

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Agenda for the meeting to be held on Monday, 27th April 2009 at 7.00 p.m. at Wandsworth Town Hall (Room 122), Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU

MEMBERS

Chairman

Mr. Roger Bird

Users' representatives

Capt Ian Field
Capt Ian Rose
Capt Robin Renton
Capt Paul Watts

Residents' representatives

Wandsworth

Mr. Alan Fairleigh (Battersea Reach Residents' Association)
Mr. Jonathan Harris (Prices Court Residents' Association)

Hammersmith and Fulham

Sir Peter Jennings

Kensington and Chelsea

Ms. Eryl Wrage

Local Authority Representatives

Hammersmith and Fulham

Councillor Jane Law (Sands End Ward)

Kensington and Chelsea

Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds (Cremorne Ward)

Wandsworth

Councillor Tony Belton (Latchmere Ward)
Councillor John Hallmark (St. Mary's Park Ward)

AGENDA

1. Minutes (17.11.08)

The Consultative Group are asked to confirm that they approve the draft minutes of

(see back)

the last meeting of the Consultative Group held on 17th November 2008 (Attached – Paper A).

The draft minutes were circulated to all members of the Consultative Group and to all on the circulation list for Consultative Group papers, and published on the Council's website, on 9th March 2009.

Upon approval, the minutes will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

The Chairman will then invite members to raise any matters arising from the minutes.

2. Monitoring of helicopter movements

The Consultative Group, at their last meeting, agreed a programme of on-site monitoring of helicopter movements, proposed by Mr. Steve Mayner, the Council's Head of Corporate Affairs, and Mr. Colin Stanbury, the Council's Aviation Consultant.

Mr Stanbury will report on the progress with the monitoring of helicopter movements using CCTV cameras.

Also, as part of this programme, Capt Christopher Forrest has offered two alternative dates for members of the Consultative Group for Annual Open Day visits to the Heliport – Tuesday, 5th May 2009 at 11.00 a.m. and Friday, 8th May 2009 at 2.30 p.m.

Capt Forrest has also confirmed that the unplanned 'audit' visits by members of the Consultative Group may begin. The dates of the Open Day visits and the arrangements for the unplanned visits were circulated to members of the Consultative Group on 16th April 2009 by email.

3. Information on helicopter movements

Summary information on helicopter movements at the London Heliport in Quarter 4 of 2008 and Quarter 1 of 2009, provided by Capt Forrest, is included herewith for information. (Attached - Paper B).

Detailed information on helicopter movements at the Heliport, as provided by the Heliport on a monthly basis to the Council and the Civil Aviation Authority, for the period October to December 2008 and January to March 2009 inclusive, are available from the Heliport. In view of the purely statistical nature of this document, and also because of its size – and hence in the interest of economy – this document has not been circulated with this agenda. However, electronic copies will be made available by the Heliport or the Secretary to the Consultative Group, upon request.

4. Noise complaints

Information on noise complaints received and on the action taken in response by the Heliport, during the period October to December 2008 and January to March 2009 inclusive, is included herewith for information. (Attached – Paper C).

5. Helicopter activity at Battersea Power Station site

Capt Forrest has requested a response by the representatives of the Council to the question: "What action is Wandsworth Borough Council taking to curtail the use of the Battersea Power Station site as a helicopter landing site in excess of 28 days per year without planning permission?"

6. London in a spin – a review of helicopter noise

On 11th February 2009, in response to a request by the Greater London Authority for views on the progress on the London Assembly's Environment Committee's recommendations on helicopter noise (October 2006), Mr. Mayner submitted a response he prepared on behalf of the London Heliport Consultative Group. (Attached – Paper D).

Also attached for reference to the London Assembly's original recommendations, is a report submitted to the London Assembly's Environment Committee (18.11.08) to which these recommendations are attached. (Attached – Paper E).

In submitting the views set out in Paper D, Mr. Mayner advised the London Assembly thus:

"Where detailed comments are made, I am satisfied these reflect views previously expressed at the Group's meetings. My response will be reported to our next meeting on April 27.

I think members will be most concerned at the lack of progress in setting up the London-wide working group (Recommendation 12). The LHCG has made considerable progress in the short time it has been meeting. We would be keen to put this experience to wider use.

In addition to the technical expertise at its disposal the Group's lay members have a knowledge and insight into the practical issues arising from helicopter activities which would be of great use to a London-wide review. It remains a key concern that while the London Heliport is now monitored more effectively there are no comparable arrangements for the majority of helicopter traffic in the capital that is not associated with the heliport."

7. Any other business

The Chairman will ask members of the Consultative Group whether there are any other matters they wish to raise.

8. Date of next meeting

The Consultative Group are asked to determine the date of their next meeting. Monday, 23rd November 2009 is suggested as the prospective date for the next meeting.

(see back)

Refreshments

Sandwich refreshments will be available for members of the Consultative Group in the Committee Room (Room 122), prior to the meeting.

Contact:

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20th April 2009

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of The London Heliport Consultative Group held at Wandsworth Town Hall (Room 123), on Monday, 17th November 2008 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT

Chairman

Mr. Roger Bird

Residents' representatives

Mr. Kenneth Fergusson (deputising for Mr. Alan Fairleigh)
Mr. Jonathan Harris
Sir Peter Jennings

Local Authority representatives

Councillor Belton
Councillor Hallmark
Councillor Law

Users' representatives

Captain Ian Rose
Captain Paul Watts
Mr Peter Norton (deputising for Capt Robin Renton)

Observers, advisers and officers

Capt. Christopher Forrest (Operations Director, PremiAir Aviation Services Limited)
Mr. Simon Hutchins (The London Heliport)
Mr. Steve Mayner (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr. Colin Stanbury (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr. Francis de Lima (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr. Max Dixon (Greater London Authority)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Mr. Alan Fairleigh, Ms. Eryl Wrage, Councillor Condon-Simmonds, Capt. Renton and Capt. Ian Field.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the start of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Mr. Peter Norton, Chief Executive of the British Helicopter Advisory Board, who was deputising for Capt. Robin Renton, to the meeting.

