

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the Rochester Airport Consultative Committee (RACC) held at The Holiday Inn, Chatham on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017.**

### **Present:**

M. Moulton (MM) – Chairman  
P. Britten (PB) – Rochester Airport Ltd (RAL)  
K. Carr (KC) – Rochester Airport Ltd (RAL)  
S. Bursi (SB) – BAE Systems (BAES)  
R. Heaps (RH) – MAPS Ltd.  
T. Clarke (TK) – Medway Borough Council (MBC)  
P. Rudd (PR) - Skytrek Flying School (SFS)  
N. Tiller (NT) – Aylesford Parish Council (APC)  
G. Chapman (GC) – Local Resident Group  
P. Gould (PG) – Secretary

### **1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence:**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 17:00 and welcomed everyone attending.

Members present took turns to introduce themselves and the organisations they represent.

*Apologies had been received from: Anne Chapman, Local Resident Group; Dick Searle, Rochester Airport Ltd; Phil Cole, MAPS Ltd; Peter Homewood, KCC Member for Malling Rural North and Alan Marsh, KCC.*

### **2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016:**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were accepted and signed as a true record.

The Chairman requested that Minutes of Meetings should, in future, be circulated and approved well in advance of the next meeting. A two-week turnaround would be the aim for Minutes to appear on the Rochester Airport Ltd website.

### **3. Matters Arising not covered on the Agenda:**

There were no matters arising.

### **4. Planning Application Progress:**

PB gave an up-to-date report, which is attached to these Minutes.

PB and KC remained positive about the application. It was important that Rochester Airport should have a runway that could be used all year. During the previous week soil-testing activities had been carried out. Work continued to be on-going and Medway Council had employed consultants, who were aviation specialists, to put forward the planning application. If a Judicial Review were called for, a judge would decide whether the planning application was legal or not. It was understood from the noise consultant that there was no excessive noise coming from the Airport. An Environmental Consultant had also been employed.

Medway Council was satisfied that everything necessary was being done and that residents' concerns and objections had been taken into consideration. It was hoped that the application would be successful. PB and KC had done all that had been asked of them.

*(Gary Chapman arrived at 17:50)*

#### **5. Airport Manager's Report:**

A report had been prepared by KC for the meeting and is attached to these Minutes.

A number of parties had expressed interest in the empty AV8 premises and there would be more on this at the next meeting.

The engineering company based in the hangar at Rochester Airport had recently taken on two new staff. One might be offered an apprenticeship.

MM thanked KC for his excellent report. He drew attention to the Airport as a public amenity and it was good to see it being so well used as such.

#### **6. Mr. James Brewood Request:**

Mr. Brewood's written request, and responses from MM and RAL were read to the meeting. It was agreed that his assertions and questions would be included on the agenda, to be discussed and answered. After much discussion it was unanimously concluded that

- Members of the public may attend RACC meetings, as representatives of groups having interests in the Airport.
- MM had invited either Mr. McLelland or Mr. James Brewood to attend as such on a number of occasions.

- Aircraft movements will be capped as put forward in the previous planning application and until the noise report is finalised no assumptions should be made to the contrary.
- Intensification would definitely NOT be the result of having a hard runway. From experience, a hard runway would even out movements and the noise situation should improve.
- No responsibility for any of the fatalities referred to had been attributed to Rochester Airport by the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB), whose reports can confirm this. These reports are readily available on the AAIB website.
- With regard to public safety outside the perimeter of the airfield, no responsibility lies with the Airport or the CAA. In such cases, pilots are responsible for public safety.
- Any pilot experiencing difficulties, whether flying from the Airport or not, will have undergone the same training syllabus. Pilots are trained to make dynamic risk assessments at all times. This could involve putting down in a suitable field, wherever in the land they may be. For aircraft in the vicinity of Rochester, the Airport represents an additional safety option.

It was agreed that, as soon as the Minutes were published, Mr. Brewood should be directed to them on the RAL website.

## **7. Other Business:**

TC – confirmed that Medway Council were keen to get the Planning Permission granted and funds had been earmarked for the work to go ahead. The Council was committed and supported the airport plans. *TC left the meeting at 18:00.*

RH – MAPS Ltd activity continued. The Short Scion floatplane restoration is an important part of Medway's industrial heritage.

