



**BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

c/o Clare Silcock (Secretary)  
Blackbushe Airport Ltd  
Terminal Building  
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13 March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

**BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 19:00 PATHFINDER CAFÉ, BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT**

The next meeting of the committee will be held at The Pathfinder Café at Blackbushe Airport on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7pm, when the presence of members is requested.

The agenda for the meeting is enclosed, along with the minutes of the previous meeting which was held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

I should be grateful if any member who cannot attend the meeting would kindly let me know in advance, by e-mail. Deputies are welcome to attend as are members of the public as this is a public meeting.

The Airport have a section of their website dedicated to this committee <https://www.blackbusheairport.co.uk/consultative-committee/> where as previously agreed it would be appreciated if you could publicise it on your website to increase the awareness of this committee.

Yours sincerely

Clare Silcock  
**Secretary of the Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee**

## BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held at 7pm on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023

### AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting (Appendix 1)**  
To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022, attached.
3. **Report by Airport Manager including monitoring of complaints**
4. **Update on Deregistration of Common Land**
5. **Blackbushe Air Day 2023**
6. **Twilight Runway Challenge**
7. **Matters Arising**
8. **Questions (members of the public may ask questions for a period not exceeding 15 minutes)**
9. **AOB**
10. **Confirmation of date and venue of the next meeting**

Clare Silcock  
Secretary of the Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**APPENDIX 1**

**BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 19:00 ON THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2022**

**Present:**

Chris Gazzard	Blackbushe Airport [CG]
Michael Bagshaw	Chair [MB]
Cllr Steve Thomas	Sandhurst Town Council [ST]
Cllr Sheila Davenport	Sandhurst Town Council [SD]
Cllr Diana Harvey	Hartley Whitney Parish Council [DH]
Cllr Terry Hunt	Blackwater & Hawley Town Council [TH]
Cllr Peter Cullum	Rushmoor Borough Council [PC]
Cllr Richard Quarterman	Hart District Council [RQ]
Cllr Adrian Collett	Hampshire County Council [AC]
Cllr Tony Spencer	Yateley Town Council [TS]
Cllr Jules Crossley	Rushmoor Borough Council [JC]
Clare Silcock	Secretary [CS]

		<b>Action required by</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  Cllr Colin Edge (Eversley), Nicky Lyle (Yateley Society), and Bramshill Parish Council	
<b>2</b>	<b>NEW CHAIRPERSON APPOINTMENT</b>  CS opened the meeting welcoming everyone and passed to the first item on the agenda which was to appoint a new chairman. A letter had gone to all the members of the consultative committee outlining the background of Michael Bagshaw who had been suggested by CG as someone who has a lot of aviation knowledge, a background at Blackbushe, but someone who could remain a neutral party. The committee was asked if they had any objections, there were none, and Michael Bagshaw was duly appointed.	
<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022</b>  The minutes of the meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2022 were agreed as a true record. This was proposed by ST and seconded by DH.	
<b>3</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b>  There were no matters arising.	
<b>4</b>	<b>AIRPORT MANAGER'S UPDATE</b>  These minutes are in addition to the Airport Managers detailed presentation which should be referred to in conjunction with these minutes.	

**4.1 In the Business Performance** figures compare 2022 with 2019, as 2020/21 were such anomalies with the effects of Covid. Notable points are that GA rotary (smaller helicopter) traffic was down by 58% in 2022 mainly due to the loss of Phoenix Helicopters in 2020. However, the executive helicopters have been up to 2011 levels. AVGas fuel sales have been affected by higher fuel price. Unfortunately, when BBS purchased the fuel, it was at a higher price than when other airfields did, so some planes went elsewhere for their fuel. But Jet A1 is up to 2011 levels. We expect a positive EBITDA for the first time since 2011. Jet traffic is much higher in 2022, with a lot of King Airs and other turbo props as well as larger private jets coming in and out. This is partly due to Farnborough limiting their weekend traffic to anything greater than 7.5 tonnes, and also the uncertainty at Fair Oaks. AC asked how close Farnborough is to its limits during the week. CG was uncertain but JC said that they are at 2/3 of their capacity.

Executive Aviation accounts for just 5.7% of the movements at BBS (it was 4% when CG joined back in 2017). The average small plane is charged about £14 for landing (residents only £2), whereas a business jet is charged an average of £150, so a lot more revenue is generated. However, CG acknowledged that BBS is never going to be the same as Farnborough and Biggin Hill in terms of business traffic.

