

London Gatwick Airport DCO Open Floor Hearing – 28th February 2024

An introduction to me:

My name is Sally Brown.

I am a wife, mother and grandmother and a local resident of Crawley. I have lived and worked in close proximity to Gatwick Airport all of my life, and I have brought my family up here. Back in the 1980's I worked for Dan-Air in their Horley office and then for 5 years I was based at the Airport, working for Alders international. Before me my Father-in-law was an Aircraft engineer for British Caledonian and then British Airways. My son currently works for the Civil Aviation Authority and my Daughter-in-law works for Gatwick Airport Ltd. My family, and many of my friends and their families, have benefited and continue to benefit from the employment opportunities having a thriving airport in the heart of our community brings.

An introduction to Gatwick Diamond Business: The organisation I represent:

As well as being a local resident, I am a Director and the General Manager of Gatwick Diamond Business and I have been with the organisation for 13 years.

With just over 350 member companies, employing around 40,000 local people (and growing), Gatwick Diamond Business has been at the very centre of the Gatwick Diamond business community, supporting and working with businesses in the South East for 70 years. We are proud of our independence and our not-for-profit status; owned and governed by our members, for our members.

We support our membership and the wider business community, to make connections, explore new opportunities, access learning, training and knowledge sharing, and champion the needs and

interests of gdb businesses across and beyond the Gatwick Diamond region.

We are proud to highlight the region's business achievements, promoting business opportunities for gdb members and we work closely with partner organisations and key stakeholders, to encourage collaboration, growth and inward investment.

Our current relationship with London Gatwick

London Gatwick has been a proactive member of Gatwick Diamond Business for many years, engaging at our top level of membership (Diamond Champion), with Stewart Wingate joining fellow Champions to have high-level discussions around key issues affecting the Gatwick Diamond economy.

They also support:

- through their engagement with our various media channels including our business magazine, with articles and updates keeping local business people informed on the latest airport news,
- also through our Educational Seminar Programme, providing speakers to cover presentations around procurement processes and opportunities,
- and through their Headline Sponsorship of the Gatwick Diamond Business Awards, helping us to acknowledge and celebrate business excellence and achievement across the region.

Over the past 13 years I have seen and welcomed a huge improvement in Gatwick Airports efforts to engage with the local business community. Initiatives like:

- The new STEM centre, to inspire local children and students to consider airport related careers, and open to engaging and collaborating with innovative companies outside of the airport.

- Engagement with the Sussex & Surrey Institute of Technology, working alongside other employer partners to shape the design and delivery of the curriculum to ensure it meets and anticipates local employer needs.
- The London Gatwick Economic Summit –delivered by the airport to bring together stakeholders from across the region to discuss long-term, sustainable economic growth and future inward investment and driving the creation of an Airport Economic Zone identity, to benefit the airport and the regional economy.

I meet on a regular basis with London Gatwick’s External Engagement and Economic Partnerships teams to share current news and discuss potential opportunities. These meetings are very much driven by Gatwick and enable us to keep our members and the wider business community up to date with airport news, and feedback comments and opinion from our business members. Additionally, one of my fellow Directors represents gdb on the Gatwick Consultative Committee.

And as a result of these conversations, we have received some valuable introductions; for example To JetBlue, Delta Airlines and Air India - all promoting new routes out of Gatwick- with these routes providing opportunities to further expand business relations, explore new opportunities and help attract inward investment back into the area, leading to economic growth.

The use of the Existing Northern Runway in scheduled operations:

If approval is received for The use of the Existing Northern Runway in scheduled operations, it will enable long term, sustainable growth and resilience at London Gatwick and will deliver a £1bn boost to the regional economy, including 14,000 additional jobs.

In July 2023 we carried out a survey of Gatwick Diamond Business Member companies asking if they were in support of Gatwick's plans to bring its standby runway into routine use – 80% of respondents said yes.

Mindful to reflect the views of the 8% of our responding members who voted no, we acknowledge concerns of congestion and changes to infrastructure, noise and air pollution, and the environmental impact. We will continue to press the airport on these issues on behalf of our members and the local community and hold them to account on minimising these impacts. We will also continue to encourage focus on increasing local spend.

In closing I'd like to say:

It's a privilege to be able to work closely with the proactive and forward-thinking team at London Gatwick Airport. We are proud of our positive relationship and consider ourselves a critical friend and in a fairly unique position to have honest and frank conversations on behalf of our members.

London Gatwick provides an exceptional gateway into our beautiful country- is not just an airport; it's the pillar of our local economy, providing jobs, opportunities, and driving investment across and beyond the Gatwick Diamond Region.

Along with our members, we understand the important role the airport plays in ensuring we all thrive.

Thank you.....