

Minutes of the Cross-Party Group Aviation Group AGM and November meeting

9th November 2022

18:30 – 19:30

Committee Room 9

MSPs attendees:

Paul McLellan MSP
Graham Simpson MSP
Sharon Dowey MSP

Non-MSPs attendees:

Peter Carroll – Glasgow Airport
Roddie MacPhee – ABTA Scotland
Janice Hogarth – SPAA
Greg Maxwell – Edinburgh Airport
Ali Gayward – Easyjet
Thom Rawlinson - Easyjet
Donna McHugh - Loganair
Charandeep Singh – Scottish Chamber of Commerce
Mike Tibbert - SPAA
Ian Clarke - NATS
Lauren Broughton – UK Inbound (via Teams)
Karen Musgrave – Barrhead Travel (via Teams)
Steve Kay – Airlines UK (via Teams)
Alan Campbell - IAG/ British Airways (via Teams)
Josh Hill – Parliamentary adviser

Apologies

Ross Southgate – BALPA
Tracy Docherty – If Only
Luke Petherbridge – ABTA
Rupinder Pamme – AOA

Welcome and Apologies

The meeting was opened by Graham Simpson who as Co-chair would be chairing this meeting and alternating with Paul McLellan who would chair the next meeting.

Agenda Item 1 - AGM

Election of Co-Conveners

Paul McLellan and Graham Simpson both agreed to continue as Co-conveners of the group

Janice Hogarth asked for formal acceptance of this motion and this was agreed.

Election of Secretariat

Graham Simpson asked if Janice Hogarth was prepared to continue as Secretary which she agreed to and Graham then asked the meeting for formal acceptance of this which was also agreed.

Agenda Item 2 - Approval of Minutes

The minutes from last meeting had been circulated and were approved.

Agenda Item 3

Discussion on the recovery of Sustainable Aviation, Travel and Tourism in Scotland report

A copy of the report had been distributed to the members of the group and this was now the main item of the meeting to discuss comments from the group.

Ali Gayward from Easyjet asked whether the comments relating to the input from airlines could be more generic and Steve Kay from Airlines UK promised to collate the airline responses.

Peter Carroll from Glasgow Airport commented that it would be better to make the report more positive as he felt that it was a little covid heavy which Greg Maxwell from Edinburgh Airport agreed with and felt the report should concentrate on the future opportunities.

Alan Campbell from IAG talked about the importance of the production of sustainable Aviation fuel as the UK is currently not producing any. He also stressed the importance of progress on the Air Space Change Programme which would help the reduction of carbon emissions with better and more sustainable routing of aircraft.

Discussion on the section and importance of connectivity was highlighted in relation to the recent caps on Heathrow and the negative effects that had resulted for Scottish passengers with the changes in domestic connections. Mike Tibbert from SPAA commented that it was essential to ensure that this did not reoccur for 2023 with Heathrow Airport needing to ensure that it could return to its previous levels of capacity.

Karen Musgrave from Barrhead Travel commented that an item should be added to the report to reflect that it was still tough on the High Street but that the full impact of the cost of living had not really seen the full impact yet and which would probably not be seen till after Christmas. She added that the effects would only really be highlighted when the peak booking season started in January

Charandeep Singh from the Scottish Chamber of Commerce commented that perhaps there should be more emphasis on the role of exports and the impact of freight on aviation both inbound and outbound which had contributed greatly to the survival of airlines and routes and supplies to and from Scotland. Charandeep also added that a mention of Freeports should be included in the report.

Paul McLellan suggested that the group should engage with the Tourism Group to potentially add their input.

Discussion turned to how the report should be distributed once finalised and how the group should engage with Scottish Government and also UK Government. What engagement should there be with the press ?

It was agreed that once it had been sent to the Scottish Government, that the group would ask perhaps Ivan McKee to respond from Scottish Government and Baroness Vere from the Westminster perspective.

Roddie MacPhee representing ABTA Scotland talked about the importance that should be attached to APD and the devolving of ADT in Scotland, the extension of the ADS scheme and the additional support for route development.

A question was also asked in regard to the recently announced UK recruitment campaign for General Aviation and whether this covered Scotland ? It has funding behind it and it would be very positive if Scotland was included.

Easyjet commented that there had been no further engagement with airlines following on from the Scottish Aviation Group that had met regularly chaired by Gordon Dewar.

A suggestion of an infographic was suggested to go along with a letter behind the report which would show potentially with 5 key asks to show what would remove barriers to encourage travel and what would be required to help with recruitment. The meeting then decided that as many of the items recommended were not devolved that it would probably be better to create 2 x infographics with one for devolved issues and one for non-devolved.

Members of the group were asked to forward their additional comments and amendments to the secretary within the next two weeks for the report to be adjusted. (23rd November)

Discussion turned to when would be the best time to release the report and whether this could be done pre-Xmas for the initial infographics with a full release to follow in January.

Janice Hogarth intimated that she had been in discussion with IATA and BARUK who would also like to contribute to the report.

Charandeep Singh suggested that this document could become an item on the agenda for future meetings of the CBI/FSB.

Discussion took place on the need to seek engagement with other organisations and it was noted that the 7th December was International Civil Aviation Day. Janice would collate the next wave of comments and work on the infographics for distribution

AOCB

The next meeting would be arranged for potentially January/February.