

## **REDHILL AERODROME CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Redhill Aerodrome Consultative Committee held on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 10.00am via Zoom.

### **PRESENT:**

Terry Pollard (Chairman)  
 Michael Blacker (Reigate & Banstead Borough Council)  
 Jim Blackmore (Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council)  
 Richard Blain (Pilots' Hub)  
 David Burke (Estates Manager, Redhill Aerodrome Ventures Limited)  
 Paul Cole (National Police Air Service)  
 Wayne Clark (Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council)  
 Richard De Coverly (Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust)  
 Jonathon Essex (Reigate & Banstead Borough Council)  
 Pat Glenn (Bletchingley Parish Council)  
 Chris Hoskins (Nutfield Conservation Society)  
 Rigel Mowatt (Nutfield Parish Council)  
 Paul Murray (Keep Redhill Airfield Green)  
 Vince Sharp (Secretary)  
 Nick Stagg (Chairman, Redhill Aerodrome Ventures Limited)  
 Nicola Taplin (Cubair)  
 Philip Wright (Aerodrome Manager)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The secretary read out a message from Councillor Debbie Vickers (Tandridge DC) who had given her apologies for absence. This advised that Councillor Vickers would be standing down at forthcoming local elections. She considered that the RACC meetings had been productive during the last nine years and hoped that communication between the Aerodrome and residents would continue. She thanked Philip Wright for his responses whenever called upon and for forwarding TDC emails on to tenants for her during the last year.

### **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

### **3. FLIGHT MONITORING**

The Aerodrome manager's flight monitoring reports for November 2020 to February 2021 had been circulated prior to the meeting. These comprised movement statistics; complaints by residents about aircraft movements; and references to incidents / accidents.

Philip Wright explained that that there had been virtually no fixed wing activity apart from maintenance and pilot instructor flights. Limited fixed wing flying was due to commence on the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

In response to a query from Jim Blackmore, Philip Wright would check the figures regarding an apparent discrepancy between the runway usage movements and the fixed wing totals for November and December 2020.

Chris Hoskins stated that calls to the (01737 888123) noise line were not being responded to and that information about reporting complaints (about aircraft operating within the aerodrome's air traffic zone) was not being made widely available. He had received feedback that residents no longer thought it was worth reporting complaints because they seemed to be ignored. He was also concerned that the police helicopter appeared to be making unnecessary flights over residential areas in non-emergency situations and cited a recent incident where this had caused a horse to panic, resulting in an injury to its owner.

Philip Wright explained that, due to the pandemic, air traffic staffing had been reduced to a minimum and the priority had been to staff the control tower. Consequently, there had been no time to respond to noise line messages. This situation should be rectified once workplace Covid restrictions were lifted. He offered to contact the editor of the Nutfield Link with a view to information about flight reporting arrangements to be included in future editions. Nutfield Parish Council's website was also suggested for this purpose. For the longer term, Philip hoped that an on-line reporting system would enable complaints to be handled more efficiently via e-mail exchanges.

Paul Cole acknowledged the concerns raised by Chris Hoskins and would contact the pilot responsible for the above-mentioned incident if it was established that the route breached flight path rules for NPAS helicopters.

#### **4. UPDATE ON BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AT THE AERODROME**

Nick Stagg confirmed that the lack of airside activity during the pandemic had led to significant shortfalls of income from landing fees and the sale of fuel. Although rental income had been maintained to date, some commercial tenants were experiencing financial difficulties and two leases would not be renewed. It was hoped that new tenants would be found once the economy reopened, although the financial outlook for the aerodrome was uncertain in light of falling income and on-going expenditure commitments. In response to a question from Richard Blain, Nick Stagg advised that it was not viable for RAVL to grant concessions regarding the rental obligations of its tenants. He explained that, unlike other commercial landlords who had been able to grant rent holidays etc, RAVL did not have the luxury of reserve funds to draw upon, and income streams from non-airside activities were not nearly as robust as those generated by retail outlets.

Nick Stagg welcomed the decision of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council's Planning Committee (17th March 2021) to grant planning permission for the retention of the widened hard standing on taxiway C/D. He had spoken at the meeting and had confirmed his wish to encourage more open and positive relations with the Council. Richard Blain confirmed that, from a pilots' perspective, the Planning Committee's decision represented a good outcome.

Councillor Blacker looked forward to more constructive dialogue between the Aerodrome's owners and the Council and highlighted the importance of the planning conditions attached to the planning permission being fulfilled. Nick Stagg confirmed that draining mitigation works would be undertaken (in accordance with one of those conditions) within the next two months at an estimated cost of between £35,000 and £45,000.

In response to a question from the Chair, Nick Stagg confirmed that nothing had come from a speculative enquiry regarding the possible letting of aerodrome accommodation for storing PPE.

Nick Stagg was pleased to report that required improvements to runway illumination could be achieved by small changes to the existing lighting pattern and without the need to install floodlight towers beyond the domain of the grass airstrip which might otherwise cause light pollution.

## **5. DATE OF THE 2021 ANNUAL MEETING**

The date of the annual meeting had previously been scheduled for Saturday, 19th June at the aerodrome's business centre (or via Zoom dependent upon possible ongoing Covid-19 restrictions). It has since transpired that national Covid lockdown restrictions were not due to be lifted until Monday, 21st June. The Committee therefore agreed that the annual meeting should be delayed until Saturday, 17th July in the hope that it can be accommodated safely in the business centre.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Philip Wright advised that, later in 2021, the aerodrome's runway designations would change to align with movements in the earth's magnetic field.

The meeting closed at 10.35 a.m.