Email: sasig@surreycc.gov.uk,
Website: www.sasig.org.uk

SASIG

Parliamentary Bulletin
17-23 March 2012

SASIG, PO Box 1308, Kingston upon Thames,
KT1 2WF. Tel: (020) 8541 9459,
Fax: (020) 8541 9447

Government News

19 March 2012 - David Cameron sets out transport network plans
Prime Minister David Cameron has set out plans to boost Britain's airport capacity and attract private money into the roads. He promised to take on "vested interests" to force through improvements to the transport network and said he wanted to look "urgently" at private-sector options - which could involve tolls for new roads.

21 March 2012 - Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne delivers the Budget Statement
The SASIG Office has produced a report on the budget statement that can be found on the link here.

22 March 2012 - Business minister appeals for owners to invest in Cardiff Airport
Welsh Assembly Business Minister Edwina Hart has told the National Assembly's Enterprise and Business Committee that the Welsh Government could assist the airport, but said she had little confidence in its current Spanish owners.

Westminster Debates and Legislation

19 March 2012 - Airport policy in the European Union

The European Scrutiny Committee recommended the debate on airport policy in the European Union (EU) because of the 2011 White Paper, in which the EU Commission identified the need to make more efficient use of airport capacity, optimise the provision of ground-handling services and address the anticipated increase in demand for air services. Against that background, the Commission presented a paper on its better airports package, which includes an overarching communication—document A—and three draft regulations that are intended to help boost capacity, reduce delays and promote quality in the EU's airports.

Press Releases

21 March 2012 – Dame Anne Begg MP attacks increase in air passenger duty
The Aberdeen South MP condemned Chancellor George Osborne's decision to increase air passenger duty despite calls from Scotland's airports to rethink the planned hike and give them the chance to compete against European rivals.

21 March 2012 - A Fair Tax on Flying campaign - Budget Response - Air Passenger Duty

Westminster Committees

19 March 2012 - Lords EU Sub-Committee B - Airport slot allocation
The Committee heard from: Simon McNamara, Deputy Director General, European Regions Airline Association; David Smith, Schedule Planning Manager, British Airways; and Richard Matthews, Head of Scheduling, Easyjet
During a meeting of Lords EU Sub-Committee B on Airport slot allocation, Peers were told that adopting the proposal from the European Commission on slot allocation would be a retrograde step and potentially cause global confusion on slot allocation policy. Existing regulations needed to be applied consistently across Europe before the Commission considering the implementation of new proposals.

19 March 2012 - Lords EU Sub-Committee B - Airport slot allocation
The Committee heard from: Rob Siddall, Policy Director, Airport Operators Association; Emma Gilthorpe, Economics and Regulation Director, BAA Ltd; Daniel Edwards, Head of Economic Policy and International Aviation, Civil Aviation Authority; and James Cole, Director of Airport Coordination Limited International (ACL). The Committee heard that increasing the transparency of the slot allocation procedure would ultimately result in an improved passenger experience.

House of Commons Questions

Varying rates of air passenger duty in England

Air routes between London, Scotland and China - MacNeil, A - 20 March 2012

Changing levels of air passenger duty in Northern Ireland - Long, N - 21 March 2012

SASIG 2012/13 Meeting Dates

Thursday 14 June 2012 The Aviation Minister, Theresa Villiers, shall be attending.
Friday 9 November 2012 and Friday 1 March 2013. Meetings are held between 11am and 1pm, at Local Government House, Smith Square, SW1P 3HZ, with lunch provided afterwards; location map