The Consultative Group then attended to the matters of business set out in the agenda for the meeting.

Minutes (16.06.08). On item 1 (Paper A), the minutes of the last meeting of the Consultative Group held on 16th June 2008 were approved and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Police helicopter operations in London. On item 2, the Chairman invited Capt. Watts to make his presentation to the Consultative Group.

Capt. Watts circulated a paper providing graphic information on helicopter activities undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Service Air Support Unit (MPSASU). This paper is attached to these minutes as Annexe 1.

Capt. Watts explained that the graphs provide information into the Unit's range of activities and roles and the percentage of the time devoted to each of these sets of activities. The graphs also provide the 'Monthly flying hours total and hours flown per borough' – for each of the local boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham, Wandsworth, and Lambeth, as well as the 'Total hours flown', for the period April 2007 to October 2008 inclusive.

In reply to a question by Sir Peter Jennings, Capt. Watts confirmed that MPSASU was an integral part of the Metropolitan Police, not a contracted service. He informed the Consultative Group that the Unit, which has existed for some 27 years, is based at Epping Forest and has a fleet of three EC145 helicopters, one of which is on call for 24 hours of the day and a second for between 8 and 16 hours of the day. The third machine will normally be undergoing routine maintenance. The Unit covers the entire Metropolitan Police area, operates on 365 days of the year, and has a budget sufficient to fly 3,300 hours per year. Capt. Watts commented that the budget and the helicopter were a limited resource and, accordingly, were not used "willy-nilly". He advised that the number of flying hours had remained constant for the last ten years and that there were no plans to increase the number of flying hours.

Capt. Watts explained that all instructions to fly are received from the control room. Any Metropolitan Police officer can make a request to the Unit which vets every request received. A large number of requests for roof-top searches are received, which are scrutinised carefully for suitability and a large number of these are declined. Helicopter surveillance covers high profile events like the State Opening of Parliament and the Trooping the Colour ceremony. At other times, Police helicopters act to provide short-term deterrence over a week or two. There is very little helicopter activity by way of pursuit and, whilst some training is conducted in the air, this is not done over central London. He added that only 2% of the total flying time is carried out over the four local boroughs mentioned in the bar graphs; central London and some other central London boroughs receive more.

The helicopters carry cameras that are sharp and can take photographs from a great height. Capt. Watts explained that when Heathrow control is open, the helicopters can achieved even greater heights.

Capt. Watts commented that the Unit were very aware about helicopter noise nuisance. He advised that complaints about noise by the Unit's helicopters could be lodged through the Police. In response to a question by Councillor Hallmark about whether there are any time restrictions for any mission, Capt. Watts commented that it was difficult to assess the length of time a task would take as each task is different. Whilst most tasks may involve 15 to 20 minutes of helicopter activity, other, most serious occurrences, e.g. a siege or a major fire may require much more flying time. He advised that there were too many variables to allow for restrictions to be set.

Following Capt Watts' presentation, the Chairman invited comments and questions. In reply to a question by Councillor Belton, about whether the 3,300 hours' budget was a political or financial limit, Capt. Watts stated that it was both financial and logistical. He explained that, with the need for more engineers, the Unit struggled to achieve its 3,300 hours limit and, last year, flew for some 80 hours less than that limit. In reply to a question by Mr Fergusson, Capt. Watts explained that each helicopter had a crew of three – the Mission Commander, the pilot and the camera operator.

Mr Harris described the Unit's activities as representing high visibility policing and asked whether their activities were publicised as, if more people were aware of the Unit's activities, they might be more amenable to accept them, despite the noise involved. Capt. Watts said that the Unit did not publicise its own activities; publicity often derived from borough council initiatives e.g. Safer Streets, etc. He added that people generally welcomed the presence of the Police helicopters, whether in the air or on the ground.

In reply to a question by the Chairman, Capt. Watts said that Police helicopters do not use the Heliport much, except for refuelling when only one helicopter is available and is involved in an operation in central London. He added that the Unit has the option of using the Heliport out of hours but has never utilised this option.

In reply to a question by Mr Fergusson, Capt. Watts explained that, prior to acquiring the EC145 helicopters, the Unit flew EC55 aircraft. He added that the Unit's helicopters had a dark blue and yellow livery on the upper part of the craft. The Unit does use other helicopters for training.

The Chairman then drew the Consultative Group's attention to Ms Wrage's report which was tabled at the meeting. That report, which primarily provides examples of movements of helicopters accessing the Heliport, includes a comment by Councillor Condon-Simmonds, which, inter alia, states as follows: "... the flights are the tip of the iceberg. The ones I see are all the Police." The Chairman asked that Councillor Condon-Simmonds be sent a copy of the report circulated by Capt. Watts.

The Chairman then thanked Councillor Watts for his presentation.

Helicopter movements in London. On item 3, in response to Councillor Condon-Simmonds report, Capt. Forrest commented that the reference to "the amount of helicopter traffic seems to have increased dramatically" was not specific to the Heliport but could apply to anywhere in central London. In reply to a question by the Chairman about helicopters being held in queues on busy days, Capt. Forrest advised the Consultative Group that, on occasion, it may be necessary to hold up helicopters accessing the Heliport over Chelsea Bridge or Caesar's Camp, Wimbledon Common, if it is not safe for them to approach

the Heliport or if there is an emergency mission. However, there were not many such occurrences this year.