The cafe is a £3/4 million business on its own. SD asked if the café was now profitable, and CG stated that it has been within two months of opening.

No funds have been taken from the Shareholders since April 2021. BBS has taken £2 million of shareholder funds since they bought the airport in 2016. The airport doesn't expect to take any more funds for next year.

**4.2 Noise Complaints** – CG has categorised the 2022 data – There were 8 complaints about approach or climb outs from aircraft and these were mainly over Hartley Wintney. CG has asked Farnborough, who control that airspace, to try to get the aircraft to straighten up over Hook as that would be better as the aircraft would be higher at that point, so each time this happens the Tower contact Farnborough. There have been a few complaints from the Frimley area, which is East and north of Farnborough, and these are mainly due to the change in Farnborough airspace. Farnham are also experiencing a few issues now because of this change too. JC said that to ensure that we address as many issues as possible next March with Farnborough as that is the time that they will register and analyse most of their complaints. AC asked if the airport has many complaints due to police helicopter flights, but CG confirmed that there has not been any this year. There is usually 1 or 2 received a year. Mr Hall continues to be the most prolific complainant with 31 complaints registered over the last 6 months. CG said that due to the position of his house, which is right on the edge of the noise abatement area, it isn't surprising that he experiences more noise than others. A plane only has to get it slightly wrong, and they will go over his house. Any emails that are received from Mr Hall are forwarded automatically to the Tower in-box now so they can

immediately try to trace which aircraft has caused the problem and why, and then address the issue.

RQ asked if CG checks the Yateley Community pages for any issues and he confirmed he does a couple of times a week. CG confirmed that the airport gets a lot of positive feedback from Yateley Community. SD mentioned that she tends to get a lot of helicopters flying over Sandhurst and others mentioned that Crowthorne also experiences that, but it is likely that this is due to being close to the M4 corridor and the trainline as helicopters use these as guidelines for location.

CG went through some typical examples of some mistakes that pilots make and said that the team are constantly educating pilots on the noise abatement areas and using the Farnborough airspace.

**4.3 Common Land Deregistration** – CG summarised the process that the airport had been through with the courts to try to get some of the land deregistered and stated that the airport was surprised that the case got rejected before it actually got to the Supreme Court, but suspect it is due to so many delays in the court system after Covid, and Blackbushe's case was not as important as others. Now the case has gone back to the Planning Inspector, and he has written to the airport to say that he would reject the entire application. However, this should not be the case as at the very least all parties had agreed that at least the footprint of both the café and the Terminal Building should be de-registered. The airport has to respond by 31<sup>st</sup> October. PC asked if the airport was to ask for the car park area as the curtilage how would that work. CG explained that he had looked at a few previous cases and there were examples such as a golf course in Norfolk where the car park had been agreed as the curtilage of the clubhouse. Some objections were made to that, but the land was given as curtilage. The Airport is hoping to get the whole car park as it serves both buildings and gives access to the A30.

**4.4 Common Land Exchange** – Back in 2016 the new owners considered two routes for the airport's development – either schedule 2 which was the deregistration process, or schedule 16, using the exchange of land. Unfortunately, at that time there was no land around Blackbushe available for purchase, but CG has always been looking out for some. One of the Shareholders of Blackbushe purchased Cottage Farm last year, which is adjacent to the Common. This has 35 acres of land that the Airport could potentially use to exchange for some of the common land that Airport is on. This would give a good portion of land to the airport all the way along the A30 where hangars could be built. CG has had a very productive meeting with the Open Spaces Society (OSS) to discuss this idea to see if they might be open to this. They acknowledged that they could certainly see the benefit of the new piece of land compared to the airport land, as there is no right to roam for the public on the airfield, except for the 27 local commoners, whereas Cottage Farm land would be available for all to access. The OSS also gave CG some suggestions as to what the airport needed to do with the Cottage Farm land such as the general upkeep and access points.

CG has also approached the Hampshire County Council legal team but they were not interested in pre-consulting. However, some of the local Hampshire councillors are meeting with CG next month to discuss the proposal.

The Airport expect to put in a s16 application by the end of the year and then it will take 12 months to go through as there will have to be a public consultation and then it is very likely to go to public inquiry (unless none of the commoners' object).

JC commented that Farnborough Airport is actually built on common land, which CG was not aware of.

#### 4.5 Blackbushe Events 2022

The **BBS 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary** was this year so an open day and fly in was held in the Summer. The event was limited to 3,000 tickets which were sold out a week before the day. Due to its success and positive feedback from the local community the airport is considering whether to host it annually. The possible date for next year could be Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023.

