

PRESS RELEASE

FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE AIRPORT ACTION GROUP (GAAG)

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Airport Plans Just Don't Add Up

On Tuesday 2nd December at 6:00pm a special Scrutiny meeting at Gloucester City Council will discuss Gloucestershire Airport's expansion plans. Local opponents of the plan will be holding a protest on the North Warehouse steps from 5:30pm and campaigners will make the case against the development at the meeting. Councillors will be presented with parody cheques highlighting how the economic case for Staverton's runway extension just doesn't add up.

Drawn on the Icelandic Boom & Bust bank, the cheques are addressed to the Gloucestershire Airport White Elephant, dated 'too soon', for a sum of millions, signed by the local tax-payer. Why? The airport is intent on spending millions on a runway extension at a time when we are heading for recession, many airlines are seeing profits fall, routes are being closed and some carriers have gone bankrupt. The Staverton scheme is to be funded by government loans, making local councils and hence local council tax payers liable for the airport failing to keep up the payments.

Campaigners invited to speak at the meeting include Richard Conibere of Cheltenham Friends of the Earth (Cheltenham FoE) and Neil Marshall from the Concerned residents Against Staverton Expansion (CASE). Neil said:

"The airport's plans are not about safety, the agenda is expansion; Their own business plan talks about introducing more and bigger planes including private jets. The runway extension scheme is a recipe for more noise, more traffic and more pollution"

Richard said "In the current economic climate pursuing airport expansion is madness. It's a risk too far on top of local council potential losses to the bankrupt Icelandic banks."

Contacts:

Neil Marshall (CASE) – 01452 854483 / 07973 327375

Richard Conibere (Cheltenham FoE) – 01242 693663 / 07790 676987

Notes For Editor:

[1] The Concerned residents Against Staverton Expansion have a website giving an excellent account of their objections to the Airport's plans. See www.case-online.org.uk. CASE have prepared a report 'Gloucestershire Airport Expansion Project' outlining the argument against the plan. http://www.case-online.org.uk/docs/JASWG_Response_001.pdf

[2] The airport plan is opposed by a broad coalition of groups and individuals including local Green Party and Friends of the Earth groups, Gloucestershire Plane Stupid and CASE. David Drew MP has consistently opposed the Airport plan, making a speech at last year's Camp Hope protest against the development.