

## SLAE Written Representation Submission for Deadline 10 - Petition and the DCO process

SLAE note that Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council are supporting a private petition for the expansion of Luton Airport.

The petition is both an online and manual based petition.



SLAE find this interesting. A petition is a one-way singular avenue aimed to gain supporters for causes via signatures quickly, cheaply and easily to promote an organiser's aims and views.

Have Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council wasted millions of pounds encouraging a petition to support their airport expansion, having no faith in the Non-Statutory Consultation, Statutory Consultation 1, Statutory Consultation 2 and DCO process to gain public support for their aims.

As explored in the DCO process the application for expansion consists of a lot more than jobs, economic growth and money. Along with a wishy, washy green agenda.

Has Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council no faith in the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) process which was introduced to streamline the decision-making process for major infrastructure projects, making it fairer and faster for communities and applicants alike. Instead they are relying on a community based petition to gain its own way to expand the airport.

*TR020001-000627-1.03 Introduction to the Application - Appendix A Letters of Support*

*TR020001-000619-6.02 Consultation Report Appendix A Non-Statutory Consultation Materials and Feedback Report*

Consultation materials were available online, at consultation events, at Document Inspection Venues in the vicinity of the airport, libraries and also advertised placed in local and regional newspapers, posters, direct mail and email, ad vans etc

A variety of feedback channels were available to encourage participation and newsletters, consultation brochures, summary and FAQ and consultation response forms in seven of the most popular languages spoken by the local community.

## Details of the Petition

[https://www.petitiononline.uk/expansion\\_of\\_london\\_luton\\_airport#form](https://www.petitiononline.uk/expansion_of_london_luton_airport#form) (accessed 27/01/2024)

### Expansion of London Luton Airport

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[Petition](#) [Signatures 259](#) [Comments](#) [Statistics](#) [Extra Visibility](#)

**Total signatures (offline & online) as at 27 January 2024: 3,792**

Thank you to the many hundreds of people who've signed the hard copy version of this petition. I've set up this page for anyone who hasn't been able to sign the hard copy petition and would like to do so online.

...

Luton's communities are resilient, caring and have supported each other through a number of difficult years. Vital funds generated from our airport have helped keep the town afloat. And the importance of the airport to the town have never been as clear following the impact of COVID and the current cost of living crisis.

But poverty remains too high in Luton which is why we support the plans to grow London Luton Airport. It would bring around 11,000 new jobs to the town. It would also produce millions of pounds of additional funding for local charities, helping to transform thousands of lives in our community.

In addition, growing the airport would help to bring more investment and business activity to Luton, growing our local economy by more than £1 billion. We need this to stop our children growing up in poverty.

Importantly, we understand that these benefits will not come at the expense of the planet and people's quality of life, as we know Luton Rising will put stringent environmental constraints on any future growth.

There are hard copy versions of this petition circulating across Luton to ensure it is accessible to all of our communities – please get in touch if you want some hard copies as we really want Luton's voice to be heard.

**Mohammed Tariq** [Contact the author of the petition](#)

#### Sign this Petition

By signing, I authorize **Mohammed Tariq** to hand over the information I provide on this form to those who have power on this issue.

[Login with Facebook](#)

OR

First name  Last name

City  Country

Email address   
We will not display your email address publicly online.

I'm signing because... (Optional)

Show my signature publicly online  
 Yes  No

Email me whenever there's an update about this petition  
 Yes  No

I am at least 16 years old and accept the [Privacy Policy](#).  
 Yes  No

[Sign](#)

Council Exec and Luton Rising signatures circled in red.

#12  
I believe that Luton Airport will provide a great future for our children and young people through jobs and investment into the town  
**Hazel Simmons** (Luton, 2023-01-17)

#14  
**Roy Greening** (Luton, 2023-01-18)

#15  
I support sustainable growth for Luton Airport  
**Lavinia Douglas** (Stevenage, 2023-01-18)

#17  
I think it will be good for the town and the region.  
**Tracey Bateman** (Hitchin, 2023-01-18)

#18  
Having worked in Luton the best part of 16 years and closely with local people through The Mall for the last 7 years I believe the benefits of this expansion massively out weigh the negatives.  
**David Geary** (Houghton Regis, 2023-01-18)