The **Twilight Runway Challenge** used to be held at Farnborough Airport but moved in 2021 to Blackbushe. This year the runners raised nearly £40,000 for a variety of charities. CMPP (the organisers), work closely with local businesses and their workers to join up with the local community to work on projects in schools and charities. The event is already been booked in for 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023, with a discount for those who book themselves on early!

**4.6 Management of Disused Runway** – There have been two complaints about how overgrown the disused runway area has become and the airport has already completed some tidying of the areas as there was certainly a risk of fire spread. Some areas have been cut back to help maintain fire breaks. However, there was some complaints by Natural England and the airport have also had some filming enquiries turned down due to objections from Natural England. The airport is now in conversation with the RSPB who would like to lease some of the land from the airport for the next 11 years in order to maintain the area. The airport would like to continue to consider filming opportunities and hope to have some more next year. A scene from Kraven The Hunter, one of the Marvel films was filmed over there this year and it is a useful income to the airport and actually helps to pay the costs of maintaining the area. RQ commented that there did seem to be a lot of weeds on some parts of the runway whereas other parts are clearer. CG confirmed that some clearing is done in conjunction with some filming events. AC asked if the RSPB's intention was to improve the habitats for birds, but it is more to turn it back to heathland.

**4.7 The Blackbushe Heritage Trust** is a charitable organisation who are trying to bring back a Vickers Viking aircraft to BBS, as about 30 of these aircraft used to be based there in the 60's. These are very rare aircraft nowadays, so the Heritage Trust is trying to obtain an aircraft from an airfield in Austria, refurbish it and base it at BBS. Peter Brown, a member of the public and Heritage Trust, explained that the Trust has recruited about 25 volunteers who could help restore the plane once it comes to Blackbushe but that they need to raise

	<p>money to pay the very high transport costs (£30,000) to get it here and then also have some money available for the refurbishment. They have held a number of events and have a trailer that they take to other airfield events where they inform the public and ask for donations. They will apply for lottery funding and there is a willingness from the BBS shareholders to help, but the group need to gather some donations first. There is another refurbished Viking at the Brooklands Museum. It is likely that the plane at BBS will be in the colours of Eagle Airways who were based at BBS in the 60s. There is also a history hub in the Terminal Building at BBS which highlights the Viking's history at the airfield amongst other things. MB commented that there is also a Varsity aircraft down in Cornwall, which is very similar to the Viking, and may be useful for some parts when the time comes.</p>	
5	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PUBLIC &amp; COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>RQ gave an update on the Yateley Neighbourhood Plan which has now finally been approved.</p> <p>JC asked about the type of fuel that BBS sells and whether it has lead in it. CG explained that the AvGas 100LL is a leaded fuel and it is used in quite a number of the small training planes. However, in 2019 the airfield installed a UL91 pump (unleaded) and some aircraft are able to switch to this, and some of the flying schools have bought aircraft specifically to use the unleaded fuel. £40k fuel sales have been due to UL fuel purchases, out of £300k this year so far. However, there is in fact a worldwide shortage of 100LL and the US has produced a 100UL variant of fuel which is hoped will be available soon in the UK. Two American states have actually banned the use of leaded fuel for aircraft, so the change is happening. UL91 is a more expensive fuel, but BBS price matches it to 100LL to encourage users where possible to buy it. PC asked if there were any power implications when aircraft change to the unleaded version and CG and MB said that some planes are slightly affected with perhaps a 5% reduction in power.</p> <p>PC also asked if there was still some electric aircraft at BBS. CG explained that Semet Aviation had had to let go of its electric aircraft after there was a problem with Russian ownership which meant they didn't fly them, which then meant that the owner took them back. They did experience other problems with them however as the recharge of them takes about 2 hours and they only have a range of about 37 minutes of flying, so circuits work, but other flying is very restricted. MB explained that the RAF had a similar problem with some aircraft they bought so at the moment going electric is limited due to cost, recharging and range of flight. BBS does have an electric charging point here so if other aircraft do come, they can be recharged.</p>	
6	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> - There was no other business to report except MB thanked everyone for attending and thanked Chris and the management team at BBS for their positive approach and changes implemented at Blackbushe over the last few years.</p>	

10	<b>FUTURE MEETING</b> - It was suggested to avoid Mondays and Thursdays for the councillors so the next meeting date will be Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 7pm at the Pathfinder Café again. However please let CS know if this creates a clash with other local events.	
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