

Consultative Committee

**South Yorkshire Joint Authorities
Governance Unit**
Town Hall, Church Street
Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2TA.

Our ref: DSACC/MJM

Your ref:

Date: 06 July 2018

This matter is being dealt with by: **Mel McCoolle**
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Dear Member

DONCASTER SHEFFIELD AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 12 JULY 2018

Please find attached an additional agenda item in relation to the above meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. McCoolle'.

Mel McCoolle

Encs

DONCASTER SHEFFIELD AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

12 JULY 2018

IN THE BLENHEIM MEETING ROOM, HEYFORD HOUSE, DONCASTER SHEFFIELD AIRPORT, FIRST AVENUE, DONCASTER, DN9 3RH.

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA: Reports attached unless stated otherwise

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UKACCs DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE DFT'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS QUESTIONS

Dear Sally,

DFT'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS QUESTIONS

Firstly, UKACCs thanks you again for your presentation to the UKACCs Annual Meeting on 7 June, concerning the role of ACCs in engaging with communities impacted by the use of airspace and aircraft noise and overflight. The DfT's review of the community engagement mechanisms in place at UK airports is viewed as important and timely given the UK's airspace modernisation programme and changes that will be required at a number of airports across the UK over the next few years. There is also a need for the Guidelines to reflect the requirements of the CAA's new airspace change process set out in CAP 1616 given the references to ACCs in that process.

UKACCs is pleased that the DfT is not seeking a fundamental review of the current Guidelines which our member ACCs believe are serving airports and ACCs well and enable ACCs to reflect local circumstances around their airports rather than adopting a "one size fits all" approach. As set out in the current Guidelines, ACCs must be free to set their own constitution, membership, frequency of meetings and operational arrangements to suit local needs. UKACCs would strongly object to any proposal that would see that level of flexibility removed from the Guidelines.

UKACCs fully agrees that the Guidelines should be kept under regular review by the DfT and that the CAA's new airspace change process set out in CAP1616 is an appropriate opportunity to review how airports are engaging with their communities. However, a number of our member ACCs have pointed out that the CAP 1616 process will probably be a 'once-in-a-lifetime' requirement for most airports. They are also concerned that an ACC's involvement in that process could detract its consideration of other airport related issues that also require scrutiny. The key challenge will be how the ACC maintains a balanced agenda as there is a risk that it could become dominated by airspace change engagement and all the issues associated with that.

Our collective response to the questions posed in your paper is as follows:

1. What do you see as the role of ACCs in effective community engagement? How successful have they been in fulfilling this role?

The value of an ACC to its airport is well recognised and the current ACC guidelines clearly set out the statutory foundation of an ACC and its expected role.

ACCs bring together a wide range of interests concerned with the airport's operation, management and future development. UKACCs member ACCs have memberships that embrace the three distinct interest groups identified by statute which are set out in the current DfT Guidelines. In the majority of cases about half the membership of an ACC is made up of democratically elected individuals who have the responsibility of ensuring that they are seeking the views of their community, and representing these in the deliberations of the ACC.

The feedback that UKACCs has received from member ACCs is that they believe they are very representative of local communities, including amenity groups in the area, without involving representatives of other action groups who do not have elected member legitimacy. Involving well established, properly constituted local group representation adds value to the deliberations of an ACC thereby ensuring more effective and constructive dialogue between the ACC and their airport. However, as you heard at the Annual Meeting, member ACCs are very concerned about the increasing number of airport-specific, subject-specific pressure groups purporting to represent 'communities' who have recently been granted a 'voice' at a national level, which many of ACCs see as disproportionate given their sphere of interest. The concerns and issues that they represent

should clearly not be overlooked but should wherever possible be addressed through the respective ACC and their ACC representative to raise issues on their behalf.

There is a need for DfT to find a way of filtering out the impact of the mainly south-east England centric lobby groups which are not necessarily representative of the rest of the UK's ACCs. For many airports, particularly those in the more peripheral regions of the UK, aviation is a critical support to the local and regional economy, business and individuals, for whom other means of public or private transport can never compete with air travel over longer distances.

2. In view of expected airspace change proposals in the next few years: are there any changes you would suggest to the way that ACCs are structured and operate? How well placed do you think ACCs are to engage with the CAP1616 process?

At the UKACCs Annual Meeting on 7 June, the general consensus was that:

- ACCs were able to deal with issues within their existing structures, particularly as there was flexibility to make changes according to local situations.
- ACCs were only one of many channels of engagement that airports had in place with local communities.
- whilst the CAA's CAP 1616 process cited ACCs in the various consultation stages, ACCs were not the sole focus for consultation and it was emphasised that ACCs were one of many stakeholders to be engaged in the process.