Capt. Watts informed the Consultative Group that, in respect of the parade following the Olympics, there were Police as well as press helicopters in the air over central London. In reply to questions by Councillor Law, who commented that there was a noticeable increase in helicopter activity during Palace garden parties, Capt. Watts confirmed that the Police do not contract in more helicopters and neither does it have much involvement in the garden parties other than to check the roads in advance.

The Chairman commented that, whenever there were issues about helicopters hovering over particular areas, it was best to lodge a complaint in order to obtain an explanation.

Helicopter noise data 2007. On item 4 (Paper B), Mr Stanbury introduced the report - Environmental Noise Monitoring Summary Report 2007 for the London Heliport.

Mr Stanbury explained that two sound energy recording stations had been installed at the Heliport (adjacent to the control tower) in January 2007. Environmental sound energy data is now being collected continuously, using automatic sound data logging equipment. These monitoring stations are fully maintained and paid for by the Heliport.

The purpose of the monitoring is to provide long-term objective data to enable trends in overall noise to be tracked. For example, on the basis of 2007 data, Graph 1 in the report indicated a trend of decreasing day and night time levels. Graph 1 provides information on a monthly average basis. Four noise metrics are monitored: LAeqT (Day and Night), LAeq T (Day), LAeq T (Night) and LA90.

Mr Stanbury suggested that the annual report format is currently not at a sufficiently high resolution to enable the noise events of individual helicopter flights to be identified and charted separately. At present, it is also not possible to use the data to make any robust predictions about noise levels at sensitive residential receptor locations around the Heliport.

Following discussion, during which Mr Stanbury answered members' questions, the Consultative Group agreed that Mr Stanbury should confer with the Heliport's acoustic consultant in order to ascertain if the data capture is at sufficient resolution to enable actual flight arrival and departure noise levels to be presented in future reports. Mr Stanbury also acceded to a request for him to investigate whether, in the longer term, it might be possible to use the noise monitoring data to produce noise contours around the Heliport.

(Subsequent to the meeting. Mr Stanbury has provided the following elaboration on the information he provided at the meeting:

EXPLANATION OF ACOUSTIC TERMS

Noise is measured in decibels (dB). In understanding the report it is useful to consider decibel values of some everyday noise at the extreme ends of the range encountered. At the low end, 35 to 40 dB (A) is the normal noise level in a quiet living room, 35 dB (A) is the noise level given as a target for suburban bedrooms by the Wilson Report, a Government report on noise published in 1963. At the high end is the noise level experienced at the pavement edge of a busy main road, a level of 75 to 80 dB (A).

The sensitivity of the human ear varies with pitch or frequency. The designation 'A' used in the report simply means that the noise levels are being measured using a meter which is able electronically to respond very closely to the performance of the human ear. For some types of noise measurement which contains a high proportion of low frequency tones, a 'C' weighting may be used in order to replicate the extra annoyance that low frequency noise can cause.

Decibels are measured using a logarithmic scale, and, therefore, two numerically equal values cannot be added together arithmetically. Two equal noise levels occurring together form a new level which is 3 dB (A) higher than either alone. Thus two identical helicopters each producing 65 dB (A) at the measuring point will produce, not 130 dB (A), but 68 dB (A), if both engines are running together at the same distance from the microphone.

If one source of noise is 10 dB (A) below an adjacent louder source, then the combined effect will be virtually no different to the louder one alone.

Experiments have shown that most people will indicate that a noise has become twice as loud, when on a measuring meter it has risen by about 10 dB (A).

It is generally accepted that a difference in 3 dB (doubling in energy terms) is the smallest incremental step in a steady state noise source that can be distinguished by the average human ear.

***L_{A90}**. This is the noise level exceeded for 90% of a time interval T. **L_{A90}** and it is termed background noise level. It is effectively a measure of the minimum noise level which is experienced in the absence of specific noisy events such as helicopter flights or Heathrow fixed wing arrivals.*

***L_{Aeq T}** is the equivalent continuous noise level over a time T, which can be described as the 'energy – average' noise level. The A weighted Leq contains all the noise energy received over a particular time period*

*'T' in the context of this report means, Day + Night (24 hours), Day (18 hours - 07:00 hours to 23:00 hours), Night (23:00 hours to 07:00 hours). Thus **L_{Aeq T}(Night)** is the sum of all the noise energy received over an 8 hour period divided by the number of seconds in 8 hours (28,800).*

***L_{A peak}** is found at Graph 2 of the report. It represents the highest instantaneous noise level recorded by the measuring meter during a single event e.g. arriving helicopter. Peak noise measurements cannot be directly compared with Leq.)*

Monitoring of helicopter movements. On item 5 (Paper C), in introducing the report, Mr Mayner explained that this was an attempt to formalise an approach to dealing with reports about helicopter movements in connection with the Heliport.

He explained that it would be possible to use the Council's cameras for a limited period of time and that it might be possible to employ other cameras as well. He hoped to be in a position to offer more information to the Consultative Group, at the next meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the proposal in the report for ‘audits’ by members of the Consultative Group.

In answer to questions by Councillor Hallmark regarding the proposed ‘unplanned’ visits to the Heliport, Mr Mayner explained that these visits would be unscheduled but, as a matter of courtesy to the operators of the Heliport, it was proposed that 48 hours notice of a visit should normally be given. Capt. Forrest commented that, ordinarily, there would be no problem if a member turned up at the Heliport unannounced. However, it would matter if, for operational reasons, it was not convenient to host a visit.

Mr Harris argued that what was important was to have a system of monitoring helicopter movements when the Heliport was not aware that its activities were being monitored. Accordingly, he suggested that monitoring ought to be conducted off-site because, he suggested, people behave differently if they know they are being monitored. Mr Stanbury replied that was precisely what the officers were seeking to establish in their discussions with the Council’s Community Safety Section.

