

## **Introduction & Background**

1. Heathrow Airport is a key part of the infrastructure of the south-east of England, and of the UK as a whole. It has a huge impact on the surrounding sub-region. That impact has economic, social and environmental dimensions.
2. The Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG, or 'the Group') was formed in autumn 2015. It enables collaborative working between local authorities and others around Heathrow Airport to develop a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing matters of common interest. Those interests include spatial planning, transport, environmental issues (including emissions of aircraft noise, polluting emissions and carbon reduction / climate change objectives) public health and economic development. This collaborative working enables strategic, cross-boundary and comprehensive approaches to be taken to better deal with issues that arise.
3. This Accord sets out the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group's aims and objectives, together with its working processes.
4. The Group is a joint-working partnership between the member organisations who undertake to work together to support mutual objectives. It is not a legal entity and is not a decision-making body. It therefore operates through an 'Accountable Body'. That is currently the London Borough of Hounslow. The role of the Accountable body is set out in a Memorandum of Understanding ('the Memorandum') which members signed in 2022.
5. This version of the Accord updates the previous version, which was approved in July 2020. That in turn replaced the first Accord, which was agreed in 2017.

## **Purpose and objectives**

6. The key purpose of the group is to enable collaboration between members to allow effective collective intervention on matters of shared concern, and enable the opportunity to efficiently develop and deliver shared projects and initiatives. It will also enable the members to give meaningful and timely feedback to documents and other relevant materials issued by Heathrow Airport Limited, the Government and its

Agencies, regional government (e.g. GLA) etc relating to matters of joint interest, as well as to share best practice in this space.

7. The Group's objectives relate to the following areas, which are discussed in more detail below:

- a) the improvement of the functioning of the current airport
- b) planning and development matters relating to the airport
- c) the betterment of the area covered by the Group, and transition to net zero carbon emissions
- d) partnership and engagement with stakeholders
- e) sharing information and expertise
- f) other related issues as they arise.

8. Specific objectives will vary from time to time. Following the Covid pandemic, for example, objectives were revised to focus on recovery. The objectives will be reviewed annually and will be set out in an annual work plan.

#### *The current airport*

9. Whatever is planned for the future development of Heathrow Airport, there is widespread consensus around, and support for, the need to optimise the use of current facilities. This includes ensuring full consideration of the impacts on local communities arising from the day to day operations on the ground and in the air. These impacts include:

- local environmental emission effects such as aircraft noise, and impacts on local air and water quality
- environmental performance matters such as the impacts of the airport on green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity
- global environmental impacts and in particular responding to the climate emergency and the transition across the sub-region to net-zero carbon emissions
- economic development, including jobs, business development, innovation and skills and training
- surface access/transport, in particular the negative environmental externalities arising from access to the airport for workers, passengers and logistics/freight operations, and the economic and social costs of congestion.

10. Whilst there are clear changes to the level of impact of the airport arising from an additional runway, optimisation of the current two runways could also have significant effects on local communities and therefore need to be carefully and collectively considered.
11. Whilst the airport operator is a key instigator and decision maker in the future development of Heathrow, as a regulated monopoly it is also important to understand the policy and regulated ecosystem in which Heathrow Airport Limited operates. On occasion this will mean close liaison with a wide range of other agencies who have influence over the impact of the airport on the local area, including in particular the Civil Aviation Authority and Department for Transport.

#### *Planning and development*

12. A co-ordinated approach to planning and development for cross-boundary and strategic matters relating to the airport is essential. This will enable authorities to efficiently progress their legal 'Duty to Co-operate'<sup>1</sup> obligations (or successor arrangements) in relation to Heathrow and related matters through their Local Plans to assist in effective and sustainable planning across the area and improvement of the physical environment.