UKACCs welcomes the increased recognition of the role that ACCs can play in the CAA's new airspace change process as set out in CAP 1616. The channels of engagement facilitated through the ACC can add value to the engagement and consultation process particularly given the broad and balanced approach ACCs can broker. However our member ACCs recognise that they cannot be complacent and regularly review their membership and way of working.

The CAA's CAP 1616 process cites ACCs in the various consultation stages, principally these are set out in Appendix C of CAP 1616 but it should be noted that ACCs are only one of the many of stakeholders that need to be kept informed about and consulted as part of the process.

However there is a lack of guidance on the expected role of an ACC in this new process. UKACCs would therefore wish to work with the DfT and CAA in developing further guidance to assist ACCs in their consideration of airspace change proposals and ways in which they can ensure the wider communities are engaged in the process.

From UKACCs' understanding of the new process and given the role of an ACC as set out in the current DfT Guidelines, it should be made explicitly clear in any reviewed DfT Guidance that:

- the ACC is not the dedicated engagement forum for the process
- the ACC is one of the many parties that should be engaged in the process given its ability to make informed, balanced approach comments on principle aims and on the overarching strategy and consultation plans
- The collective breadth of knowledge and expertise of the ACC's membership is very well placed to act as the critical friend to the airport in the early stages of the process and to raise issues of common concern to communities
- The ACC can input to the airspace change sponsor's draft strategy for consultation required under the process, rather in getting involved in the detail of the proposed changes.
- The ACC can help raise awareness of airspace change proposals and the engagement opportunities that will be provided for communities to input their views.
- Community groups should make their views known to the airspace change sponsor direct but that they can also raise issues for consideration with their ACC representative to take forward on their behalf where this is appropriate to do so.
- the ACC is not the arbiter for deciding on specific routes or specific options for respite but what it can do is give guidance on what the over-riding principles in airspace design need to take into account to address concerns of all communities around airports.

- The ACC has a role in monitoring the airport's implementation of the consultation strategy and as such the airspace change sponsor should provide regular reports on issues raised by communities as part of the engagement programme for the ACC's consideration.
- The ACC can raise matters for further consideration by the airspace change sponsor as part of the process.

Having clear guidance on this will help to manage community groups' expectations which will leave them in no doubt about the expected role of the ACC in the process.

UKACCs has recently asked member ACCs to advise whether their airports have any airspace changes planned, and if so the engagement their ACC has had in the process. I attach the latest version of the summary of feedback for your information. As you will see, many ACCs are already engaged in the process and are advising their airports.

3. Understanding what works with communities will help to focus efforts and resource: what can be done in cases of limited resources/money?

This question is critical to what CAA and DfT are expecting from ACCs. The funding, resource and independent expert advice available to ACCs varies considerably across the UKACCs membership.

Some ACCs are responsible for a small budget that their airport allocates to them, some benefit from an active independent secretariat, and some rely on the goodwill of the airport to support the work of their ACC both financially and in terms of the support resource. Given these differences, will also to some degree influence the type of engagement an ACC has beyond its membership and the support it gives to its member organisations. As mentioned above, local flexibility must be retained so that the way in which ACCs operate is left to local determination. However, it is felt that more support could be given to ACCs, through:

- More DfT Guidance on the role of an ACC member and the need for member organisations to play their part in the feedback mechanisms to reach out to their wider communities and raise awareness
- Formal written (published) requests from the DfT seeking specific advice from ACCs or for the ACCs to play a role. This would demonstrate transparent support for ACCs and make it clear to community groups what the ACC has been asked to comment on or take a specific role.
- The DfT and/or CAA offering briefings or training for chairs and members of ACCs at such time as a CAP 1616 proposal is likely to be instigated e.g. before Stage 1 of the process, to equip them to respond effectively to the new tasks identified for them.
- ACCs may also need access to additional short-term funding or independent technical advisory resources, which in the absence of central funding of some kind will inevitably fall on the airport concerned.

4. Understanding how ACCs represent communities: how can we ensure community views are fully reflected and continue to represent a broad cross section, bearing in mind the potential for rapid development of local community groups utilising social media?

It is important to acknowledge that the Airport (or airspace change sponsor) has the first responsibility to ensure effective consultation, of which ACCs see themselves as an important player. As mentioned above, ACCs are only one of the many of stakeholders that need to be kept informed about and consulted as part of the process but given the collective knowledge and experience of an ACC membership it is well placed to advise the airport (or airspace change sponsor) about its consultation strategy and help raise awareness amongst communities of the opportunity they have to feed into the consultation process. The expectations of community groups beyond the membership of an ACC, particularly the newly formed, self-appointed, single issue groups, of the expected role of an ACC. Examples of our interpretation of an ACCs role is set out in our response to question 2 above.

I hope you find our views helpful and can be taken into account.

DRAFT