

LGA Special Interest Groups

2014 Annual Report to LGA Leadership Board

Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)

SIG NAME, LEAD OFFICER, AUTHORITY AND CONTACT DETAILS:	
<p>SIG NAME: Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG) LEAD OFFICER: Anna Mahoney, Director AUTHORITY: N/A ADDRESS: PO Box 1308, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2WF TEL: (020) 8541 9459 / 07968 832687 EMAIL: sasig@surreycc.gov.uk WEBSITE: www.sasig.org.uk</p>	
CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:	
<p>[Note: Only LGA member authorities are entitled to SIG membership]</p>	
<p>Broadland District Council Buckinghamshire County Council Canterbury City Council Cheshire East Council Cornwall Council Crawley Borough Council Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council East Herts District Council Essex County Council Hampshire County Council Hertfordshire County Council London Borough of Hillingdon London Borough of Hounslow Luton Borough Council Mole Valley District Council Reigate & Banstead Borough Council</p>	<p>London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Southend on Sea Borough Council Spelthorne Borough Council Surrey County Council Thanet District Council Uttlesford District Council West Midlands Joint Committee: Birmingham City Council Coventry City Council Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council Wolverhampton City Council Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Wokingham Borough Council</p>
<p>SASIG represents 12 million people, more than a fifth of the national population.</p>	

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

Mission Statement

SASIG works to ensure that UK aviation policy is implemented in a manner that reconciles economic, social and environmental issues.

Terms of Reference

- 1 The Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG) shall provide the forum within the Local Government Association (LGA) for all local authorities to discuss strategic aviation policies and major aviation issues.
- 2 SASIG will contribute to the work of the LGA in responding to Government and the European Commission on all aviation issues that have a strategic planning, transportation, land use, economic or environmental health dimension. SASIG, where appropriate, will work through and in conjunction with the LGA. SASIG will make representations direct to Government and elsewhere arising directly from the SIG's special interest. SASIG shall not act in a way that conflicts with or undermines LGA policy as a whole or damages the interests of member authorities.
- 3 SASIG will develop its role and pursue its objectives in accordance with an annual work programme, which will be kept under review so as to ensure consistency with LGA policy and meet with the aspirations of a wider membership.
- 4 SASIG will operate under the following constitution:
 - (i) Each authority in membership is entitled to designate one Member and/or one officer to attend each meeting of the Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group.
 - (ii) Whilst the Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group will seek to work by amicable agreement amongst the authorities, the formal position is that only one person from each member authority is entitled to vote.
 - (iii) There is no objection to additional Members and officers attending meetings to observe and speak with the permission of the Chairman.
 - (iv) A Chairman's Advisory Group and a Technical Officers Group, with representatives drawn from around airport locations on the Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group, will be maintained to assist in taking initiatives forward but with no specific executive powers unless so authorised or at times when urgency dictates that responses must be made between meetings.
 - (v) A Chairman and up to three Vice Chairmen will be elected annually to ensure a broad geographical spread of interest.
 - (vi) The role of Honorary President may be filled by an appropriate person.
 - (vii) The Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group shall submit an annual report to the LGA and shall table other reports for LGA meetings as and when necessary.
 - (viii) The Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group shall set an annual subscription rate for membership based on an assessment of its likely annual expenditure on staff, consultants, printing/publicity and other costs. These costs will be apportioned between member authorities on a formula to be agreed.

- (ix) Authorities joining SASIG in any quarter of the financial year shall pay the relevant proportion of the annual subscription.
 - (x) Authorities shall be advised of the forthcoming subscriptions each autumn for their approval. The absence of a response to the contrary indicates approval.
 - (xi) Authorities resigning from SASIG shall give notice in writing prior to the end of the financial year.
- 5 The Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group will keep its working methods and subscriptions under review with the aim of setting the subscription for all members at the lowest practical level. The current subscriptions are listed below.
- 6 Surrey County Council will provide financial management services to SASIG and ensure that all income and expenditure is controlled and audited within their normal practices.

