

GLASGOW PRESTWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

220th QUARTERLY MEETING HELD ON 09th January 2025 (postponed from 06th December 2024).

Present

Bob Smith - Chair

Bob Logan - Secretary to GPACC

Jim McCall - Treasurer

Neil Learmonth – Police Scotland

James Riach - Prestwick Community Council

Harry Middleditch - Monkton Community Council

John McGhee - East Ayrshire Council

John Stevens – Royal Aeronautical Society Prestwick branch.

Wilson Barrie – University West of Scotland.

In Attendance

Juan Merrill CFO, GPA

Apologies

Claire Baird

Nigel Wallace

Richard Searle

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present.

2. Apologies

There were three apologies for absence.

3. Minutes of the 219th Meeting held on 1st September 2024

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as read with the following amendment - Page3, para 11 should read William McAlpine and not William McGregor.

4. Matters arising not elsewhere covered in the agenda.

BL stated numerous pieces of correspondence for the airport had been received through the GPACC webpage over the previous 3 months. Clarification was sought as to an airport single point of contact for forwarding such e-mails. **JM** stated that Janet Kindness-Muir should receive any correspondence and she would redistribute it as appropriate.

5. Chief Executives report

JM apologised for having to cancel the December meeting at short notice. He stated since the last meeting, we were now into the winter season. This sees about 40 passenger flights a month to 5 destinations. From the start of the 2024 summer season till December, the airport has handled nearly 500,000 passengers. Summer 2025 is now on sale with Ryanair, with an additional 5 flights per week to existing 2024 destinations, namely Alicante, Faro, Malaga and Murcia x2.

Ryanair's new training centre is now open on Apron Bravo.

The departure area upgrade is continuing with the new machines now in place. The area should be fully operational come February. The new equipment includes two body scanners and automatic tray return, making the passenger experience even better.

Scotrail have decided to cancel the 50% reduction on fares for passengers using the rail service to/from the airport. This is apparently due to cost pressures from the government.

JM stated that the first trial cargo flight from Hong Kong to PIK in December went very well with positive feedback from the customer with promising signs of future traffic. There are further trial flights due and the airport are working towards this becoming a scheduled service which could lead to significant employment opportunities in the next 6 months.

The airport held a successful jobs fare in November with around 400 people attending the event.

The airport will continue to support the airshow in 2025.

Run the Runway, the charity event that took place in November last year, with around 1000 participants, raised over £150,000 for 3 local charities. It will take place again in 2025, with the potential to go to a bi-annual event thereafter.

JM stated there had been 6 noise complaints in the last 12 months. There were 2 new complaints since the group last met in September.

[REDACTED]

.BS made a point about the lack of publicity by the airport media team, especially around new routes. **BS** raised a previous topic regarding the lady who had made a complaint about her glasses being broken whilst in the central search area. One of the ladies' points, was that there was no complaint form to fill in. He asked if the airport could ensure that complaint forms were readily available in central search area. **JM** said he would take this onboard. **BS** asked about the recent press release regarding the tie up between Prestwick and Chicago Rockford. **JM** stated it is a cargo route they would like to pursue moving forward.

6. Police Scotland report.

NL stated that the airport policing team had taken part in a full-scale exercise which was based around a crashed aircraft on the runway. It was a well-supported and successful exercise.

[REDACTED]

7. Treasurer report.

JMcC stated that the end of year balance was £9579.32. Two councils, namely East and North Ayrshire have still to pay their contributions for the year and **JMcC** is escalating this with respective council leaders.

8. General Aviation.

BL stated that the AAIB had published their report into the Prestwick Flying Club PA-28 accident last year. The probable cause was carburettor icing which caused the engine to stop. **BL** asked **JM** if there was an update in relation to the Prestwick Flight Centre hangars being erected. **JM** stated that as they were of metal construction, they may cause a safeguarding issue in relation to the nearby radar. Steve Thomson is looking into this.

9. Spaceport update

BS informed the group he had twice written to the director of South Ayrshire Council for Spaceport after having receiving the report. However, the promise to answer any questions **BS** had from said report, has not materialised. South Ayrshire Council did put out a press release stating basically that they were continuing to push forward with the development and deliver key projects within the Ayrshire growth deal, assuring that monies are spent appropriately. Going forward investment in the Prestwick spaceport project will not be considered part of the Ayrshire growth deal. **JM** stated that the airport will no longer be pushing ahead for a licence for the spaceport at this time.