At the end of the discussion, the Consultative Group agreed to support the arrangements recommended in the report for a programme of on-site monitoring of helicopter movements at the Heliport.

Information on helicopter movements. On item 6 (Paper D), in introducing the report, Capt. Forrest commented that the deteriorating economic conditions in the country would undoubtedly affect the Heliport as well.

Noise complaints. On item 7 (Paper E), the Chairman commented that, especially in view of the nine items which involved instances of helicopters coming near buildings or of ‘cutting the corner’, the monitoring proposed in Paper C would be of help.

Mr Fergusson commented that he was particularly struck by two of the recorded complaints – those of complaint references 08/020 and 08/022. In the case of the first complaint, there was an example of a helicopter being held for a period of time. The second complaint demonstrated that a clear report by the complainant enabled identification of the helicopter in question and it was possible to remind the pilot involved and his company of the correct procedure. He commented generally that the list of complaints in Paper E and the descriptions of the Heliport’s responses to each, demonstrated that the system that has been instituted for monitoring complaints, was working effectively. Mr Fergusson also referred to the comments provided by Ms Wrage in the paper tabled at the meeting and wondered why she had not reported formally on the incidents she had observed.

Capt. Forrest agreed on the value of complaints of which, he explained, the Heliport “were not shy”. He appealed for as much detail as possible to be given by complainants as this facilitated easy identification of the aircraft involved. In reply to Mr Fergusson’s comments regarding the complaint set out by Ms Wrage in her paper, Capt. Forrest explained that this was reflected in the complaint listed under Complaint reference 08/017, which was followed up by the Heliport and resulted in the pilot/company being reprimanded.

Capt. Forrest then informed the Consultative Group about an incident a couple of weeks ago when an RAF Chinook helicopter that entered the Heliport in the correct way, had

departed in an incorrect way. The Heliport had made a formal complaint to the pilot's squadron and had received a reply, which Capt. Forrest read out. He advised the Consultative Group that it had been explained to the RAF that a proper debriefing of departure procedure would be required before the pilot involved was allowed back at the Heliport.

Residents' items. On item 8, the Consultative Group then considered the matters placed on the agenda by the residents' representatives.

As regards item (a) (Enhancement of complaints procedure) – the Chairman commented that, while improved monitoring was already being proposed, the “adoption of best practices used at other airports and heliports” might present some difficulty given that, as experience had demonstrated, other airports and heliports may not have advanced as far as the London Heliport had in establishing complaints procedures and monitoring of activities. He enquired whether such information was readily available in respect of other airports and heliports.

Mr Mayner explained that Shoreham Airport had been used as a model in establishing the Consultative Group and that the experience of Paris had also been examined. He said that he would seek to follow up on the suggested improvement. Capt. Forrest informed the Consultative Group that the French equivalent of the Civil Aviation Authority had sent representatives over to Britain to fact find here and Capt. Rose added that, in Germany, there was much less corporate use of helicopters than in Britain. Mr Hutchins reminded the Consultative Group that, as reported at the last meeting, in March 2008, Mr de Lima and he had hosted visitors from Rotterdam who had visited London specifically to learn, among other matters, how the Heliport had dealt with complaints and the kind of procedures that had been instituted here.

Mr Harris informed the meeting that he was a member of an association of residents associations between Putney and Lambeth Bridge and that, following the last meeting of the Consultative Group, he had circulated emails intended to drum up interest in issues relating to the Heliport. He advised the Consultative Group that most people had responded negatively, from which he had concluded that it was imperative to engage with the general public until the monitoring of the Heliport's activities and the complaints procedure was improved. He said that he wanted to feel confident that people would seek to register a complaint if they had something to complain about.

In response, the Chairman commented that this was a consultative group – the “ultimate talking shop” – whose aim was to bring local people together with a view to addressing issues relating to the activities of the Heliport. He observed that it would be a futile endeavour if people were reluctant to report issues. He noted, however, that the Consultative Group was beginning to see more complaints being reported – and, importantly, responded to. He hoped that this represented the start of the process.

Mr Harris commented that the residents wanted to see the process the Chairman had referred to, grow. Mr Fergusson agreed with the need to better inform people throughout the Borough about the work of the Consultative Group. He suggested that this process was assisted by the last article on the subject in *BrightSide* and suggested that another article – on the Heliport's complaints procedure – might be helpful.

The Chairman said that people who were sceptical about the value of the Consultative Group ought to be encouraged to engage with the process that had been established, to attend meetings of the Consultative Group and to meet with its members.

Mr. Hutchins informed the Consultative Group that he had met with residents at Oyster Walk that afternoon who had expressed their desire to establish a residents' group and were keen to make contact with the residents' representatives on the Consultative Group. Mr Harris suggested that they could be advised to do so via the Wandsworth website.

Mr Mayner undertook to arrange for an article on the Heliport's complaints procedure to be placed in *BrightSide*. He emphasised, however, that it was necessary to have similar articles appear in the journals produced by Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham Councils as well.

Mr Hutchins asked that, in any articles or publicity material issued, it should be emphasised that all complaints received by the Heliport are recorded, addressed and responded to – and reported on to the Consultative Group at each meeting.

Mr Fergusson reported that he had written an article for the Battersea Society – which he had copied to Mr de Lima – in which he had described the channel for lodging complaints about helicopter nuisance.

In response to Councillor Belton's comments that only residents in the private sector housing developments had been invited to be represented on the Consultative Group, the Chairman commented that, shortly, it might be sensible to review the consultative arrangements.

As regards item (b) (Helicopter types and their certified noise levels), the Chairman noted that this aspect had been covered in an earlier discussion.

As regards item (c) (Central point of contact for complaints about helicopter noise within the UK), Mr Mayner observed that action arising from the research commissioned by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) would hopefully lead to the establishment of greater co-ordination between agencies on the matter of helicopter noise nuisance. He suggested that possibly the GLA could be instrumental in undertaking such co-ordination.