Annual Membership Subscriptions for 2013/14

Districts around regional airports	£900
Districts distant from London airports	£900
Districts close to London airports	£1,800
Unitaries around regional airports	£1,800
Unitaries distant from London airports	£1,800
Unitaries close to London airports	£3,600
Counties around regional airports	£1,800
Counties distant from London airports	£1,800
Counties close to London airports	£5,500

June 2013

KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

SASIG's objectives are:

- to promote the need for long-term, sustainable aviation policies that lead to a reduction in the environmental impact of aviation whilst securing appropriate social and economic benefits;
- to increase understanding of the local and global impacts of aviation on the environment and communities;
- to identify and promote the changes needed to move towards sustainable aviation practices within the industry and Government; and
- to work with other organisations and the Government on the formulation of policy advice.

SASIG Policy Principles

- i. To give the people of the UK the social and business opportunities to travel from their nearest airport where feasible.

.....continues.....

- ii. To capture, not stifle, the social and economic benefits of aviation using robust and objective evidence.
- iii. To direct aviation growth to locations where it will assist sustainable economic regeneration.
- iv. To minimise adverse impacts – social, economic and environmental – by protecting people and non-transferable habitats.
- v. To ensure that the air transport sector rather than local communities pays the full costs of the impact of all air journeys.
- vi. To offer the aviation industry tough but realistic parameters based upon associated impacts around which to secure growth.
- vii. To ensure that good quality surface access links are provided to airports, particularly public transport links that create integrated transport hubs.
- viii. To promote better point to point air services from regional airports, with sensitive control over all impacts.
- ix. To cap the existing London Airports at the capacity of the existing number of runways, with careful controls imposed so as to reduce the adverse impacts over time.
- x. To consider the concept of a new 24-hour airport in the South East, where it would have minimal impact on local communities.
- xi. To support the coordination and integration of the full spectrum of national policies on issues relating to aviation. This must accord with international and regional policy-making and implementation.
- xii. To promote investigation of the impacts of the air freight industry, supporting the development of air freight infrastructure where it is the most appropriate mode.
- xiii. To encourage Governments and the aviation industry to make greater efforts to reduce aviation's impacts on climate change.

SASIG strongly urge that Government address the need for a new national aviation policy that:

- Is based on the need to control the impacts rather than the aviation activity.
- Has considered in detail all options for providing capacity to meet forecast demand, and for providing for other, lower levels of demand.
- Embraces the concept of integrated transport provision.
- Audits the parameters that should be used in any forecasts of future demand.
- Adopts an assessment process for aviation developments that explicitly includes all associated costs.
- Sets effective environmental limits for the aviation industry to meet, taking the appropriate form – regulation, charges, taxes, etc.
- Considers and mitigates against the impact of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Develops the economic analysis of aviation, and in particular improves valuation of the net impact – benefits and disbenefits.
- Coordinates with other transport policies and with other associated national policies, such as climate change, and energy policies.

KEY ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

National representation

The ways in which SASIG is represented publicly emphasises the national nature of the membership and thus the sphere of interest.

For instance, when the SASIG office team, accompanied by members of the Chairman's Advisory Group, travelled the country during Summer 2013, for the Regional Aviation Workshops undertaken with Transport for London, the need to understand and incorporate regional priorities was included in SASIG's presentation, pressing the point that we need a national aviation policy, not one that serves only London and/or the South East.

The make-up of the Chairman's Advisory Group also supports the geographical spread of the membership, and all opportunities are taken to highlight this, such as when SASIG met with the Aviation Minister, Robert Goodwill MP.

Ministerial meeting, Feb. 2014

The SASIG Chairman, two SASIG Vice Chairmen, and the SASIG office team met with Robert Goodwill MP, the Aviation Minister in February 2014. This was a valuable opportunity to introduce the Minister to SASIG's work and hear first-hand from the Minister.

The priorities derived by the membership in response to the Airports Commission's 'Interim Report' (Dec. 2013) informed the headline issues brought to the Minister's attention:

- Phase two of the Commission's work must deliver a thorough, net economic assessment* if local communities are to capture their share of the aviation sector's economic and social benefits.
* a net economic assessment is one that takes account of the full infrastructure, urbanisation and catalytic effects of aviation development.
- The costs and extent of stimulated demand for land, housing & commercial activity, integrated road and rail provision, blight and emissions - noise, air, and climate change, must all be clearly accounted for in Phase two of the Commission's work.
- If the factors required for a net economic assessment are not adequately incorporated in formation of the Commission's recommendations, the Government must redress this.
- The Government must ensure the opportunity costs of focussing investment and development in London and South East England have been fully evaluated in setting that focus, and determined to be acceptable in terms of not diminishing regeneration and development outside London and South East England.
- The Independent Aviation Noise Authority must be: truly independent; a body with effective powers; and appropriately involved in the planning process.