#### *The betterment of the area and transition to net zero carbon emissions*

13. Actions to improve the environment will include pressing for the timely delivery of high-quality infrastructure, including transport, community, and green and blue infrastructure (such as improving peoples' ability to access and enjoy the natural environment in the wider area around the airport). A particular focus arising after the pandemic has been around supporting a green recovery and identifying opportunities for members to work collaboratively with Heathrow and each other to accelerate the shift to net zero carbon emissions across the local economy. In many cases individual members have only partial influence over reducing emissions attributed to their area, given the root causes of those emissions lie elsewhere e.g. traffic passing through the local authority area generated by the airport. However, collective action can increase members influence

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<sup>1</sup> The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant authorities and bodies constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis for strategic planning matters (see section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

over the root causes of emissions, help drive change at pace, and improve cost effectiveness of transition to a low-carbon economy.

#### *Partnership and engagement*

14. The Group will aim to build partnerships, engage with key stakeholders, and be a joint voice on collective matters to achieve the objectives set out in this Accord. Strong relationships with a wide range of other bodies are paramount. In particular the Group will have a seat on the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA) and will represent the views of members in that forum, as discussed in the Executive Partnership Board (see below) CISHA fulfils the statutory role of Airport Consultative Committee (Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act, 1982).

15. Other key relationships include those with:

- Heathrow Airport Limited
- government departments, notably the Department for Transport and their statutory Agencies such as the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), National Highways, Environment Agency and Natural England)
- local authorities in the area and neighbouring areas not currently members of the group
- the Local Government Association
- local Members of Parliament
- the Mayor of London (including Greater London Authority and Transport for London)
- infrastructure providers such as Network Rail
- bodies with an influence on the aviation industry, research and innovation and energy sectors, (such as the CAA's Environmental Sustainability Panel), community organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

#### *Sharing information and expertise*

16. The Group will provide a forum where the members can share knowledge and expertise about the areas set out here, making best use of the knowledge and expertise that is available across its membership.

*Other related issues as they arise.*

17. It is intended that the role of the Group will be strategic in nature, but it will also be practical and delivery focussed. The Group will respond flexibly to related issues as and when they arise and its role will evolve to best respond to the matters as they develop.

## **Membership**

18. There are three types of membership of the Group:
  - Full members
  - Associate members
  - Observers.
19. Full members of the Group comprise those bodies who are signatories to this Accord, or to the Memorandum. The members at the time of agreeing this Accord are listed in Appendix A. Full members contribute to the funding of the Group.
20. Associate membership or observer status is for bodies who have an interest in Heathrow airport and want to contribute to the work of the Group without becoming full members. This allows them to be kept informed of activities of the Group and to pool efforts in collaborative working without being formal participants.
21. Associate members may wish to be involved in the work of the Group, but do not financially contribute to it. Associate members may attend meetings of the Group and participate to the extent agreed by the Chief Executive Steering Board and Executive Partnership Board. They may engage in particular workstreams (e.g. transport modelling work) or be involved in developing projects (e.g. the Environment Agency's River Thames Catchment scheme).
22. Observers may provide a financial contribution to the work of the Group, but because of their other responsibilities do not feel it appropriate to be formal members.
23. Associate members or observers have included governmental bodies (such as National Highways, Environment Agency, Natural England, Public Health England, and Network Rail) or organisations such as London Borough of Hillingdon, Buckinghamshire Council, the West London Alliance (of West London Boroughs), the Greater London Authority, and Transport for London.

24. New members are welcome to join the Group. Potential new members are likely to include local authorities and other bodies with a close connection to Heathrow Airport. Any organisation seeking to join should apply to the Secretariat. Their application will be considered for approval by the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chief Executive Steering Board and Executive Partnership Board.
25. A member may withdraw by giving three months written notice to the Secretariat.