#19  
the community funds that the airport provide make a lasting difference to the surrounding area.  
**Nikki Sema** (Dunstable, 2023-01-18)

#25  
Having worked in Luton for over 8 years, I support sustainable growth for Luton Airport  
**Laura McCluskey** (Luton, 2023-01-23)

#26  
We must encourage aviation to the 100% of the airport and surrounding areas to support the economic development of the airport which will bring in new jobs and investment into the region.  
**Andy Williamson** (Luton, 2023-01-24)

#27  
This is a generational opportunity to put Luton on the map, support young persons, employment and vulnerable people in our communities, and take environmental measures to the next level.  
**Chris Hall** (Luton, 2023-01-24)

#29  
I fully support the expansion proposals for London Luton Airport. They will bring much needed jobs and economic growth to the region whilst doing so in an environmentally responsible manner.  
**Ian Otter** (Hemel Hempstead, 2023-01-25)

A petition was successful for the council in 2020 when they asked the Government for money to help fund the airport (Appendix A), whilst making 365 council workers redundant (Appendix B) and Appendix C

As already reported in previous submissions the councils' auditors and representatives from the government have repeatedly advised not to put all the 'eggs into one basket'

## **Appendix A**

### **Politics**

<https://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/politics/luton-petition-sets-off-for-parliament-10000-signatures-call-on-government-to-provide-crisis-fund-for-council-2906197>

Luton petition sets off for Parliament: 10,000 signatures call on government to provide crisis fund for council

A small delegation from Luton is taking a petition to Parliament signed by over 10,000 residents calling on the government to provide a crisis fund for the town.

By Stewart Carr

Published 7th Jul 2020, 12:01 GMT

The petition was organised by community activist Fiona Martin and it will be presented in Parliament by Luton South MP Rachel Hopkins before today's evening session.

As it contains more than 10,000 signatures, the government has a duty to formally respond to the entreaty.

Luton Borough Council has described the "sharp, sudden and shattering" loss of commercial income from Luton Airport due to Covid-19, with a £49m shortfall in its finances this year.

## **Appendix B**

### **Politics**

<https://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/politics/in-full-profound-sense-of-grief-and-loss-as-council-confirms-ps22m-cuts-to-services-in-emergency-budget-2914104> (accessed 04/02/2024)

IN FULL: 'Profound sense of grief and loss' as council confirms £22m cuts to services in emergency budget

An emergency budget compiled with "a profound sense of grief and loss" has been agreed by Luton borough councillors.

By Euan Duncan, Published 15th Jul 2020, 11:54 GMT

The local authority described the projected shortfall of £49m in its finances this year as "devastating" due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Passenger numbers at Luton Airport are not expected to return to pre-Covid-19 levels until around 2023, and the council's airport company London Luton Airport Limited (LALL) is unable to pass on dividends to the council.

This funding has been relied on heavily to fund many "vital front line services".

A thorough review of the council's finances uncovered a £22.2m budget gap, which is prompting 365 job losses and cuts to services, including:

- > Cuts to customer services, except for most vulnerable residents
- > Cuts to the council tax support scheme
- > Cuts in neighbourhood enforcement, public protection services and highways maintenance
- > New charges for green waste collection
- > Cuts to street lights
- > Cuts to the flying start children's centres
- > Cuts to travel support for adults and children in need
- > Cuts to funding for school improvements, youth advice and early years services

"The total gross Covid-19 impact is in the region of £70m," the council's finance and audit director Dev Gopal had previously told the scrutiny finance review group.

A LLAL stabilisation plan accounts for in the region of £31m, with government support so far around £11.2m and a further £6.3m anticipated to cover lost income during the coronavirus crisis.

Presenting the emergency budget to a full council meeting on Tuesday, July 14, Labour High Town councillor Andy Malcolm described "the impact of ten years of unrelenting austerity".

He said: "In Luton, we receive more from trading and investments, including the airport, than we do from council tax.

"The coronavirus crisis has broken our defences against austerity.

"With flights virtually at a standstill, our airport company won't be in a position to pay dividends this year or next year.

"The government hasn't provided sufficient support, despite our repeated requests since March and the 10,000 strong petition signed by the people of Luton.

"We have suffered a dramatic loss of income, yet we still have a legal obligation to balance our budget.

"Local government cannot borrow and spend to get through a crisis.