10. Windfarms

BS raised the issues surrounding the Sauchrie burn windfarm proposal, which is near to the heads of Ayr and in conflict to traffic using the airport. The proposal is for 9 turbines with tip heights of 200m. He stated that if the airport needed further support in challenging this proposal, then the GPACC, as a legitimate group, would be happy to write a letter of objection to the council. **JM** gave an update on how windfarms can be problematic to ATC radar returns and the potential cost involved to mitigate these issues. He informed the group that Prestwick is the most congested airport in the UK for wind turbines. **BS** that he would add windfarms to agenda moving forward.

11. 90th Anniversary of the founding of the “Scottish College of Aviation”

BS welcomed new RAeS Prestwick branch member John Stevens to the group. **JS** stated the Scottish College of Aviation was founded in 1935 and after a meeting at the Aeronautical society, it was decided that this anniversary should be celebrated in some way, as it is an important year. **JS** went on to say that he has spoken to local

MP's, South Ayrshire Council and Glasgow Prestwick Airport. With regard to the meeting with the airport, it was discussed as to possibly having some form of exhibition in the old spectator's terrace as part of the anniversary celebration. **JS** informed the group that the RAeS promotes aviation throughout the country and across the world and they promote a heritage plaque, which aims to commemorate significant people, places and things that showcase technological or operational achievements in aviation. The plaque for Prestwick, was originally destined to be placed on a wall at Spirit's Prestwick site in Monkton, however, there is little scope for the public to be able to see it in this location. It was thought as part of the 90th anniversary celebrations that the plaque, could be situated within the airport terminal and thus give access to the public to see this prestigious award to aviation in Prestwick. **JM** stated he did not see a problem with the plaque or the exhibition and he would speak to those involved at the airport and get back to **JS**

12. UKACC AGM update.

BS gave an update on the UKACC AGM held at Leeds Bradford in November of last year. The outgoing chair, Colin Flack, was voted to remain in post for another term. The price increase for the membership was agreed. There were inputs from Leeds Bradford Airport on their vision moving forward, the CAA on working together to improve environmental performance, the DfT on an overview of the department post-election, ministerial priorities and aviation policy going forward. Internal business included going over the CAA manual of guidance for ACC's. The group have drawn up guiding principles for best practice toolkit, which will be available in the future. This is a more in-depth manual of guidance than what is presently in the CAA guidance. Next year's AGM will be held at Bristol airport.

13. GPACC vacancies

BS stated there were still vacancies, especially from councillors in the North and South and this would hopefully be addresses in the coming months. **BS** mentioned that the post of vice chair had still to be filled and asked those present if anyone wished to self-nominate, or indeed nominate someone for the role. Several members mentioned William McAlpine and it was agreed for **BS** to make an approach William to ask if he was interested in the role.

14. GPACC Provisional dates for 2025

There was a discussion regarding the best time and day for the GPACC meetings for 2025. Some members present had no preference, but keeping it as it currently is was also favoured. **BL** will circulate an e-mail for those not present to seek their thoughts, with the dates for the 2025 meetings circulated once the best time/day was agreed.

15. AOCB

BS made some clarifying points regarding the group. He stated GPACC was instigated by the then Prestwick airport management 55 years ago and is the airports group, independent of Prestwick airport. The group is 100% behind the airport and is supportive for all the good points and on the odd occasion, the critical friend, where we would challenge something that didn't seem right. The manual of guidance clearly states what the group should be made aware of includes, but is not exclusive to –

1/ Airport update including passenger numbers, new services, runway utilisation, complaints, noise and track keeping.

2/ Updates from the local authorities on all local plans and policies that impact the airport e.g. windfarms.

3/ Community noise – local air quality monitoring.

4/ Passenger service issues.

5/ Noise insulation schemes.

6/ Surface access.

7/ Airport development.

8/ Airspace changes.

9/ Noise action plans.

10/ Responding to consultations.

BS raised a point about the CEO's report being issued in advance of the meeting to allow members to digest it and have any questions prepared for on the day of the meeting. This was done in years gone by, but had fallen away in recent years. **BS** asked **JM** if he could take this away and discuss with the CEO to ascertain if it could be reintroduced.

16. Date of next meeting

The next meeting date will be circulated after a decision is made on suitable time/day.

ACTIONS

ACTION	OWNER	DEADLINE
Liase with John Stevens RAeS regarding 90 th anniversary Scottish College of Aviation and possible plaque placement within airport	Juan Merrill	14/02/25
Ascertain if CEO report can be circulated a week before the meeting.	Juan Merrill	14/02/25
Arrange for complaint forms to be held in central search	Juan Merrill	14/02/25