Mr Dixon advised the Consultative Group that the London Assembly's Environment Committee would be addressing the recommendations in DEFRA's report and would pursue the Department for Transport for a response.

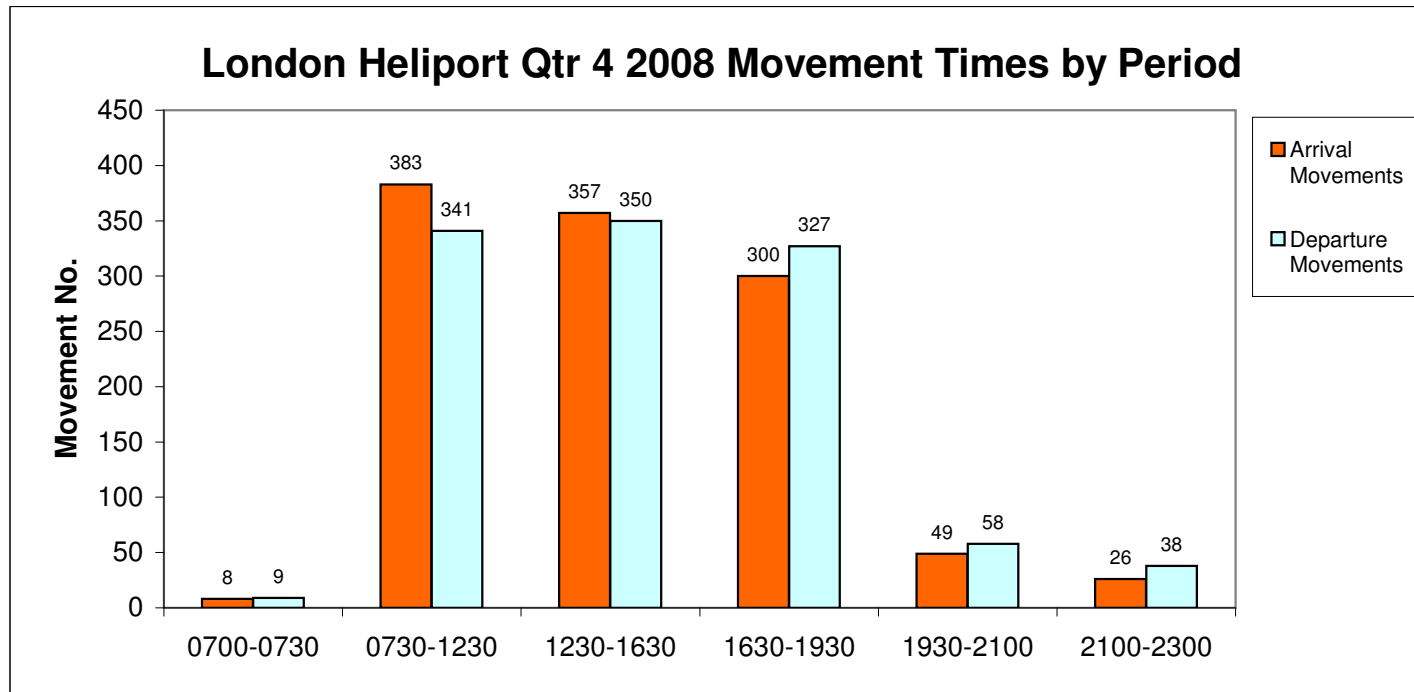
Any other business. On item 9, at the end of the business set out in the agenda, the Chairman enquired whether members of the Consultative Group wished to raise any other matters. No other items of business were raised.

Date of next meeting. On item 10, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Consultative Group should be held on Monday, 27th April 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.