Mr Goodwill told of his positive experiences flying from and living in the vicinity of Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield, and of his industrial placement with Manchester Airports Group.

Airports Commission

SASIG has been actively involved in the Airports Commission's programme, in a variety of ways.

Following our March 2013 'Assessment Criteria' submission and Local Authority meeting with the Commissioners, we submitted a 'Key Issues' document in July 2013, for use by the Commission as they reviewed proposals received for short-, medium- and long-term development options.

The public evidence sessions held in July 2013 were attended by the SASIG office team, and Council Members & officers, at which the Director made a statement calling for improved economic assessment of aviation developments. This is needed to illustrate the net out-turn, taking account of demands on local infrastructure and land use in the broadest sense – road; rail; water; flood management; energy; housing; business; education; health; leisure; food production; and open space.

A net economic assessment should assist with maximising the capture of predicted economic gains, having been informed by evaluation of previous developments and modified according to losses and gains experienced across local economies.

Recognising that aviation sits within the broader context of other economic sectors in each locality, with each of those sectors having demands to also be taken into account, should support the production of a robust, mixed economy for the country.

SASIG responded to the Commission's 'Noise' Discussion Paper (Oct. 2013), commending the assessment of existing, and any new, aviation capacity be predicated on an improved economic assessment, informing the extent to which economic benefits can be maximised as the following factors would have been taken account of:

- compulsory purchase of properties, along with the associated loss of community;
- opportunity costs of sterilised land, i.e. reduced or zero development potential due to noise impacts;
- mitigation & compensation payments for noise impacts; and
- social cost of noise-induced health and welfare impacts.

This approach makes aviation noise impacts integral to the UK aviation industry – not an after-thought to simply be dealt with through mitigation and compensation.

SASIG was again instrumental in bringing Councils and the Airports Commission together for another briefing session in October 2013.

SASIG Chairman's statement - Airports Commission's 'Interim Report', Dec. 2013

The SASIG membership & office team collated media outlets and worked together to produce a draft press release in anticipation of the Airports Commission publishing their 'Interim Report' in December 2013.

From the draft SASIG press release a Chairman's statement was issued on the day of publication, in which, amongst other matters, the Chairman stated that SASIG Councils recognise the significant role aviation plays in our lives, but while the industry is recognised as global its impacts are disproportionately local.

SASIG meeting, Jan. 2014

An additional meeting was arranged for the SASIG membership to meet and discuss the Airports Commission's 'Interim Report'. The priority issues for the Group were derived from this meeting and used in subsequent events, such as meeting with the Aviation Minister. (detailed above)

SASIG article in LGA 'first' publication, Nov. 2013

The following SASIG article was published in the Local Government Association's weekly publication 'first' (http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/first-features/-/journal_content/56/10180/5713090/NEWS).

It has been a year since the Government's Airports Commission began considering UK aviation capacity.

The commission, chaired by Sir Howard Davies, sees regional airports as serving their local markets well, but does not see them absorbing the predicted scale of future demand. It therefore recommends provision of extra runway capacity in south east England. Respecting our domestic carbon reduction target, Sir Howard will recommend how the sector should grow.

The commission's first major publication will be their interim report, due before Parliament rises on the 19 December. This will supply the shortlist of aviation development options for further consideration, shaping the future provision of aviation capacity across the UK.

Aviation plays a significant role in our lives: it connects families and societies, offers leisure and business opportunities, and distributes freight around the world. But while aviation is recognised as a global industry, its impacts are disproportionately local.

Balancing act

The industry needs land for housing and employment attracted to airports, and integrated surface access for employees, freight, passengers and other road and rail users. There are health and climate impacts from airport activity and road vehicles; changes to local employment (positive and negative); issues around enabling travel while reducing carbon emissions; and, of course, more flights mean more noise.

