

## COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES MEETING WITH THE CAA BOARD, 15th NOVEMBER 2017

The following is a summary of the principal suggestions made to the CAA board at a meeting with community group representatives, including SASIG, on 15th November 2017.

1. In relation to airspace changes we hope the CAA will ***be clearer about the way it plans to interpret its Transport Act section 70 duties when deciding whether to approve airspace changes***, particularly how it will balance efficient use of airspace and the environmental guidance given to it by the Secretary of State.

The DfT's guidance, now published, puts the ball in the CAA's court. The government asks the CAA to "*ensure an appropriate balance is achieved as the UK embarks on a major programme of airspace modernisation*". It also requires that the benefits of growth should be shared between the industry and those who suffer its impacts. The CAA hasn't yet set out what it believes that balance should look like, or how it will ensure that the benefits of growth are shared. We are keen that it should "set the tone" for its future airspace change decisions and so provide additional clarity for both communities and the industry. We envisage this could include both some absolute environmental red lines, that is noise impacts, perhaps reducing progressively over time, which would normally result in an airspace change being rejected, and a vision of what a fairer, broader, balance should consist of.

2. Alongside the point above, and as one way of implementing it, we'd like the CAA to consider ***conditional approvals for airspace changes***, that is approvals conditional on noise, ATM or other caps, noise reduction profiles or other elements of a balanced approach. If the CAA itself doesn't have powers to grant conditional approvals, legally binding undertakings, perhaps secured via contracts with local bodies might be another way to achieve the same effect.
3. We would like the CAA, working with ICCAN, to be ***more proactive on broader noise management issues, unrelated to airspace changes***. This could include highlighting both good and poor practice using its information powers and leading on key noise issues.
4. We would like the CAA to ***take adverse health impacts on the ground as seriously as it takes achieving a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services***. We do not understand why an organisation that is so alert to safety issues in the sky pays so little attention to the health impacts on those on the ground; arguably air services that have significant land-based health consequences are as unsafe as dangerous practice in the sky. It seems extraordinary for example that the CAA feels able to approve airspace changes that concentrate aircraft noise without having considered seriously the health impacts of those changes.

5. We would welcome ***moves to ensure the CAA's Board became more experienced in, and aware of, environmental and community issues.*** Of the 12 current board members 10 have transport or defence sector backgrounds (see annex) [and none has an environmental background]. Options might include inviting one or more of the board to take a particular interest in the industry's noise and environmental impacts and seeking a wider range of experience in forthcoming board appointments.
6. We hope the CAA will ***encourage DfT to adopt much clearer and more meaningful noise policy objectives.*** The core phraseology the Department has used for many years "to limit and, where possible, reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by adverse impacts from aircraft noise", now to be "in support of sustainable development" is open to multiple interpretations and is not, in our view, a sound basis for effective regulation.
7. We hope the CAA will help ***persuade government that new noise regulatory arrangements are now essential*** for airports where the current set up has failed. The patch and mend approach of the past 30 years has failed to deliver government's stated policy objectives and resulted in a confused and ineffective institutional set up. Communities around most of the major airports do not have confidence in the current system of regulation. We would welcome CAA endorsement of the proposals we have set out, or constructive engagement on them.