SB – Looked forward to attending future meetings. The Airport needed to be applauded the public made aware of what an asset it was to the community.

GC – Apologised for his late arrival. GC was impressed with the number of schools visiting the airfield.

KC – Thanked everyone for attending.

MM – Despite opposition to the Airport, there were still plans to create an Aviation Heritage Centre on the Airport site.

A preliminary application had been made for Heritage Lottery Funding, but, despite a great deal of work having been done it would not be possible to make a definitive proposal, while the Airport's future remained in doubt. It was hoped to leave a legacy in which Medway people could take pride. The aviation history of Kent was an important part of that heritage..

PB – Confirmed that, whatever happened, the land would be there even if the runway did not get paved. The hangars would be done and MAPS Ltd re-located into a new hangar.

**8. Next Meeting: day, date and time:**

It was proposed that, once Planning Permission was rolling, a meeting should be held shortly after. Tentatively, KC suggested an autumn meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 18:20

Signed .....

Dated .....

NO		DATE	DAY	TIME	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	REMARKS
37	P	02 April 2016	Saturday	16:16	Mr D	ME1	01634 XXXXXX	G-CFIO on a glide flew 10' over his house. Will be taking this further CAA. Report written
38	P	12 May 2016	Thursday	11:02	Male	Not Supplied	Not Supplied	Gentleman phone asking about a helicopter flying over the river Medway, what was he doing. JC explained that it was a police helicopter on task! He asked about the 500@ foot rule, JC explained that he was on task and exempt. The gentleman put the phone down!
39	P	05 June 2016	Sunday	13:39	Mrs H	ME1	01634 XXXXXX	Complaint about being very busy every 10min an aircraft has taken off since 09:00 hour local time. KC explained that the wind is unusually from the North 020/10-15 kts and therefore unable to change runways. Advised that I would log her complaint. The call came following a busy 10-15 min with 2/3 in the circuit and many taking off straight after each other. The numbers reduced following the call.
40	P	30 June 2016	Thursday	09:47	Mr T	ME2	01634 XXXXXX	Complaining about low flying helicopters in the Wainscot area. One comes over on a regular basis at 100' - 150' I know this as an ex para. He will take a photo next time. KC reported that no helicopter had been on frequency with EGTO today (Green White and Yellow in colour)
41	P	27 July 2016	Wednesday	15:10	Mr M	ME4	Not Supplied	Noise complaint. Autogyros! Nothing wrong with fixed wing.
42	P	06 August 2016	Saturday	13:40	Mr W	ME7	0778 XXXXXX	Helicopter operating low near his house. Helicopter was filming and never below 600' was the pilot's reply. The pilot phoned Mr W who gave permission for KC to supply details. Mr W has spent over £10K on security etc. for his property.
43	P	14 August 2016	Sunday	15:20	Mr D	ME1	01634 XXXXXX	Complain about noise from Autogyros and why it keeps going round. Explanation given about cct's and it was a training flight. Caller seemed happy that the complaint was logged and reported to manager.
44	P	16 August 2016	Tuesday	10:59	Mr M	ME1		Mr M phoned KC and left message on his mobile. Complaining about autogyro Low flying on 02 LHC, KC watched the take off and landings, all looked OK. Mr M called when the autogyro had only completed 3 cts flying over his house with great accuracy and pi**ing him off. KC tried to call on Mr M's mobile at 11:12 & 11:25 no answer. Autogyro landed 11:34 having completed 7 cct's.
45	P	20 August 2016	Saturday	08:20	Mr E	ME1		Not a complaint but, The C172 cct aircraft was too low and the pilot applied full power over my house. A conversation was had and Mr Ellison stated that our biggest issue was autogyros as the noise can be heard for miles
46	P	24 August 2016	Wednesday	15:20	Ms S	ME1	Not Supplied	Complaint about noise from Autogyro and why it keeps going round ever 10 min. Explanation given about cct's, it was a training flight and landing after the next pass. Caller was not happy as it would all start again.
47	P	06 September 2016	Tuesday	15:20	? A pilot	ME1	Not Supplied	A pilot from ME1 area phoned up. "I never thought I would phone up but can't the autogyro change his route, I know about landing into wind etc, but even I am getting fed up with them now! Support the airport and have signed to keep the airport. But."
48	P	05 November 2016	Saturday	16:50	Mr B	ME5		Mr B phoned regarding SP-KTS AN-2. Mr B claimed that the aircraft was dangerously low & Zig Zagging over his property, clearly didn't know where he was going. The aircraft was seen from the Airport Control tower and its profile appeared "OK".