All of these issues need to be managed locally, with councils balancing the economic and other benefits with the noise, congestion, air pollution, climate change and blight burdens of aviation.

People affected by airport operations are not solely the service users, the freight operatives and passengers, but also residents and businesses in communities around airports.

So with demand for air travel predicted to nearly double by 2030, local authorities must attend to the pressing issue of aviation capacity.

The LGA's Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG) welcomes the benefits of aviation while emphasising how negative impacts are often only partially accounted for.

Improved economic assessment of aviation would ensure we capture the value of the sector for the whole country. The lack of a transparent, thorough assessment compromises growth, as well as quality of life and wellbeing for the worst affected communities.

Robust assessment would inform debate around the share of public and private financing, recognising the sizeable public spend required for large-scale aviation developments, especially access and infrastructure.

Local authorities are crucially important to the aviation debate. We are the bodies with oversight of, and responsibility for addressing, the competing demands, desires and needs of all the interested parties, and pivotal to the processing of aviation development. This is a critical time to be involved in this on-going debate. There is a pressing need to understand and articulate the full role that aviation plays in your local area. SASIG can help your council deliver a clear message to the commission as it forms recommendations on the nation's aviation infrastructure.

Cllr Jamie Macrae (Con, Cheshire East Council) is Chairman of the LGA's Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)

Regional Aviation Workshops, SASIG & Transport for London (TfL), Summer 2013

SASIG was involved with the series of Regional Aviation Workshops held by Transport for London (TfL) over Summer 2013 to present the London Mayor's aviation proposals. SASIG provided bespoke, tailored contact databases; assistance arranging speakers and supporting attendees; and speaking at the events.

SASIG Councillors kindly spoke at the events on the responsibilities for Local Authorities with respect to aviation – the need to provide travel and employment opportunities whilst reducing the local negative burdens. The SASIG Director spoke at the events about the Group's work and role; and SASIG's input to the Airports Commission on Assessment Criteria.

SASIG banners were displayed, and SASIG literature provided, at the events to showcase the group to the Local Authority representatives attending. Contact has been maintained with Councils attending those events, for instance, through extension of invitations to attend a SASIG meeting in an observer capacity, with a view to the Council taking up membership.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

SASIG has inputted to LEPs at appropriate stages in their work programmes, for instance supplying input to strategic priorities. Networking and awareness across the SASIG membership has also been facilitated and enhanced.

Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body (LTB), May 2013

The SASIG Chairman invited the SASIG Director to speak at a meeting of the Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body (LTB), setting out the work of the Group, illustrating the areas of interest to the LTB, and encouraging Local Authorities present to join SASIG.

Members' Aviation Seminar, Surrey County Council, Sep. 2013

The SASIG office team attended early discussions with Surrey County Council colleagues about event design, speakers and contact information, for a Surrey Members' Aviation Seminar. The event covered the breadth of implications for the Council to consider with regard to the existing scale of aviation capacity and future capacity provision.

The SASIG Director spoke at the event to 'set the scene' by illustrating the breadth and interconnectivity of aspects across the Council's remit that are pertinent to aviation development. This complemented presentation by the commissioned consultants of local assessments looking at economic and transport implications for Surrey. The issues were then brought together by the final speaker in the context of the challenge and opportunity of building a new airport.

Uttlesford Councils' Aviation Seminar, Uttlesford District Council, Jan. 2014

The SASIG Director worked from outline details supplied by Uttlesford District Council, indicating the desired nature of the event, to produce a timed agenda for an Uttlesford Councils' Aviation Seminar.

The Director spoke at the event, supplying background information about SASIG, covering the main points to come from the Airports Commission's 'Interim Report' of December 2013, and referencing the elements of the report specific to Stansted Airport.

Advisory Board member - 'Runways UK'

The SASIG Director represents SASIG on the Advisory Board of 'Runways UK', an organisation seeking to ensure increased aviation capacity is realised from the Airports Commission's programme. The message delivered for SASIG in this forum is the need to recognise those issues that must to be managed locally: economic impacts - affects on existing businesses & likely future changes, both positive and negative; land take; pressure on surface access networks; pollution impacts (noise, air quality, climate change); & blight.