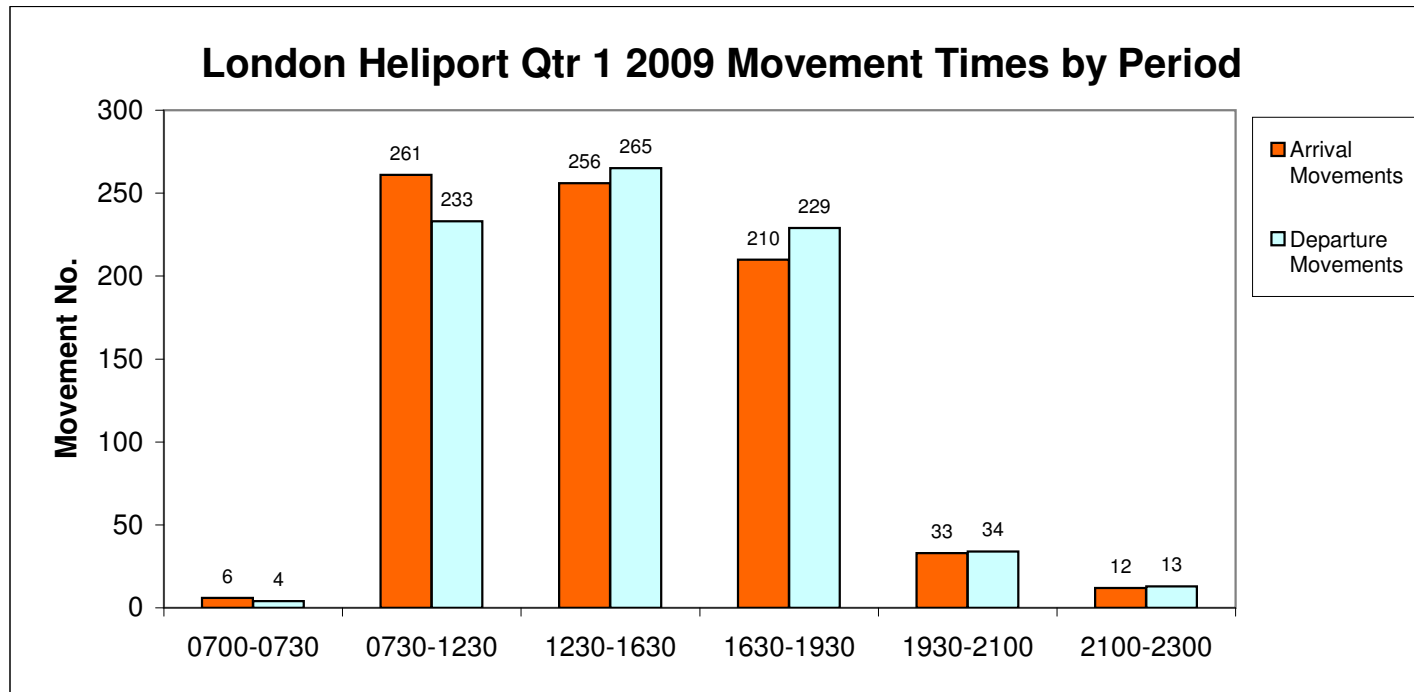
Qtr 4 2008 Movement Time Breakdown

Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	8	9	
0730-1230	383	341	
1230-1630	357	350	
1630-1930	300	327	
1930-2100	49	58	
2100-2300	26	38	
Total	1123	1123	2246



Qtr 1 2009 Movement Time Breakdown

Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	6	4	
0730-1230	261	233	
1230-1630	256	265	
1630-1930	210	229	
1930-2100	33	34	
2100-2300	12	13	
Total	778	778	1556



Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken	Completed By/Date
08/026	12/10/08	16:00 Prices Court SW11	16:00	Firstly aircraft was held for five minutes on FATO awaiting clearance from ATC giving rise to noise concern. Secondly aircraft had low rate of climb causing concern to complainant. about aircraft and public safety.	Bell 206 Jet-Ranger (single-engine) flown by safety pilot & owner. Heliport ATC unable to expedite receipt of clearance. Poor rate of climb (which safety pilot unable to correct once helicopter airborne) due to inexperience of owner.	Pilot had been reminded of local 'fly neighbourly' policy and requested owner to return on another occasion for re-brief and to carry-out a full accompanied familiarisation flight..	SH 13/10
08/029	15/10/08	13:00 Putney	13:30	Aircraft cutting the corner of the river at Hammersmith. Complainant concerned about over-flight of built-up area. Previous instances cited.	GWRBI given direct clearance to Brent Res from Barnes, but had to turn back due to low cloud (i.e could not maintain required altitude for that sector of route) towards Barnes. R44 over-flight heading west along river was instructed to fly toward south bank of river by radar controller in order to achieve North/South separation of the two a/c. NB both aircraft flying below normal heli-route maximum required altitude due to the low cloud.	Complainant informed verbally of the details in the investigation. No further action required.	SH 15/10
08/030	16/10/08	11:25 Morgans Walk SW11	11:30	Aircraft overflew complainants house. 2 x Apache helicopters flying along Thames heli-route.	Helicopters were at more or less correct circuit height and no significant deviation from heli-route was apparent (our ATC did not observe).	Complainant informed verbally of the details in the investigation. No further action required.	SH 16/10
08/031	08/12/08	11:29 World'sEnd Est. SW10	11:07	Aircraft flew past complainant residence at relatively low level.	Helicopter was inbound to heliport and pilot instructed to hold toward north bank of Thames (on ATC instructions) to visually separate from traffic departing heliport in opposite direction. To the south side of the Thames. However pilot decided to hold at lower level than normal due to perceived heightened conflict between his own helicopter and the departing one. N.B. Both pilots reported visual with each other at all times.	Complainant informed that due to reduced separation allowed by ATC the pilot was acting out of safety concerns.	CF 09/12

Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken	Completed By/Date
09/001	13/01/09	17:00 Elm Park Gardens, SW10	17:00	Helicopter flew past complainants building at low height. Increased noise level but no specific details of helicopter.	The helicopter was not noticeably low joining over the river nor in the angle of approach. Some blade slap may have occurred as helicopter descended.	Complainant was provided with name of his borough councillor representative on Consultative Group. Also informed of current campaign to highlight circuit discipline and 'fly neighborly' policy. Explained probable routing of a/c overhead from Brent and descent from 1400ft over specified are to reach circuit height at river before approach into Heliport.	SH 14/01/08
09/002	13.02.09	19:15 Battersea Reach SW11	19:15	Helicopter appeared to fly low over Battersea Reach whilst lining up for final approach.	ATC reported approach to be normal	Complainant informed verbally of the details in the investigation. No further action required.	SH 16/04/09
09/003	09.03.09	15:25 - 08/03/09 World's End Est. SW10	15:00 09/03/09	Aircraft flew past complainant residence at relatively low level on approach to heliport.	Pilot of aircraft interviewed at heliport on 15.03.09. Reported a normal "steep" approach. May have commenced approach early or from reduced height and therefore appeared lower than other traffic passing complainant residence.	Complainant advised by email of findings. Complainant not fully satisfied by pilot explanation given. Prevailing winds may have affected aircraft positioning prior to approach and control of approach though pilot did not report any difficulties in relation to this. However pilot was re-briefed.	SH 09/03/09
09/004	12.03.09	18:40 11/03/09 World's End Est. SW10	10:05 12/03/09	Two consecutive aircraft flew past complainant residence at relatively low level. on approach to heliport.	Incidents occurred in darkness so use of heliport CCTV to assist investigation inconclusive. Pilot of first aircraft reported normal approach from far northern end of heliport circuit. Conclusion: approach path may have been longer and shallower than other aircraft.	Complainant advised by email of findings. Complainant (same as 09/003 with similar complaint) not fully satisfied by explanation given.. However pilot was re-briefed.	SH 16/04/09

Recommendation 1

The key requirement is for a comprehensive London-wide picture of activity which addresses issues arising from helicopter activity not associated with the London Heliport at Battersea.