## **AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT TO ROCHESTER AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – 10th March 2017**

### **From the Watch Log**

RFFS put on standby for various incidents. Rough running engines, doors opening, oil flaps open, number of landing gear issues, weather standbys. One incident aircraft G-ETIV caught one of our PAPI's on landing. I am pleased to report no injuries on any of these incidents.

### **Noise Complaints**

I report 12 questions/complaints, 6 of these are noise complaints since our last meeting.

### **Airport Security**

Five fence posts have been broken during the last year down Laker Road.

Hangar 3 alarm went off for no apparent reason on three occasions last year.

Two visits by travelers in the Holiday Inn car park, stayed for less than a couple of day's.

Damage to a fabric hangar and theft of petrol, tools and aviation fuel, dog handlers, traffic, armed response and Medway Police are dealing with the situation. A couple of arrests have been made in connection with these incidents.

### **General**

Since our last meeting 5 scout/cub groups (59 children given an insight into the Airport, a tour of control tower and hangars, the tour also included an overview of an aircraft.) With another 4 already planned for this Year.

7 local schools visited, with a total of 250 children.

7 local groups visit 89 people in total.

2 Kent Fire and Rescue (KFRS) visit to support the ongoing training for KFRS personnel and the new Rochester fire station.

12 work experience pupils have been supported by Rochester Airport, with another 10 planned for later in the Year.

Operation Propeller, 9 second world war veterans were to fly from Rochester in 4 aircraft. Unfortunately canceled due to poor weather.

Good Friday spot landing competition cancelled due to poor weather.

Aircraft movements were slightly down on previous year due to weather. Busiest Months being June-September with July being the busiest month of the year.

Air Watch had a number of successful meetings in the airport café and a number of exercises in the local area.

A number of ATC squadrons have used the airport for drill and band practice. A number of squadron's celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ATC, with a couple of Tiger Moths and a Rapide, which flew to Biggin Hill with cadets and relay torch on board.

Continuing to support local group with car parking. (Anne Chapman/Southern Highlanders/Graham Underwood)

Model flying evenings continued.

Southend have followed up on their SID's plus Airspace with very few comments being made.

NATS LAMP project has been implemented over the Rochester area.

Brenden O'Brian Flying Circus has set up at Headcorn.

Hangar 3 Roof panels flew off during March last year. Successful repairs carried out at great expense.

Sorry to advise AV8 Helicopters closed at the end of August 2016.

**Kelvin Carr, Airport Manager, Rochester Airport Ltd.**

## RACC MEETING 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2017

When I reported last year I had hoped that the planning issues would have been resolved within six months. However, they are not, although I am pleased to report that they should be resolved shortly. The matter of the EIA has been onerous and will not go through the complexities involved.

These delays culminated in us late last year splitting the application between airside operations i.e. runway etc. and building works. Hangar 3 lost part of its roof last year, has holes appearing everywhere and is in very real danger of becoming unusable. MAPS continue to work in intolerable conditions as do the aircraft engineers.

The original application has had all aircraft operational works removed and requests permission for two new hangars, MAPS hangar, other landscaping works and moving of the fuel farm. This application will be determined by Medway Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017. As all of these works are within Medway Councils curtilage Tonbridge & Malling Council are not involved.

Should we be granted permission these works will start very quickly.

We are now also able to complete the application for a new runway and other works together with an EIA. This work should be complete by the end of April for immediate submission. The planning timescales for an application with an associated EIA are much longer and we anticipate final determination by both Councils involved by the end of November.

It is expected that runway 34/16 will be closed in February 2018. Hopefully with the timescales above, provided permission is granted, the runway can be laid as a priority prior to the closure.

There have been no planning applications affecting the airport or its airspace in the past 12 months.