Department for Transport Aviation 'External Advisory Group' (EAG)

The SASIG Director also represents SASIG on the Department for Transport Aviation 'External Advisory Group' (EAG) - an important presence for SASIG in terms of keeping Local Authorities visible in the national aviation debate.

SASIG promotional presentation

A promotional presentation about SASIG has been produced for use by member Authorities at events they attend, to inform colleagues about the group and its work and to encourage additional Authorities into membership. It is intended that each member Authority has a link to this promotional SASIG material from their Council websites.

SASIG meetings - June 2013, Oct. 2013 & Mar. 2014

SASIG held 3 meetings across the year for the full membership - Members & officers. Agendas have been dominated by SASIG's involvement with and input to the Airports Commission; project development & funding opportunities; 2013 SASIG Membership Survey; promoting the Group; SASIG responses to Department for Transport consultations: 'Night Flying Restrictions', & 'Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees'; along with routine matters (finance, elections, etc.).

Presentations given at SASIG meetings were:

'Meeting national need through the aviation capacity provision debate', Nigel Schofield, Group Commercial Director, Northenden Diamond Travel, a division of Cresta World Travel Ltd., & Board Member, Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP); and 'Capturing the Wider Benefits of Investment in Transport Infrastructure', David Pendlebury, Policy & Networks Assistant, Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

Observer attendees from invited Local Authorities have attended SASIG meetings at an appropriate stage in proceedings.

When appropriate, officer task group meetings have been held on the day of a SASIG meeting, maximising efficiency of attendee's time and travel costs, and capitalising upon the opportunity for in-depth discussion of selected topics.

SASIG Chairman's Advisory Group (CAG)

The SASIG Chairman's Advisory Group (CAG) has again supported the Group with consideration of overarching issues, and comment on agenda items for full SASIG meetings. The geographical spread of the full membership is illustrated through CAG representatives.

SASIG Bulletin

The SASIG Bulletin is a core service provided by SASIG, made available online weekly, building into a valuable archive available to the membership. The provision of specialist resource and skill required to supply the Bulletin is a major value for money aspect of SASIG membership. For Local Authorities to take an active part in the aviation debate, they need to be well-informed, and the SASIG Bulletin meets that need for the membership as a whole.

SASIG Task Group

Throughout 2013/14, efforts have been made to inspire new ways of working amongst the membership, to generate new lines of income, and to maximise upon the network of expertise available.

Officer Task Group meetings have been convened to:

- actively promote the group through the membership's contacts and networks;
- pursue funding from European sources, on both a technical and financial basis;
- progress development and application of SASIG's policies;
- consider specific technical issues requiring detailed consideration; and
- capitalise upon the expertise amongst the membership for the benefit of all.

These meetings have been a useful forum at which to share experience of working with Local Enterprise Partnerships, discuss European funding opportunities and appropriate project proposals, hear about experience of European projects from across the membership, and consider issues that the membership would wish to see covered in project work.

From these initial discussions, project topics have been considered, and work is ongoing to produce a project proposal with the SASIG membership's endorsement and committed involvement.

The SASIG membership experience continues to be a valuable route through which other Councils, companies, academic institutions, organisations, etc., could be brought in to partner relationships with SASIG.

In support of ongoing efforts to derive a project and secure European funding, the SASIG office team set up a dedicated section on the SASIG website.

Annual SASIG Membership Survey

The 2013 SASIG Membership Survey elicited positive responses indicating the importance of information provision services for the membership, verifying the value of these services continuing to be supplied.

SASIG membership is made use of in a variety of different ways, influenced by individuals' job roles and involvement/not in services provided by the Group.

The challenge and added value of such a Group working together, bringing local expertise to bear in the formation of a coordinated message for the whole Group, was borne out in the Survey responses.



Please return to:

**Marion Stribling
Member Services
Local Government Association
Local Government House
Smith Square
Westminster
London SW1P 3HZ**

BY FRIDAY 16 MAY 2014 AT THE LATEST.

Tel: 020 7664 3040

Email: memberservices@local.gov.uk