

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of an Extraordinary meeting of the County Council held at County Hall, Hertford, on Tuesday 17 December 2002.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

N E Agar	D J Drake	L R Kercher	H M Saunders
T I Ambrose	R J M Ellis	I H Laidlaw-Dickson	D T F Scudder
D A Ashley	K F Emsall	B J Lamb	A M R Searing
S A Batson	B C Engel	A Lee	I Simpson
M V Bayes	F J Escott	D B Lloyd	E N Singam
D Beatty	G D Game	D E Lloyd	R H Smith
D E Billing	S B A Giles-Medhurst	R Mays	R J Smith
N K Brook	J Gipps	D R McManus	W A Storey
P T J Channell	P V Goggins	J T Metcalf	I E M Tarry
G R Churchar	R I N Gordon	R Mills	J Taunton
D Clayton	A K Gray (Chairman)	S J Mills	J W A Usher
F W Clayton	M Green	J R Morton	P A Webb
R S Clements	F Guest	A Oaten	G F Wenham
K J Coleman	B N W Hammond	M H O'Neill	B A York
M D Colne	D W Hills	D A A Peek	
G M Cook	M J Hobday	J M Pitman	
R N Copping	J A Hobday	S Quilty	
K M Crout	M H T Janes	D Royall	
A D Dodd	S E Jones	P A Ruffles	
M Downing	T G M Kent	R Sanderson	

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Extraordinary meeting of the County Council held on 17 December 2002, as circulated, action was taken or decisions were reached as follows:-

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 November 2002 were confirmed.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2.1 BY-ELECTION – MERIDEN TUDOR (no 67)

The Chairman announced that, at the by-election held in Watford on 28 November, Audrey Oaten had been elected to represent the Meriden Tudor division (no 67).

The Council congratulated her upon her election and welcomed her to her first full Council Meeting.

2.2 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA)

The Chairman announced that Hertfordshire County Council had been assessed as excellent in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment recently undertaken by the Audit Commission; one of only 22 in that category out of the 150 assessed.

The Leader of the Council, R J M Ellis, the Leader of the Opposition, R Mays, and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, A Lee, together with County Councillors H M Saunders and T G M Kent, congratulated staff and members on this achievement.

The Council then took item 4 before item 3, as the specific issue of Airports needed to be discussed before the wider Regional Planning item.

4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORTS IN THE U.K.

R Mays declared a prejudicial interest in this item and withdrew from the Chamber.

- (a) The following Cabinet proposals were moved by **I E M Tarry** and duly seconded (note: these were moved in slightly amended form; the changes from the wording proposed by the Cabinet are shown in bold):-

“(1) That the Department for Transport be informed of the Authority’s major concerns, namely;

- *its extreme dissatisfaction with the consultation process, especially the presentation of the Luton Airport proposals, and weaknesses in technical information;*
- *the potential cumulative impact on Hertfordshire of airport development at Stansted, Luton **and Heathrow** in terms of congestion, noise, environmental impact and development, and as a result,*
- *its total rejection of any new runway development at either Stansted, Luton **or Heathrow** airports*

and in addition stresses that:

- *as far as practicable passengers should be able to use local regional airports, thus reducing pressure on the major south-east airports. Such a policy aim could also strengthen economic regeneration in areas where this is necessary.*
- *insufficient emphasis is being placed on the use of high speed rail links to substitute for short haul flights, in order to reduce*

the need for airport capacity and reduce local environmental impacts such as congestion.

- *it is not persuaded of the need to establish a second hub airport in the congested south - east in order to compete with continental airports which have more space and a better labour supply.*
- (2) *That the initial response to the consultation be endorsed, but that the Department for Transport be informed that the authority reserves the right to add to or amend the response following any further consultation exercise.*
 - (3) *That the Department for Transport ensure that any further consultation on airport development addresses the wider issues raised in the Authority's response.*
 - (4) *That Ministers are invited to Hertfordshire in order to hear the County Council's concerns at first hand.*
 - (5) *That a commitment is sought from Government to provide adequate infrastructure before any further expansion takes place to increase the use of existing runways.*
 - (6) *That work in conjunction with appropriate District and County Councils should continue to assess any new consultation material, particularly related to its potential transport and urbanisation impacts.*
 - (7) *That the County Council will explore **every** opportunity to undertake legal action if the Government fail to address **its concerns, including** the presentation of the Luton Airport situation in the new consultation documentation."*
- (b) The following amendments to (a) (1) proposed by **B A York**, and duly seconded, were CARRIED:-

