

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-018-2020/21
Date of meeting: 14th September
2020



Portfolio: Commercial & Regulatory Services – Cllr A Patel
Subject: North Weald Airfield aircraft landing fees implementation
Responsible Officer: Darren Goodey (01992 564501)
Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To agree to the introduction of landing fees at North Weald Airfield for visiting aircraft.
- (2) To agree the recommended scale of landing fee charges.

Executive Summary:

Aircraft visiting North Weald Airfield do not currently pay a landing fee and as such there is an additional potential revenue stream to further increase income from aviation activities. This report seeks Members agreement to implement landing fees for visiting aircraft and the scale of charges to be applied.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The implementation of landing fees at North Weald Airfield has a potential to generate approximately £24,000 additional income per annum based on the current level of visiting aircraft.

Other Options for Action:

Not to implement landing fees for visiting aircraft thereby losing the potential for an additional £24,000.

Report:

1. At many airfields across the UK landing fees are imposed on visiting aircraft. It is normal practice that the landing fee is paid to the owner / operator of the airfield and is a contribution to the running and on-going maintenance of the facilities.
2. Landing fees have not been collected at North Weald Airfield in the traditional manner due to the fact that each aviation tenant has a runway license. This license not only permits them access to the runway it also stipulates how many movements (a take off and landing) they are permitted per year for which a fee is charged. There has been no differential between home based and visiting aircraft.

3. The more recently issued runway licenses have a mechanism in place that can be utilised should a tenant exceed their movement allocation. In effect they “buy” additional movements. However, the older runway licenses do not have the means to do this.
4. Currently a very small number of aviation tenants with the older style runway licenses are exceeding their allocation of movements and as such there is the potential to renegotiate them in terms of movements for home-based aircraft and to implement landing fees for non home-based visitors.
5. In the past there has been reluctance to pursue those tenants with the older style runway licenses who were exceeding their movement allocation due to the fragility of the aviation sector and the genuine fear that increasing fees could jeopardise their entire business and in turn actually reduce the Airfield’s income. It should be noted that although the Covid-19 pandemic has adversely affected commercial airlines it would appear that general aviation has recovered quickly with North Weald movements almost back to pre-lockdown volumes.
6. The means of collating movement data was also up until fairly recently unreliable and liable to challenge.
7. However, with a more reliable means of collecting movements data in place and with local authorities under more strain than ever to be self financing there is now the need to renegotiate current runway licenses and to implement a scale of charges for non home -based visitors.
8. It would be the intention to levy a landing fee on all non home-based aircraft as is common practice across UK airfields.
9. In terms of a scale of charges that could be implemented a bench marking exercise has been undertaken whereby 9 other local airfields were examined and the results are detailed below.

Location	Single engine	Twin engine	Rotary	Business Jet
Andrewsfield	£16.00	£25.00	£25.00	N/A
Damyns Hall	£10.00	£10.00	£120.00	N/A
Elstree	£15.00	£30.00	£15.00	£66.00
Earles Colne	£12.00	£17.00	£25.00	N/A
Great Oakley	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00	N/A
Duxford	£18.00	£35.00	£16.95	£44.95
Little Gransden	£10.00	£20.00	£10.00	£20.00
Stapleford	£17.00	£34.00	£34.00	N/A
Thurrock	£10.00	£10.00	N/A	N/A

10. As a result of the benchmarking exercise a recommended scale of charges for North Weald is indicated below. The charges are deemed to be reasonable and at a level that would not deter pilots from visiting.

	Single engine	Twin engine	Helicopter	Business jet
Landing fee	£12.00	£18.00	£12.00 £24.00	or From £60.00

11. The method of collecting landing fees has been examined with possible options being the Operations Team collecting cash from pilots on arrival, tenants acting as an agent and collecting monies on the Council's behalf in return of a percentage of the fee, advance on-line payments combined with the application of a remote payment card reader.
12. The cash collection on arrival is not considered suitable due to audit processes required whilst the tenant collecting fees on the Council's behalf has also been discounted on the basis that there is no actual requirement to share any of the income received.
13. The use of an on-line booking system via the Council's website and a remote payment card reader are considered to be the most suitable means of fee collection on the basis that both are currently being used successfully by other Council functions including Community Services.
14. Working with the Council's Payment Solution team Worldpay was identified as the preferred third party and they would provide the card readers at a cost of £22.50 per month. The fee charged per transaction is 1.5%.
15. Visiting aircraft will be signposted to the on-line payment system when they make contact to PPR (Prior Permission Required) in advance of their visit. However, it is recognised that a number of visiting aircraft will not book in advance and only make first contact with the Airfield once they are airborne. Therefore, these aircraft would be met by a member of the Operations team with the payment card reader once landed. Payments can also be taken in advance over the telephone without the cardholder being present if needed.
16. Prior to the introduction of landing fees there would be an awareness campaign using social media outlets and the Airfield's newsletter plus there would be a programme of updating flight guides such as Pooley's with a view to going live on November 1st 2020.
17. In the financial year 2019/20 there were approximately 2500 movements by visiting aircraft that could have generated approximately £24,000 of additional income based on the proposed scale of charges.
18. It should be noted that the number of visiting aircraft is expected to decrease if the landing fee regime is implemented as it will no doubt deter a number of pilots who will look to go to airfields where a charge is not levied of which there are still some. However, the decrease is not anticipated to be significant.
19. It is not the intention to apply a landing fee to visiting emergency services or military aircraft, those visiting for maintenance purposes or those who have diverted to North Weald for emergency reasons.

Resource Implications:

The cost of the hardware required would be met by the Airfield's revenue budget.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council has a duty to utilise its assets in the best way possible, this proposal creates a further revenue stream that will contribute to the maximisation of income potential for the Airfield.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

It is not anticipated that the number of aircraft movements will change significantly with the introduction of the landing fee system therefore there will be no change in the SCG implications.

Consultation Undertaken:

Consultation has taken place with the Council's Payment Solution Team.

Background Papers:

None

Risk Management:

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
 - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
 - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
 - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
 - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
 - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
 - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: Commercial & Regulatory Services

If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: No

Title of policy or decision: N/A

Officer completing the EqlA: Darren Goodey Tel: 4501 email: dgoodey@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Date of completing the assessment: 01/08/19

Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? Yes
2.2	<p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): To obtain agreement from members to start the collection of landing fees for visiting aircraft at North Weald Airfield.</p> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>To increase income by £20,000</p>
2.3	<p>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• service users• employees• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? <p>Some service users will now have to pay a fee to land at North Weald Airfield which is common practice at many Airfields across the country.</p> <p>NWA employees will be undertaking a new duty in collecting said fees.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</p> <p>No</p>
2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p> <p>No</p>
2.5	<p>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</p> <p>No</p>

Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	What does the information tell you about those groups identified?
3.2	Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?
3.3	If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	Neutral	L
Disability	Neutral	L
Gender	Neutral	L
Gender reassignment	Neutral	L
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	L
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	L
Race	Neutral	L
Religion/belief	Neutral	L
Sexual orientation	Neutral	L

Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Q Durrani

Date: 19/08/20

Signature of person completing the EqIA: Darren Goodey

Date: 01/08/20

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.