

FACC Questions – October 2019

Julia Longrigg asked the following questions:

Question 1. Farnborough Exhibition Centre hosted the DPRTE (Defence Procurement Research Trade and Exportability) event on March 28th this year. The event was not published on the website. The DPRTE was rejected by the NEC as an Arms Fair. How will transparency be ensured to reassure local residents about the nature of events hosted in our community in future?

Michael Watton - Farnborough International Ltd, responded, the Farnborough Exhibition Centre website is there to notify the general public of up and coming events hosted at the centre, that are open to the public. A number of the events held at the centre are NOT open to the public; they are strictly trade/industry events. The decisions as to whether events are open to the public is dictated by the organisers, not by Farnborough International.

Julia Longrigg responded by saying she feels local residents should be made aware if an arms fair is taking place in their town.

Michael Watton replied the DPRTE was not an arms fair, it was an event to develop business and business connections in the area.

The nature of any promotion of events is down to the discretion on the organiser.

All events held at Farnborough Exhibition Centre fully comply with planning approval and local regulations relating to the hosting and holding of exhibitions.

Question 2. The Exhibition Centre was granted specialist 'airfield' planning permission as a permanent structure with parking for 3,500 cars, on the basis that its primary purpose is to support the bi-annual Airshow. The Exhibition Centre is hosting regular events such as Screwfix / wedding fairs etc. How does this align with its primary purpose and what future permanent structures might be required to support the Air show?

Michael Watton responded, Farnborough Exhibition Centre received planning permission on the basis it would organise and host a variety of exhibitions, events and activities.

The Centre operates within these regulations and guidelines. If there is any doubt about the legitimacy of any proposed event, the Council should be consulted.

Levels of traffic and traffic congestion as a result of events are monitored. Again, depending on the nature of the event and any potential impact on traffic flow, the Council would be advised and consulted with ahead of the event.

Norman Lambert - Crondall Parish Council added, the issues raised were more a matter for Rushmoor BC than the FACC. The basis for planning approval and consent for the exhibition centre would be a matter of public record.

Julia Longrigg asked MIRA what Infra-structure meant?

John Bruen responded in his view included the Transport, Utilities, Renewables and Telecoms sectors, and all activities and industries related thereto.

Fiona Sheppard – Extinction Rebellion, Farnham – asked what is Farnborough Airport doing in support of the state of emergency the climate is now facing?

John Bruen – Responded by saying MIRA is globally committed to work to reduce the climate impact of its activities.

MIRA actively invests in alternative technologies in all sectors.

Brandon O'Reilly – Responded acknowledging that the aviation industry is a polluter of the environment. In 2009 when Farnborough Airport created its Master Plan, they realised this threat and deliberately included an Environmental Section. This contained a number of ambitious targets relating to the environment, recycling, and carbon neutrality. He saw these as moral responsibilities not just business targets!

As a result, management looks at every facet of the business and where possible, changes processes, procedures and behaviours to reduce the environmental impact of everything they do. This was fully endorsed by the TAG ownership and now fully supported by MIRA.

Farnborough Airport is the only business airport in the world certified as being carbon neutral. An accreditation it has now received two years running. This is a source of immense satisfaction and pride.

Brandon sees education and technology as two of the more positive drivers in the environment narrative. Farnborough Airport actively works with schools in the area to educate pupils to the issues around aviation and the environment and is involved in initiatives such as the tree planting programme (5,200) planted to date, to provide thought leadership.

And regards technology, both equipment, aircraft and engines and the fuels need to evolve to become less harmful environmentally.

Again, the Airport takes a leadership position on this. It will only allow the most efficient aircraft (Chapter 4) to use the airport and it champions the use of Sustainable Alternative Fuels through event and forums.

Fiona Sheppard - What can be done to accelerate the rate of change in this direction?

Brandon O'Reilly – Responded, not enough is being done! Governments need to put down legislation requiring the development in technology and fuel. Subsidies may be required.

The issues need to be made known to everyone in an understandable and with a pragmatic and realistic solutions proposed, back to EDUCATION! A more holistic approach is required!

Colin Shearn- Extinction Rebellion, Farnham remarked it is hard to justify the levels of carbon produced by aviation. How will MIRA address the cost of technical development or the additional cost of eco fuels?

John Bruen – Responded, progress is slow but there is progress.
Engine technology is beginning to bring real improvements in efficiency. We are beginning to see the introduction of electric aircraft and this will only continue.

As regards sustainable fuels, these have a huge role to play in aviation. They are more expensive, so the operators need to see or be persuaded of the reason for using them.

John Bennison – When we will see the first electric aircraft at Farnborough Airport?

Brandon O'Reilly – An all-electric Airbus aircraft flew at the last FIA in 2018.
Brandon added, the logistics of supplying eco-fuel is challenging, this needs to change; the fuel needs to be made available in a cost-effective manner; producers and operators need to 'buy into' to change.

Colin Shearn – What is the average number of passengers on a business jet flying out of Farnborough?

Brandon O'Reilly – 2.5.

Colin Shearn– How many aircraft fly with no passengers?

Brandon O'Reilly – We have no details on that.

Fiona Sheppard – What is the projected movement growth for the airport?

Brandon O'Reilly – We don't know as yet. As mentioned earlier, this year movements will be about 32,000. The Master Plan saw movement levels at 50,000 by 2019.

The Committee received a number of technical questions from Geoff Marks and Hugh Sheppard; these are attached. Farnborough Airport responded to these questions at the Meeting, answers are also attached.

Brian Edmunds, Farnham Town Council, asked why aircraft landing or taking off from Farnborough appear to fly low over Farnham?

Roger Walker explained that Farnham lies beneath uncontrolled airspace allowing operators to use that airspace.

Under the proposals being put forward under the ACP, the airspace above Farnham will be classified as controlled so low flying will not be allowed.

Hugh Sheppard - Hampshire branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England asked the following questions:

Now that the CAA has Approved Farnborough's Airspace Control Proposal, as upheld by a Judicial Review, can this meeting be updated about the implementation programme?

Covered in ACP update from Roger Walker.

Under the ACP, my understanding is that other aviation movements will be routed above, below or around the newly designated airspace. CPRE's concern has always been that such aircraft required to fly lower and/or through a pinch-point are likely to cause more noise for those on the ground.

Will accessible records be kept of such movements and the related air traffic information and advice by Farnborough Airport or NATS so as to tie-in any complaints? Should such records not be kept, how would any forthcoming Implementation Review incorporate this information?

Roger Walker responded, that these other questions are better addressed to the CAA. Roger agreed he would pass on this question to the CAA when he meets them in November.

Geoff Marks – With reference to the above, reminded the Committee of Paragraph 79JR.

Geoff Marks – Requested that the briefing meetings offered above by Roger Walker should happen as soon as possible.

Roger Walker agreed he will do his best to accelerate these.