

GLASGOW PRESTWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
215th QUARTERLY MEETING HELD ON 1st Sept. 2023,

Present

Richard Searle	Chair
Bob Smith	Vice-Chair (Co-opted)
James Riach	Treasurer (Prestwick Community Council)
George Smith	Co-opted Member
William Brown	Monkton Community Council
Wilson Barrie.	Ayrshire Chamber
Bob Logan	General Aviation
John McGhee	East Ayrshire Council
Ian Masterton	North Air

In Attendance

Ian Forgie	CEO, GPA (for the main meeting only)
Heather Scott	Freight Operations Manager (for tour of Cargo Operations)

Apologies

Nigel Wallace	Secretary to GPACC
William McAlpine	Passenger Representative
Cllr Tony Gurney	North Ayrshire Council
Councillor Andrew Giusti	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Jim Miller	North Ayrshire Council
Gordon Smith	Visit Scotland
Jim McCall	Co-opted Member (Cargo)
Councillor Duncan Townson	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

1. Welcome and tour

Heather Scott, Freight Operations Manager, welcomed members to the Cargo area. She explained Ian Forgie would be slightly delayed therefore she had been asked to bring forward the planned tour of the cargo area.

Heather introduced herself and explained some of the logistics of cargo operations. She then led a tour of the facilities showing both import and export operations and highlighting recent and planned investments to support existing business and to attract new business. At each stage she answered a number of questions. At the end of the tour members expressed their grateful thanks for a most interesting and enlightening tour.

Returning to the Cargo Meeting room, members were greeted by Ian Forgie and the Chair then formally welcomed those present to the 215th Quarterly meeting of Glasgow Prestwick Airport Consultative Committee.

2. Apologies

The apologies received were noted.

3. Minutes of the 214th Meeting held on 2nd June 2023

The minutes from the last meeting were approved as read subject to minor changes to remove potentially commercial sensitive information.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Chief Executive's Report

Ian Forgie, CEO, provided an update on airport operations over the summer period including:

- Further reference to the development of cargo operations as just seen during the tour and how these support further development of the airport as a cargo hub.
- There have been a number of recent examples of good positive press coverage for the airport which reflect good work by the new Communications Manager
- Continued good progress to improve the airport's carbon footprint against a 2018 baseline. This includes further work to take the airport off-grid (i.e. electrically independent of national grid supplies). [REDACTED]
- Airport staff provided great support to ensure the success of NATO's Air Defender Exercise which offers the prospect of hosting similar events in future which are a good source of income for the airport
- Work has continued on Spaceport plans

But, to set against the generally good news, IF drew members attention to two issues which are of big concern to him and the airport. These are windfarms and staff vacancies.

Windfarms

Contrary to mutually supportive agreements reached with several windfarm developments over the last decade, two new major windfarms have just been given government permission to proceed without the need to agree mitigating terms with the airport. These farms are in direct line with the southerly approach to the airport and will require very expensive mitigation measures (radar developments). It appears the government have chosen to ignore the airport's willingness to negotiate and instead are taking a simplistic approach of "windfarms good, airports bad" therefore the airport must alone bear the enormous mitigating costs which will arise from these windfarm developments.

Staff vacancies

This is an issue affecting not just the airport itself but also a number of aerospace businesses surrounding the airport. IF expressed his view that more could and should be done within the education sector to encourage and support better training and apprenticeships and that the matter is urgent.

Discussion

Several members expressed their understanding and concern about both the windfarm and staff vacancy issues. One member gave a specific example of his own son's recent experience and agreed to provide IF with further details to provide ammunition to support the airport's arguments. The Chair also agreed to raise the windfarm issue at the forthcoming UKACC meeting in November and seek to garner support from other affected or potentially affected airports. This was thought a little unlikely because of the current effective ban on onshore windfarm developments in England (but note, two days after this meeting the UK government announced a likely lifting of this ban).

6. AOCB

The imminent Ayrshow was mentioned and IF confirmed the airport will be involved and hinted of a possibly deeper involvement next year assuming this year's event goes well.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Consultative Committee is planned for Friday 1st December at 2.00 pm.

Richard Searle on behalf of Nigel Wallace, Secretary, GPACC
Contact: nigelswallace@hotmail.com