would not be permitted by the Council (in accordance with its own published standards) in, for example, a construction site, how does this show BHAL's – and the Council's - concern for the well being of the local population?

Reply:

It could be argued that it is at least partly because of the Council's concern for 'wellbeing' that discussions are taking place. Government guidelines effectively require more stringent measures on night flights and we will be mindful of this in our deliberations when and if a decision is made.

In planning terms, daytime is actually defined as 07:00 until 23:00 equating to 16 hours, and night time.

For the daytime an average noise level is used i.e. LAeq 16hours – The Government treats 57dB(A) as the average level of daytime noise marking the approximate onset of significant community annoyance (DfT Aviation Policy Framework 2013, p.57). Hence throughout the various versions of the NAP the emphasis placed upon the 57db(A) contour. The LAeq 16hours can be seen as an average sound level over the period of measurement.

Night time noise is evaluated in different ways using different units such as single event level (SEL). The SEL is strongly correlated to the LMAX (i.e. maximum noise level) and is the equivalent energy of an event compressed to a one second reference value. It is of great value to acousticians as it makes the comparison of events which may have differing durations easier and is universally used in noise mapping and prediction.