"1. That the Department for Transport be also informed that:

- *the Government should not 'predict and provide' to cater for unconstrained demand for air travel. The process should be one of 'plan, monitor and manage', balancing economic and environmental considerations.*
- *the Air Industry should meet the costs of the environmental damage it causes. Action should be taken against operators who violate conditions of operation. There must be effective monitoring of noise and meaningful penalties against those who break regulations.*

- *before there is expansion of any airport, full surface infrastructure in terms of rail and road, including Hertfordshire concerns such as the A120, should be in place. In particular there must be extensive expansion of affordable public transport to and from airports.*
- *Luton should be allowed to expand only on its existing runway to 15 mppa.*
- *subject to an assessment of the environmental impact, Alconbury should be developed as a freight airport thereby taking cargo flight pressures off Stansted, Luton and Heathrow (freight carriers tend to be noisy and have a high proportion of night flights).*
- *the potential cumulative impact on Hertfordshire of airport development at Stansted, Luton and Heathrow in terms of congestion, noise, environmental impact and development be fully assessed.*
- *as far as practicable passengers should be able to use local regional airports thus reducing pressure on the major south-east airports. Such a policy aim could also strengthen economic regeneration in areas where this is necessary.*
- *insufficient emphasis is being placed on the use of high speed rail links to substitute for short haul flights, in order to reduce the need for airport capacity and reduce local environmental impacts such as congestion.”*

(c) The following amendment to (a) (1) proposed by **B A York**, and duly seconded was LOST:-

“That the Department for Transport be also informed that before any decision about expansion at Stansted is taken, the Government should consider Gatwick, alongside all other options for airport expansion in the greater south-east, thereby creating a ‘level playing field’.”

(d) The following amendment to (a) (1) proposed by **R J M Ellis**, and duly seconded, was CARRIED:-

“That the Department for Transport be also informed that, before any decision about expansion at Stansted, Luton or Heathrow is taken, the Government should consider Gatwick, alongside all other options for airport expansion in the greater south-east, thereby creating a ‘level playing field’.”

- (e) The motions at (a), as amended by (b) and (d) were then CARRIED.

3. REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

- (a) The following Cabinet proposals were moved by **I E M Tarry** and duly seconded. (Note: these were moved in slightly amended form; the change from the wording proposed by the Cabinet is shown in bold):-

“(1) That the proposed response to the Regional Planning Guidance (RPG14) Options Consultation Document, set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be submitted to the Regional Planning Panel.

(2) That the overarching comments, set out in Section 1 of the Report, be also submitted as part of the County Council’s response, in particular highlighting its concerns over:

- the need to delay the preparation of RPG14, in order to take full account of the 2001 Census, revisions to the Regional Economic Strategy, Government decisions on SERAS, conclusions on the Mayor's London Plan, ministerial announcements on 'Growth Areas' and further work on infrastructure provision*
- the scale of housing and population growth, and*
- the need to secure adequate provision of affordable **and key worker** housing.*

(3) That a commitment be sought from the Regional Planning Body that any failure to achieve sufficient amounts of affordable housing does not lead to its substitution by market housing.

(4) That joint working on relevant studies should continue with adjoining authorities in order to progress cross-boundary issues, particularly in the Milton Keynes Sub-Region, and the London, Stansted, Cambridge study area, which may have potential for growth but which does not operate as a coherent sub-region.”

- (b) The following amendment to (2) proposed by **B A York**, and duly seconded, was LOST:-

“That the following bullet point be added:-

‘With 43% of households in Hertfordshire requiring affordable housing a considerably higher target than 20% across the region as a whole is required. This should be set at 35%. In addition further Government initiatives are required to allow local authorities to set and meet targets for affordable housing which reflect local needs’.”

(c) The motions at (a) were then CARRIED.

5. KEY DECISIONS / FORWARD PLAN

The following motion proposed by **R J M Ellis**, and duly seconded, was CARRIED:-

"That the position of Key Decisions in the decision-making process, shown in the current edition of the Forward Plan, be noted."

ANDREW LAYCOCK
County Secretary