Recommendation 2

Research should be commissioned aimed at correlating certificated noise of helicopter types with actual noise levels.

Recommendation 3

A national site should include links to the Battersea site www.londonheliport.co.uk which provides a single point of contact for complaints about activities associated with helicopters using the heliport. The national site could provide a similar function for non-Battersea related complaints.

Recommendation 4

The DfT could assist in publicising existing complaints procedures (eg Battersea) as well as promoting new arrangements for other heliports and helicopter activity in general. DEFRA should be urged to commission research on the setting up of a national complaints database as a means of addressing noise concerns.

Recommendation 5

The London Heliport Consultative Group (LHCG) www.wandsworth.gov.uk/heliport should also be a statutory consultee – also the constituent councils (Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea).

Recommendation 6

Wandsworth Council had taken the initiative in setting up the LHCG in summer 2006. Working with the operator, the Group has achieved the setting-up of a complaints procedure at the heliport and published guidance on helicopter activities including noise in a booklet for local residents.

Recommendation 7

Agreed.

Recommendation 8

Agreed.

Recommendation 9

Agreed.

Recommendation 10

Agreed.

Recommendation 11

Agreed.

Recommendation 12

The setting up of this working group is long overdue. Two-thirds of the helicopter activity in London is unrelated to Battersea. There is a pressing need for London-wide arrangements that complement the monitoring, reporting and complaints procedures put in place by the LHCG and the operator for Battersea. This could also include work to correlate certificated helicopter noise with actual levels and research on best practice at other heliports. Both the LHCG and Wandsworth Council (which has specialist expertise on helicopter noise and participated in the DEFRA/Salford University study (Research into the improvement of the management of helicopter noise 2008) would wish to be represented on the working group.

Recommendation 13

Agreed.

Recommendation 14

Agreed.

Steve Mayner

Wandsworth Council on behalf of the London Heliport Consultative Group

February 11, 2008

Subject: Helicopter Noise Update

Report Number: 7

Report to: Environment Committee

Date: 18 November 2008

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee notes the progress being made in implementing the recommendations set out in its 2006 report: *London in a spin – a review of helicopter noise*.
- 1.2 That the Committee approves a formal request for written updates from Department for Transport and Civil Aviation Authority on the next step for implementing the remaining recommendations.
- 1.3 That the Committee approves a formal request for information from *The London Heliport Consultative Group*, based in the London Borough of Wandsworth, on current issues and concerns.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Environment Committee produced its review of helicopter noise: *London in a spin – a review of helicopter noise*, in October 2006 and Members met with the then Transport Minister, Gillian Merron MP, in December to discuss the report and the recommendations. The Committee's review concentrated on flights into and out of London's only heliport at Battersea and flights over London by; commercial, civilian, military, and police and ambulance services. It was agreed that the Department for Transport (DfT) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) would undertake initial work on the two recommendations to improve helicopter noise data collection and make public complaints procedures clearer for the public¹. This would be followed by a further meeting to consider how best to take forward the remaining recommendations.
- 2.2 In November 2007, an update was submitted to the Environment Committee detailing the progress of the CAA and DfT regarding the delivery of the Committee's recommendations.

The CAA has completed its work on helicopter noise data and public complaints procedures. Since July 2007, the CAA has began publishing data on helicopter flights over London (within London and London City Control Zones (CTRs)) on its website at:
<http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1346>

- The CAA had also published on its website clearer public complaints procedures regarding helicopter noise: <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1346&pagetype=90&pageid=8088>

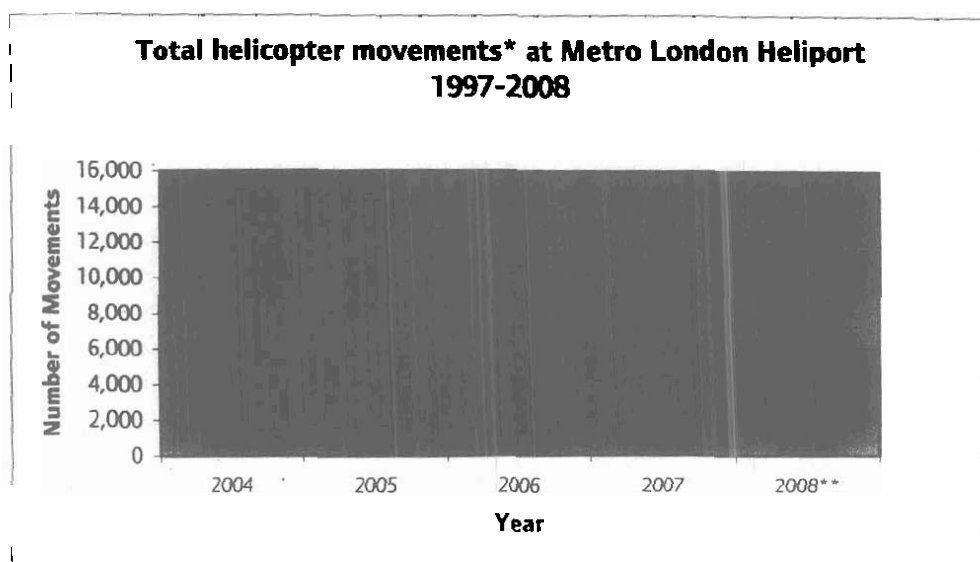
¹ See Annex 1 for a full list of the Committee's recommendations

The recommendation to establish a *Battersea Heliport Consultative Committee* was implemented last year by Wandsworth Council and Weston Aviation and several meetings have taken place between these organisations and some local residents. This group is still active.

