

**Report to:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 09 January 2023

**Title:** Scrutiny of Gatwick Airport's Carbon Neutral accreditation and the effect of the development of the Northern Runway on Eastbourne Borough Council's Carbon Neutral pledge for 2030

**Report of:** Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services (and Deputy Monitoring Officer))

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of report:** The report provides the background to the request for a meeting with Gatwick Airport representatives.

**Officer recommendation(s):** a) That the Scrutiny Committee consider the issues raised during discussion and provide a response to the Full Council.

**Reasons for recommendations:** To respond to the request from the Full Council and to fulfil the Scrutiny Committee's role in looking at policy development.

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## **1 Introduction**

1.1 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on the 10 October 2022 Members resolved to arrange an additional meeting of the Committee and invite representatives from Gatwick Airport and other relevant stakeholders to attend. This followed a Full Council meeting on the 20 July 2022, where the following motion was resolved:

'Eastbourne Borough Council notes its previous support for a second runway for Gatwick Airport in 2013. Since then, Eastbourne Borough Council has pledged to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. Eastbourne Borough Council further notes the UK Government has committed to increase airplane capacity and a new runway located at either Heathrow or Gatwick. Eastbourne Borough Council understands that Gatwick Airport has claimed to be the first carbon neutral London airport in 2017 and states on their website that they are committed to net zero direct emissions by 2040.'

- 1.2 The purpose of the meeting with Gatwick Airport Ltd representatives is to consider the Airport's Carbon Neutral accreditation, its plans for development of a Northern Runway and the impact of this on the Council's Carbon Neutral 2030 – A Plan for Action. The Scrutiny Committee will respond to the Full Council and provide a recommendation.
- 1.2 It is recognised that Gatwick Airport's level 3+ Airport Carbon Accreditation is based on direct emissions '*Direct emissions come from sources that are owned or controlled by the reporting entity*'. The amended motion from Full Council expects, any discussion with Gatwick Airport representatives to include both passenger journeys to and from the airport and fuel emissions. Therefore, the main area of focus should be the use of the Northern Runway and its resultant increase in traffic, and how this may affect Eastbourne Borough Council's ability to fulfil the pledge to be Carbon Neutral by 2030.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Full Council on 18 September 2013, the following motion was resolved: 'That this Council supports - in principle - Gatwick Airport Ltd.'s proposals to build a second runway at Gatwick Airport, recognising this as a significant opportunity for growth and prosperity for Eastbourne, recognising also the environmental issues that may arise, and the need to manage these sensitively'.
- 2.2 A global issue in 2013, the increasing levels of CO2 emissions and continued global warming has led many organisations to declare 'climate emergencies/crisis'. In July 2019 a Climate Emergency Declaration was made by Eastbourne Borough Council at the Full Council meeting, and in December of 2022, the Cabinet approved the 'Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030' Annual Update, including an update of the Eastbourne Carbon Neutral Action Plan.
- 2.3 Previous work on the issue of a Northern runway has been undertaken, most notably Consultants were engaged at the Development Consent Order (Statutory Consultation) stage by many of the authorities that would potentially be impacted by the development.

## **3 Scope of the meeting**

- 3.1 A number of questions were sent to Gatwick Airport Ltd ahead of the meeting on the 9 January for consideration (appendix A). The representatives attending will be given an opportunity to respond and Committee members will have the opportunity to ask follow up questions. The views of invited stakeholders attending will also be heard. Only the elected members of the Scrutiny Committee will be allowed to ask questions and vote at the end of the session.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to take part in the discussion and provide a response to Full Council.

## **4 Financial appraisal**

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is an advisory committee and there are no obvious financial implications associated with this report. However, any decisions that are made either now or in the future must consider if they will require any resourcing and how that will be funded. Any costs must be kept within the Council's existing budgets.

## **5 Legal implications**

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Committee is an advisory committee and there are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

## **6 Risk management implications**

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Committee is an advisory committee and there are no direct risk management implications as a result of the report.

## **7 Equality analysis**

- 7.1 The Scrutiny Committee is an advisory committee and there is no direct impact on equality or fairness as a result of this report.

## **8 Environmental sustainability implications**

- 8.1 The Scrutiny Committee is an advisory committee and there are no direct environmental or sustainability implications as a result of the report. However, the Committee will be expected to make a recommendation to Full Council on in respect of the Council's continued support of Gatwick Airport's development of a Northern Runway. This fulfils the Committee's role in scrutinising policy development.

## **9 Appendices**

- Appendix A – Questions sent to Gatwick Airport Ltd

## **10 Background papers**

The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

- [Agenda for Eastbourne Borough Council Full Council on Wednesday, 20th July, 2022, 6.00 pm \(lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk\)](#)