

# Agenda Item IMD4

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2019/04

<b>TITLE</b>	Heathrow Airspace Consultation Response
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Leader of the Council – Julian McGhee Sumner
<b>DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME</b>	5 March 2019 SF1 at 10:00
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER</b>	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)**

Heathrow is a major employer within the Thames Valley and the economy and residents of Wokingham Borough currently benefit from being in proximity to this major driver of economic activity. Expansion of the airport will provide new economic opportunities for our residents.

Heathrow is carrying out a consultation to explore options to minimise noise impacts associated with flights from the airport, this includes a review of existing flight paths, overnight flight times and the directional preference of flights, In addition to making better use of the existing runways, prior to any expansion at the airport.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Leader of the Council (on behalf of the Executive Member for Highways and Transport):

- 1) Notes the contents of the report on Heathrow Airspace and Future operations consultation;
- 2) Approves the response to the HAL (Heathrow Airport Limited) consultation as detailed in this report (appendix A) and;
- 3) Authorises officers to return the response to HAL on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council.

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Heathrow consultation on Airspace and Future Operations is running for 8 weeks between 8 January and 4 March 2019.

The report provides a summary of key aspects of the consultation and outlines a recommended response in Appendix A. This builds on consultations which Wokingham Borough Council responded to previously.

The survey consultation is primarily based on the key area of managing noise through ensuring respite on flight paths and alternating runways and directional preference, and the impact of night flights. The concluding sections are based on future flight paths and managing better use of runways.

The impact on Wokingham Borough appears to be relatively minor, but parts of the borough are overflowed by aircraft using Heathrow albeit at levels over 5,000 feet. The council's response will seek to support the options which provide maximum respite for Wokingham Borough residents and minimise impacts on WBC residents.

## Background

Heathrow Airport are seeking to engage with communities, on the impact of flight paths and overflying, prior to any further development at Heathrow Airport.

Whilst such issues only affect a small minority of residents of the borough, it is important that Wokingham Borough Council respond to ensure there is no increase in flight paths over the borough, which would have a negative effect on residents of the borough.

The consultation document is based around the following three key themes:

- ***Airspace change for an expanded Heathrow:*** “*how we design our future airspace and the local factors we should consider in different geographic areas when designing future flight paths.*”
- ***Airspace change to make better use of the existing two runways:*** “*the local factors we should consider in different geographic areas when designing new flight paths for some arrivals on our existing two runways*”
- ***Future operations for an expanded Heathrow:*** “*how we will operate our three runways in the future, this includes managing noise; respite through runway and airspace alternation; directional preference and night flights.*”

The consultation runs until 4th March 2019. The consultation documents are available to download at <https://www.heathrowconsultation.com/>

Due to the timing of the consultation and council procedures, a holding response based on this report within the consultation period. Following formal consideration of this report, a final response will be provided incorporating any necessary updates.

## Analysis of Issues

The recommended response to the questions set out in the consultation is provided in Appendix A to this report. This builds on consultations which Wokingham Borough Council responded to previously.

A supporting analysis of key issues is set out below.

### *Managing noise for an expanded Heathrow*

Questions on the general review of the proposals to reduce effects of noise, on health and quality of life.

### *Respite through runway and airspace alternation*

With a three runway operation, the alternation of flights between runways would provide respite from noise for communities close to the airport. For communities further away from Heathrow, such as those affected areas in Wokingham Borough, airspace alternation is proposed to enable respite periods for those communities.

### *Directional Preference*

Heathrow are seeking to adopt a managed preference in terms of directional flights, to supersede the existing 'westerly preference'. Work undertaken so far demonstrates a managed preference would minimise the total number of people affected by noise. Through the introduction of managed preferences flight paths which overlap from other airports can also be managed.

### *Night Flights: Early Morning Arrivals*

Currently the early morning flights (04:30-06:00hrs) only use one runway, for an expanded Heathrow with three runways opportunities will exist to schedule these flights across runways, with the same number of flights before 06:00 hours.

### *Night Flights: Other Night Restrictions*

During the night Heathrow is looking at ways to encourage the quietest types of aircraft, through measures such as night time quotas or restrictions of higher landing charges for night time landings or noisier aircraft.

### *Airspace Change*

Heathrow has asked for feedback on the design of proposed flight paths and any special characteristics of locations which should be considered to be sensitive to flights overhead.

As it can be seen, some of the categories are more pertinent to Wokingham Borough, such as directional preference and airspace change, which relate to flights over the borough, and as such could minimise noise disruption for Wokingham Borough residents. Our response to the consultation reflects this which, in summary supports the objectives of the consultation to reduce aircraft noise through the development of noise envelopes and the requirement for regular respite for residents under the flightpaths.

The consultation results are due to be published in Summer 2019, and further guidance on the issues will be published by Heathrow based on the consultation responses.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.*

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/a	N/a	N/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/a	N/a	N/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
N/a

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
N/a

<b>SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Director – Corporate Services</b>	No comment received
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	No comment
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	No comment

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
N/a

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
1. Full details of the consultation can be found at: <a href="https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/">https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/</a>
2. Appendix A – Consultation Response

<b>Contact</b> Robert Curtis	<b>Service</b> Place
<b>Telephone No</b> Tel: 0118 974 6489	<b>Email</b> robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk