

Questions in response to REP6-108

This submission details the Luton Borough Council/Luton Rising Luton 2040 Vision as to how expansion of the airport will deliver that vision of eradicating poverty in Luton.

I cannot find in any of the submissions a definitive income figure which will be required per annum to reach that goal of poverty eradication.

Could the applicant, or Luton Borough Council, please provide financial data as to what the income from the airport would have to be year on year from 2024/25 onwards to achieve and maintain that target going forwards?

The submission states that Luton has the second largest gap in the country between public spending and relative needs, in both percentage and monetary term, £278 per person below the level of need.

Could the applicant provide a figure for how much per person in Luton has been spent on the following:-

Development Consent Order Application?

Property/ land acquisition for the DCO?

DART Direct-Air Rail Transit?

The acquisition and refurbishment of Morton House?

The concession fee funds retained by the airport operator due to force majeure payments due to Covid-19?

For the benefit of the ExA, I ask this question to ensure that the financial feasibility of this project is actually achievable and sustainable?

The ability to deliver this project on budget and able to deliver the financial returns is crucial, what is also crucial is that it gives the best return on the investment, or would that investment be best used, by being directly sent into council budgets in the form of the dividend?

Page 14 of the submission details the Wards of Luton, and how they rank under the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Page 15 refers to LSOA's, Lower Super Output Areas.

The first map shows data from 2015-2019, and details the change in rankings from 2015-2019. The second shows the national rankings in 2019.

What the document doesn't show for comparison are the rankings in previous survey years:-

2007-87th in 354 Local Authorities

2010-69th in 354 Local Authorities

2015-59th in 326 Local Authorities

2019-70th in 317 Local Authorities

<https://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Planning/Observatory/2015-indices-of-deprivation-in-luton.pdf>

<https://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Planning/Observatory/2019-indices-of-multiple-deprivation-in-luton.pdf>

These figures show that during the recent years of rapid airport expansion, in relative terms the ranking of Luton has remained on a level with 2007, due to the diminishing number of Local Authorities.

Could the applicant provide data of the year on year income from the airport to council budgets since 2007? Please do not include interest on loans or any other payments to the council, purely the amount from the concession fee income stream in the form of the dividend.

For the benefit of the ExA, I ask this question because I believe it shows that a growing airport does not directly coincide with growing income into council budgets.

Unless cast iron guarantees are included in any DCO approval on that dividend payment, I believe that the majority of extra income will be spent on servicing the applicant's debts/development costs, rather than improving life chances in Luton.