- The Assembly's investigation was helpful in prompting commissioning of 'Research into the Improvement of the Management of Helicopter Noise' by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, now available on <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/noise/research/index.htm>

3. Issues for consideration

- 3.1 The release of new monthly UK Airport Statistics records² has allowed us to update the statistics used in the 2006 report to show the trend up until 2008, shown below:



*Movements are a measure of Flights into and out of the Heliport

**Estimate for 2008

- 3.2 The Committee's 2006 report indicated that helicopter activity at Metro London Heliport at Battersea was steadily increasing, with a 7.65 per cent increase in activity between 2004 and 2005, and projections for 2006 showing a further 7 per cent rise from 2004. New data shows that the increase was in fact well above estimate, reaching a record figure of 14,225 movements for 2006 (up 21.54 per cent from 2004).
- 3.3 However, while helicopter activity from Metro London Heliport continued to rise at the beginning of 2007, in spring, activity went into decline, with the final two quarters showing activity levels similar to that of 2005. Subsequently, 2007 ended with a 7.7 per cent decline in helicopter activity from the previous year. This decline has continued into 2008, meaning that since 2006 there has been a sharp overall decline in helicopter activity at Metro London Heliport.
- 3.4 The new CAA data, which is also recorded daily, enables mapping of all the peaks and troughs throughout the year. With these statistics much clearer links can be illustrated between high-level activity and events such as: horse racing events at Ascot, Cheltenham and The Derby, the Formula One Grand Prix and Farnborough Air show. It should be noted however that residents are increasingly aware of these event-induced increases, and at the start of each year London Heliport has to publish details in advance of when these busy days will occur at www.londonheliport.co.uk

² <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=80&pagetype=88&pageid=3&sglid=3>

Next steps

- 3.5 There appears to have been little further progress in implementing the Committee's recommendations since the 2007 update, and it may therefore be timely to seek a response from the CAA and DfT on possible next steps. For example, the establishment of a working group, as originally intended, to take forward the Committee's recommendations could be an important first step, preferably including officers from; the Department for Transport, the Civil Aviation Authority, NATS and the GLA.
- 3.6 A response could also be sought from other stakeholders to gauge what, if any, further steps they would wish to see taken. Given the London Heliport Consultative Group is still active, it would appear to offer the best avenue for an alternative perspective.
- 3.7 The London Ambient noise strategy is due to be updated in the coming months and Committee may wish to obtain responses prior to this to allow for input into the strategy.

4. Strategy Implications

- 4.1 The report is relevant to the Mayor's Noise Strategy: policies 51, 52 and 53 regarding helicopter noise and the Government's consultation on the National Noise Strategy.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no costs arising from this report.

Background Papers:

The Environment Committee's report, "London in a spin – a review of helicopter noise"

<http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/environment.jsp>

Agenda and Minutes, Environment Committee 17 November 2008

Contact: David Bellman 0207 983 4791

Annex 1 – Recommendations from “London in a Spin – A review of Helicopter noise”

Recommendation 1

The Department for Transport should undertake a full review of the impact of helicopter movements and noise in London over the next twelve months, with the aim of putting in place a series of policy responses designed to mitigate the impact of this form of noise pollution on Londoners’ lives.

Recommendation 2

As part of its review, the Department for Transport and Civil Aviation Authority should investigate and then establish a mechanism to ensure that research on noise and other data on all helicopter movements is effectively collected, collated, analysed and published.

Recommendation 3

A single national web-site (for example, extending the role of the national noise mapping web-site), or a clearly publicised portal, should be established by the Department for Transport and/or Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to give public access to data on helicopters, including movements, routes used, and places where holding may be expected.

Recommendation 4

As part of its review, the Department for Transport should take the lead to: make the public complaints procedures clearer, including making any telephone number universally known; that complaints are logged, co-ordinated and dealt with effectively; and that consistent data on complaints is published.

Recommendation 5

The Civil Aviation Authority should include the London Assembly and the Mayor of London in consultation, and seek amendment to legislation to make them both statutory consultees, regarding matters that have implications for helicopter noise.

Recommendation 6

The operator of London Heliport at Battersea, in association with Wandsworth Council, should establish within 12 months a London Heliport Consultative Committee to, as a first priority, address local residents’ concerns about helicopter movements and noise.

Recommendation 7

The National Air Traffic Services and Civil Aviation Authority should come forward with proposals on dealing with the issue of helicopter holding at locations across London.

Recommendation 8

The Department for Transport should review its guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority so that the environmental impact of helicopter noise is included within its responsibilities.

Recommendation 9

As part of its review, the Department for Transport should investigate user charging for any additional air traffic control services required for helicopters.

Recommendation 10

Following changes to the Regulations, the Civil Aviation Authority should impose restrictions on the use of helicopters for advertising and media so that the environmental impact can be minimised.

Recommendation 11

The Department for Transport should submit proposals to the Treasury that would lead to a change in the finance rules to give a write down allowance of 25 per cent for all helicopters.

Recommendation 12

The Department for Transport should establish a working group including the Civil Aviation Authority, National Air Traffic Services, Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit, British Helicopter Advisory Board, helicopter/heliport/airport operators, Mayor of London, local authorities, environmental groups and any affected residents groups to:

- update estimates of future demand for helicopter movements;
- examine noise assessment and control issues;
- reappraise management of airspace;
- commission and undertake research; and,
- assess options for existing and future heliport provision.

Recommendation 13

The Civil Aviation Authority should give regard to the Mayor's London Ambient Noise Strategy when developing proposals on environmental matters, including helicopter noise.

Recommendation 14

The Mayor should reflect the findings and recommendations of this London Assembly report in the next review of his London Ambient Noise Strategy.