## **Funding**

26. The main source of funding for the Group is member contributions. To be a full member, organisations must generally provide a financial contribution. In some instances members may make contributions in kind, rather than direct financial contributions. Members will agree contribution levels with the Secretariat, subject to ultimate approval of the Chief Executive Steering Board and Executive Partnership Board.
27. Contributions should be paid on an annual basis. Contributions for the year are due within 30 days of receipt of an invoice from the Accountable Body. The Accountable Body will invoice the members of the HSPG at the end of each calendar year. This allows the Group to budget and commit to work during the year. The Accountable Body will contribute to the funding as if it were part of the Group. If a member leaves the Group, they will be liable for any costs incurred by the Group in relation to their membership up to the date that they leave.
28. Funding may also be provided from other sources, such as the government or observers. For example, in 2018, the Group secured grant award funding from the Government for joint spatial planning work and an economic development strategy. In 2023 the group secured funding to explore non-technical barriers to the reduction of carbon emissions from Innovate UK. The acceptance of funding from any outside sources will be approved by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chief Executive Steering Board and Executive Partnership Board, as appropriate.
29. Funding is primarily used to pay for the work of the Secretariat and other administrative functions (IT support, website updates, meeting rooms, etc.). It may only be used for purposes agreed by the Group.

30. The Group will account for income and expenditure as agreed with the Accountable Body.

### **Organisational structure**

31. The roles and responsibilities of the various bodies that make up the Group are set out below. A diagram of the structure is shown in Appendix B.

### **Accountable Body**

32. The Accountable Body has been appointed to administer, manage and act on behalf of the Group. This may be terminated on three months' notice from the Accountable Body.
33. The role of the Accountable Body is set out in the Memorandum. Key points include:
- a) the engagement of the Secretariat, responsibility for the financial management and expenditure of the Group
  - b) ensuring that the decisions and activities of the Group conform with legal requirements
  - c) ensuring this Accord is being adhered to
  - d) ensure that records are maintained and made accessible (as appropriate)
  - e) acting as legal entity for purposes of applying and bidding for external funding, running procurement processes and entering into contracts on behalf of the Group (as agreed by the Group).

### **Executive Partnership Board**

34. The Executive Partnership Board (formerly known as the Leaders Board) is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Group.
35. The Board comprises representatives of each full member organisation, usually at the level of Council leader, or equivalent. It will be chaired by one of the members and be supported by the Secretariat. Currently the chairing of the group is on rotation amongst members, however this will be kept under review and may be changed by majority agreement of the Board as appropriate.

36. Meetings will be scheduled to respond to the previous meeting of the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport and to prepare input to subsequent CISHA meetings.
37. Full meetings of the Board will usually be held at least twice a year. 'Paper' meetings (i.e. meetings involving the exchange of emails and documents, rather than involving direct interaction) may also be held. For such meetings the Secretariat will provide written reports for noting by Board members, without members necessarily needing to meet formally, whether in person or on-line.
38. The terms of reference of the Executive Partnership Board are set out in Appendix C.

### **Chief Executive Steering Board**

39. The Chief Executive Steering Board (formerly known as the Chief Officers Group) will provide input into the Executive Partnership Board and support actions following Executive Partnership Board meetings. This may include consideration of issues in more detail to implement the direction set by the Executive Partnership Board.
40. The Chief Executive Steering Board comprises Chief Executives (or their delegates as agreed) from member organisations.
41. Meetings of the Chief Executive Steering Board will usually take place in advance of Executive Partnership Board meetings so they can provide input into them.
42. The terms of reference of the Chief Executive Steering Group Board are set out in Appendix D.

### **Working Groups**

43. HSPG has a number of specialist sub-groups and task-and-finish groups as agreed by the Chief Executive Steering Board and Executive Partnership Board.
44. Each working group will agree a chair from amongst its membership, typically at their first meeting in each calendar year.



45. The working groups may determine the frequency of their meetings, usually every two months. They will provide regular updates on their activities through the Secretariat and contribute to the annual work plan.
46. The following working groups are currently in operation:
  - Surface Access Group
  - Spatial Planning Group
  - Environment & Airspace Group
47. Terms of reference for the existing Working Groups are set out in Appendix E.
48. From time to time the Secretariat may set up time limited task and finish groups or advisory panels on specific topics, as agreed with members. Feedback from these groups will be provided to the appropriate working group or the Chief Executives Steering Board as appropriate.

## **Secretariat**

49. The role of the Secretariat is to organise the day-to-day running of the Group. It may take such decisions as are necessary to fulfil the objectives of the Group as set out in the annual work plan. In discharging these functions, the Secretariat will have due regard to the Contract Procedure Rules of the Accountable Body as set out in the MOU.
50. The Secretariat may respond to correspondence and consultations on behalf of the Group working within the Group's agreed policies.
51. The Secretariat will organise Group meetings in the pattern and frequencies set out in this Accord. All meetings in the Group may be held in-person, virtually or a hybrid of the two.
52. The Secretariat will provide members of the Executive Partnership Board and Chief Executive Steering Board with regular reports to update them on progress, typically on a six monthly basis. This will include the '*Review Reports*' from the Accountable Body, which are described in the Memorandum.

### **Strategy awayday**

53. An annual strategy awayday will be held with lead officers from member bodies at the start of each calendar year and this will be a material consideration in the development and setting of the group's annual workplan.

### **Work plan and budget**

54. An annual work plan (including a budget) will be agreed for each financial year. The work plan will set out how the Group will deliver the objectives set out in this Accord. The work plan will be presented for approval to the Chief Executive Steering Board at their first meeting of each calendar year. Details of what has been agreed will be reported to the Executive Partnership Board.
55. Urgent actions or expenditure not included in the work plan or budget can be agreed by the chair of the relevant Working Group on recommendation of the Secretariat as long as due regard has been paid to the Standing Orders of the Accountable Body, or the Accountable Body has been consulted.
56. Progress against the work plan will be monitored and reported by the Secretariat as part of the updates described above.

### **Amendments to the Accord**

57. Changes to this Accord can be made by the Chief Executive Steering Board on recommendation of the Secretariat. Such changes will be presented to the Executive Partnership Board for final approval.

### **Termination**

58. This Accord can be terminated on agreement by the Executive Partnership Board on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Steering Board. If termination is agreed, a period of two months (60 days) will be allowed for the termination to come into effect and to allow alternative arrangements to be made.
59. The Memorandum states that if the Accord is terminated, the Memorandum will be terminated automatically. At the end of the notice period, any funds after outstanding

costs have been paid (including any due to the Accountable Body) will be returned to members, as a proportion to the amount each contributed initially.

60. The Accord will continue in place until terminated by the members of the Group.

## Appendices

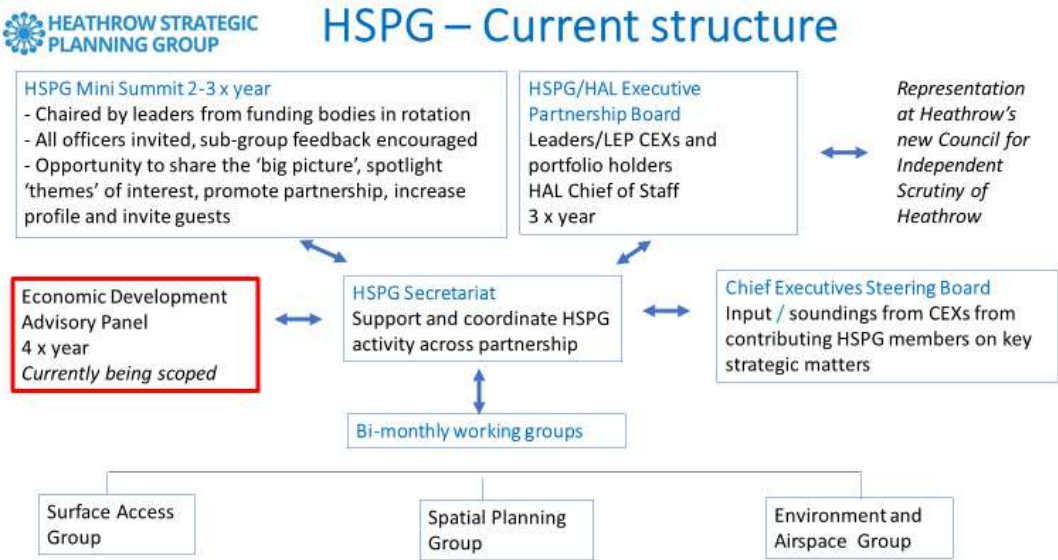
### APPENDIX A

#### *Membership*

The current full members of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group are:

- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Ealing
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Runnymede Borough Council
- Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Thames Valley Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership
- Surrey County Council
- Slough Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Heathrow Airport Limited.

Structure diagram



*Terms of reference - Executive Partnership Board*

**Purpose**

The Executive Partnership Board is intended primarily to provide a space for constructive dialogue on strategic matters – both between the leadership of individual HSPG partners, and between HSPG partners and Chief Officers at Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL).

The agenda for the board will typically be split equally into two parts, with HAL in attendance at Part 1, and with the following objectives:

1) Part 1 - HAL update & questions

- Opportunity for HAL to update as a group key stakeholders across the sub-region on strategic matters and key issues for collaboration between the parties and/or relevance to the wider local community.
- Opportunity for HSPG members to do likewise and feedback to HAL on key issues of common concern.

The agenda for Part 1 will be agreed between the secretariat and HAL.

2) Part 2 - HSPG strategic update & questions

- The secretariat will undertake to provide a high level update to the board on activities undertaken by the partnership, highlighting any key emerging issues board members should have visibility on.
- The board will also be used to provide strategic direction to the HSPG secretariat on key policy positions and specific projects and programmes as appropriate.
- The board may be requested to approve a formal position amongst the partnership on key issues (see below).

**Membership**

Only representatives of full members of HSPG. Full membership is for funding members only (although observers may be permitted as appropriate).

Invitees will be elected Leaders & relevant committee chairpersons or portfolio holders, and LEP Chief Executives. Invitees from HAL will be of comparable seniority.

Membership to be reviewed annually.

### **Deputies**

The Executive Partnership Board is intended to facilitate high level strategic conversations between the partnership and HAL, and between HSPG members. Deputies are therefore discouraged unless they are at the level of seniority required to constructively feed into these discussions.

### **Chairing**

The board will typically be chaired in rotation amongst paying members of the partnership as arranged by the HSPG secretariat. This arrangement may be reviewed by the body as appropriate.

### **Frequency**

Quarterly

### **Venue**

The Board will typically meet online via MS Teams, however in person meetings may be arranged periodically to facilitate partnership working. Locations for in person meetings will typically be rotated amongst members, with the host of the meeting then assuming chairing responsibilities.

### **Special sessions and task and finish groups**

The secretariat may, from time to time, set-up special meetings of the board to cover specific issues of key interest to the partnership.

If appropriate, a time-limited task and finish group made up of the secretariat and sub-set of the board may be set up to explore a particular issue in more depth and bring this back to a future board meeting for further discussion and recommendations for action (if required).

### **Decision Making (Part 2 agenda)**

The board may be requested to take a decision on key elements of policy and direction of the partnership – particularly if this represents a departure from the position held by the partnership as set out in the existing HSPG Accord, or is in relation to the requirement to take a new position on an emerging issue. Where a decision is being sought from the board this will be set out in a full report from the secretariat<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> In general HSPG operates via consensus, however in certain specific circumstances it may be deemed possible to express an opinion, or progress a specific piece of work, despite diverging opinions within the partnership as long as these are clearly acknowledged within any communications.



*Terms of reference - Chief Executive Steering Board*

**Purpose**

The Chief Executive Steering Board is intended to operate as an informal sounding board for the HSPG secretariat in regards to:

- inform development of overall strategy for the partnership
- strategic level oversight of overall HSPG work programme and focus for the partnership
- provide a sounding board delivery options for specific key projects and initiatives.

**Membership**

All funding members are eligible to send a representative.

