**Manchester Airport Future Airspace**

**Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG)**

Minute of the Stakeholder Reference Group held at Olympic House, Manchester Airport on Wednesday 7th August 2019 at 10am

Present:

Steve Wilkinson, Chair

Peter Burns, Manchester Airport Consultative Committee
Chris Fletcher, Manchester Chamber of Commerce

Helen Gbormittah, Confederation of British Industry

Janet Bott, David Lewis Centre

Apologies:

Linton Float, Thomas Cook

John Mayhew, National Air Traffic Services

Lorraine Sinclair

George Lane, Manchester Airport Chaplain

Paul Bailey, Oldham Council

Sue Stevenson, Stockport Council

Lynn French, Macclesfield College

George Preece,

Andy Wright

Attending:

Wendy Sinfield, Community Relations Manager, Manchester Airport

Adam Jupp, Corporate Affairs Director, Manchester Airport

Sam Carty, Public Affairs Manager, Manchester Airport

David Jones, The Consultation Institute

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Steve Wilkinson**,** chair welcomed members and officers to the inaugural meeting of the Manchester Airport Future Airspace Stakeholder Reference Group. After introductions, the chair explained the background to the establishment of the SRG and introduced David Jones from the Consultation Institute.

As an integral part of the Future Airspace Programme, the Civil Aviation Authority has introduced regulatory processes for changing airspace design including guidance on community engagement (CAP1616).

Given Manchester Airport’s commitment to meaningful and transparent engagement and consultation processes to deliver CAP1616, the Consultation Institute has been commissioned to undertake a Quality Assurance assessment (QA) of the airport’s consultation practices and processes.

To ensure a local dimension to the QA, the Institute, in agreement with Manchester Airport, has established the SRG to enhance the QA process. The Institute will be responsible for secretariat of the SRG, independent of the airport.

The Chair emphasised that the purpose of the SRG was to consider and comment on the engagement and consultation process and was not a platform to discuss the issue of changing airspace design.

1. **Background to CAP1616 and Manchester Airport’s approaches to community engagement**

Wendy Sinfield, Community Relations Manager, gave a presentation explaining the current requirement for all airports across the UK to consider future changes to airspace design and the processes required under CAP1616. Wendy explained the various categories of airspace change and the seven-stage airspace change process (with regard to permanent changes).

**The stages included:**

Define

Develop and Assess

Consult

Update and Submit

Decide

Implement

Post Implementation Review

It was highlighted that the SRG had been established early in the process and will firstly comment on the engagement and consultation process relating to the ‘Define’ stage which involves an assessment of the requirements and the design principles.

Wendy also provided information on the various methods that the Airport were minded to use as part of the first engagement exercise on design principles.

These methods included:

* On line portal
* Focus groups (geographical and communities of interest)
* Individual meetings as required

The SRG acknowledged that the airport had a long tradition of community engagement across the area and, in general, was perceived as having a positive approach to community engagement.

The Chair thanked Wendy for her presentation.

1. **The Consultation Institute, Quality Assurance Assessments and the role of the SRG**

The chair introduced David Jones, Associate from the Consultation Institute.

David explained that the Institute was a not-for profit international organisation who were specialists in the field of engagement and consultation. The Institute provides advice and guidance, training and quality assurance services to organisations from all sectors particularly in complex, controversial transformation programmes. The Institute has experience of establishing SRGs and providing support to other airports involved in the CAP1616 process.

The Institute acts totally independent from the airport.

David explained that the purpose of the SRG was to be part of the Institute’s QA assessment, informing the QA process of the views of local stakeholders with regards to the engagement and consultation processes proposed and implemented by the airport.

This would involve early sight of proposed actions at specific times throughout the engagement and consultation processes including pre- engagement and consultation activities, dialogue/ consultation phase and the post consultation feedback and analysis methodologies.

The views of the SRG would be shared with the airport in order to influence their engagement and consultation practices and processes

The SRG was also made aware of the Institute’s own Quality Charter against which assessment would be benchmarked and the importance of the Airport meeting the legal standards associated with public consultations. This relates to the Gunning Principles which effectively constitute the law relating to consultations.

Finally, David highlighted the increasingly important issue of social media and the impact of ‘Fake News’ on engagement and consultation processes and the need to consider any impact this may have on engagement and consultation process throughout the Cap1616 process.

David re-emphasised that the SRG was not established to discuss the issue of airspace change but was solely focused on considering and commenting on the engagement and consultation processes.

1. **Draft Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct**

The SRG considered draft Terms of Reference and following a discussion, they were approved subject to the inclusion of an addition paragraph relating to substitutes attending meetings. Members of the SRG were of the view that details of a named substitute should be held by the Institute to maintain consistency and that it was the responsibility of SRG members to ensure that any substitute was fully briefed on their role and the issues to be discussed prior to the meeting.

A draft Code of Conduct was also considered and approved.

1. **Current Engagement Documentation**

Wendy Sinfield issued draft copies of the main consultation narrative document and time was make available for SRG members to give initial responses.

A number of issues were raised and positive suggestions made. These included:

* The front cover was unappealing
* The font size was too small and would create difficulties for those with visual difficulties
* The maps were the wrong size with places difficult to identify
* The Forword by the CEO projected that the main audience was passengers and growth rather than recognition that this impacted on a range of individuals, groups and communities
* Consideration should be given to simplifying the language, the format didn’t ‘flow’ and the language had too much jargon
* For those with reading and visual difficulties it was suggested the airport should consider a programme which enables respondees to change the colour of background screens to make it disability/ dyslexic friendly
* Concerns were expressed about some of the questions potentially being ‘leading’ with prescribed options
* The information needed to be adapted to meet the needs and expectations of a range of different audiences with some formats having more technical detail than others.
* There were concerns that the focus groups would have too many questions to give participants the opportunity for a meaningful contribution within the allocated time. It was suggested that a mock focus group be held to test the questions.

The Chair thanked the members for their views, acknowledging that this had been the first opportunity they had had to consider the draft documentation. The airport agreed to consider the views of the SRG and report back on how they had influenced the final documentation.

1. **Open discussion**

The members considered the proposed membership of the SRG and concerns were raised that it appeared to be too biased towards organisations with fewer members from a community perspective.

The Institute and the airport agreed to review the membership and the chair suggested that a representative from the Association of Parish Councils could be sought as part of an effort to increase community participation.

1. **Date of Next Meeting and Venue**

A provisional date for early November was agreed, subject to confirmation and the venue would be Olympic House, Manchester Airport.