"This budget outlines sizeable service reductions."

The cuts affect four areas of council services, the meeting was told.

These are internal services, adult social care and health, general services and education, family support and children, according to councillor Malcolm, who's the portfolio holder for finance.

"The profound loss in this budget is crystallised in the 365 redundancies the report outlines, of which 107 posts are currently vacant," he said.

"We've opened up our voluntary separation scheme. And 260 of the posts are in school catering, so most of these will be transferred into individual schools or private companies which provide meals."

The council's neighbourhood enforcement team will no longer work into the evenings and will be slightly reduced, while the economic development team will be cut.

"We will be reducing our spending on public health by £1m this year and £500,000 next year," added councillor Malcolm.

"Sadly we're no longer able to run our own school meals service.

"As the council is taking the necessary measures to address the budget gap this year, at this stage there's no need to issue a section 114 report.

"We won't give up our fight for fair support. It's with a profound sense of grief and loss that I move this budget."

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) said the £11.26m emergency funding the council has received already is enough to cover coronavirus-related spending. The local authority's core spending power increased by over £8.9m this financial year, before emergency funding was provided, added the MHCLG.

The budget was approved, with the Labour and Conservative councillors voting in favour and the Liberal Democrats voting against the rescue package.

## **Appendix C**

### **Politics**

<https://www.lutontoday.co.uk/news/politics/in-full-extent-of-councils-dependence-on-luton-airport-income-laid-bare-in-executive-report-2927254>

IN FULL: Extent of council's dependence on Luton Airport income laid bare in executive report  
The extent of Luton's reliance on millions of pounds of airport finance has been laid bare in a report to the council's executive committee.

By Euan Duncan, Published 29th Jul 2020, 12:44 GMT

The council's net dividend and interest income from its airport company, London Luton Airport Ltd (LLAL), has increased significantly over the years - from £7.6m in 2012/13 to £33.5m in the original budget planned earlier this year.

This would have funded around 23% of Luton Borough Council's total expenditure on services, according to the executive committee report.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, LLAL is unable to make dividend payments to the council for at least two years, and has developed a financial stabilisation plan.

An emergency budget approved by the borough council this month will result in 365 redundancies as part of attempts to plug a £22.2m budget gap.

But questions remain over other aspects of the council's financial relationship with the airport.

The contract between LLAL and its operating company - London Luton Airport Operating Limited (LLAOL) - includes clauses relating to 'force majeure'.

These appear in many commercial contracts and relate to what happens when an event occurs outside the control of the parties, which prevents one of them fulfilling their obligations.

Exactly how each of these clauses will apply in the current circumstances "is now a subject of considerable legal interest and interpretation", said the report.

"Now LLAL is receiving no concession-fee income, its financial position is completely different.

"The cash holdings of the company were used to fund capital expenditure, rather than being held as cash to back its reserves.

"The stabilisation of the company will require it to borrow £59.6m, as its reserves previously used to finance capital projects amounting to £16.9m are not cash-backed.

"It also needs to borrow to finance past and future borrowing costs capitalised on the direct air rail transport (DART) and (DCO) schemes amounting to £24.7m while the assets are in the course of construction.

"And there are extra costs for the DART project amounting to £18m."

Senior councillors in the ruling Labour group have consistently said they were forced to rely on airport income due to the impact of years of austerity.

Liberal Democrat group leader councillor David Franks says the total amount that London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL) owes the council is in the region of £400m, with a further £83m loan proposed.

All that is a far cry from February, when a balanced budget was set by the local authority for 2020/21.

The council has been the airport company's sole source of borrowing.

Debenture loans have been made on the basis the company should not seek any other source of funds, as the alternative lender would have a claim on some of LLAL's assets in the event of a default, added the report.

"Therefore, a key factor in LLAL's financial stabilisation plan is to request further borrowing from LBC.

"This report doesn't request specific approval of any further loans to LLAL, although amounts of loan are included in the capital programme.

"It should be noted that when considering these requests, the executive will need to assess the robustness of LLAL's financial stabilisation plan.

"It would also consider the potential further impact of the 'force majeure' clauses in the contract.

"If the council is unable to support the plan, then the gross income from LLAL included in the council's budget, currently £43.7m for 2020/21, is at risk, and not just for the next few years.

"LLAL's community funding programme would also be put at risk."