**Deputies**

The Steering Board is intended to provide high level strategic oversight of the group and so will be limited to Chief Executives, or Executive Directors (direct reports to Chief Executive) only.

**Chairing**

The Board will be chaired by a Chief Executive from amongst the group. The chair will typically be confirmed at the first meeting of the calendar year.

**Frequency**

Quarterly

**Decision Making**

The board is not constituted as a decision-making body per se, but may advise the secretariat on the direction of overall work programme, or key projects and programmes. Such advice

may then be passed via the wider HSPG membership, including members of the Executive Partnership Board, for comment before action as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In general HSPG operates via consensus, however in certain specific circumstances it may be deemed possible to express an opinion, or progress a specific piece of work, despite diverging opinions within the partnership as long as these are clearly acknowledged within any communications.

*Terms of reference - Working Groups*

The terms of reference for each of the Working Groups is set out below.

Purpose of the group

1. The purpose of the working group is to discuss the areas set out in Appendix 1.

Membership

2. Each full member of Heathrow Strategic Planning Group may nominate an officer or officers to attend the Working Group.
3. Representatives of Associate members or Observers of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair, in consultation with the secretariat.

Chair

4. At the first meeting in each calendar year, the working group will appoint a chair. Chairs will typically remain in place for two years, after which nominations for the role should be sought from across the membership.

Vice chairs

5. The chair will be supported by a vice chair or vice chairs, who may then lead on specific actions and tasks as directed by the chair. They may also stand in for the chair in presiding over the working group the event that the chair is not available.

Frequency of meetings

6. The working group will typically meet every two months. Meeting dates will be set by the Secretariat of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group in consultation with the chair of the working group. Additional emergency meetings may be held if agreed by the Chair.

Location

7. Meetings will usually be held on-line. In-person meetings may be arranged periodically to facilitate partnership. The location of in-person meetings will be at the discretion of the Chair and Secretariat.

## Appendix 1

The purpose of each Working Group is as follows:

### **Surface Access Group**

The group will consider issues relating to access to the airport (other than by aircraft). This includes:

- Enhancing rail connectivity, including proposed improvements such as the Western and Southern rail links
- Road access, including private cars, taxis, motorbikes etc.
- Bus and coach access
- Measures to support active travel in the Heathrow area (walking, cycling etc).
- Freight and logistics activity
- Active travel, and in particular development of the Heathrow Cycle Network

### **Spatial Planning Group**

A co-ordinated approach to planning and development matters relating to the airport is essential. The key role of the Spatial Planning group therefore relates to the discharging of planning functions around the airport. Areas of interest include:

- Supporting local planning authorities to progress their legal 'Duty to Co-operate' (or successor) requirements for cross-boundary and strategic planning matters through their Local Plans
- Assisting in effective spatial planning for sustainable development and infrastructure planning across the area and improvement of the physical environment
- Compiling local plan evidence bases and common policy approaches and best practice
- Contributing to Airport master planning
- Formal requirements in relation to any Development Consent Order for national significant infrastructure projects
- Response to changes to directly relevant national policies such as the Airports National Policy Statement.

## **Environment & Airspace Group**

Environmental issues at and around the airport, including:

- Sharing insight and understanding on a diverse range of technical specialisms / subjects, and making joint responses to proposals
- Climate change adaption and decarbonisation
- Reducing energy use and waste
- Local air and water quality, monitoring of emissions
- Encouraging biodiversity in the locality
- Aircraft noise, monitoring and abatement including Noise Action Plan and noise insulation scheme
- Airspace planning including Airspace Change Proposals, airport operations and procedures and Night-time noise abatement.

## **Economic Development & Renewal Group (currently paused and subject to review)**

The group will consider Heathrow's relationship with the national and local economy, including:

- How to maximise the airport's contribution to UK economic growth, including through the promotion of trade and tourism
- How the airport can contribute to the economy of the areas close to the airport, including developing the skills of the existing and potential workforce and the development decarbonisation and 'green recovery' agenda.