



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Councillor Alan Dean: Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Please reply to home address: 49 Recreation Ground, Stansted, Essex, CM24 8BD

Your ref: UTT/18/0460/FUL

Our ref:AD20031801

OPEN LETTER TO:
Cllr Howard Rolfe
Leader of the Council
Uttlesford District Council

Telephone: 01279 813 579 / 07710 105 824
email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

20th March 2018

Dear Howard

**RE STOP STANSTED EXPANSION LETTER OF 19 MARCH 2018 TO
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT REGARDING PLANNING APPLICATION UTT/18/0460/FUL
22 FEBRUARY 2018 FROM STANSTED AIRPORT LTD (STAL) TO
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

I am alarmed and deeply disturbed at allegations contained in yesterday's correspondence from Stop Stansted Expansion (of which I have been a declared member since its inception): <http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/press505.html>.

The most significant allegations are:

- (i) that UDC has erred in law by proceeding to process an application that is said to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NISIP)
- (ii) that UDC has refused to date to meet with SSE to consider their views on the application, yet has actively engaged and funded, alongside STAL (the applicant), another non-statutory lobby group, the London-Stansted-Cambridge Consortium (LSCC)
- (iii) that UDC has held a large number of meetings with STAL over many months and has claimed to have no written records of most of those meetings
- (iv) that the outcome of these unrecorded meetings included the signing of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with STAL that contains a timetable that minimises consultation and debate and would, if maintained, force a decision on the Planning Committee by mid-July that would likely be inadequately scrutinised and understood
- (v) that STAL's application for growth to 43 million passengers per annum (mppa), which was scaled higher at 44.5mppa at the time of the scoping report, is a contrivance aimed at avoiding a referral for national determination as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

Would you please answer the following questions as a matter of urgency?

1. Has the council taken legal advice on the risk that UDC would be in breach of NSIP rules as defined in section 23 of the Planning Act 2008? What was the advice given?
2. Why have UDC planning officers refused since June 2017 to meet SSE, despite their making three requests to discuss the STAL expansion proposals? Do you consider SSE to be a pressure group that should be sidelined by the council? Do you accept that the council is not being even-handed by giving financial support to the LSCC, which lobbies for airport expansion at Stansted?
3. How many times have you met with STAL people in the period since they began planning to lift the current airport capacity caps? What has been the line that you have taken with them? Have any commitments been made or outcomes encouraged by you and/or senior council officers? Why have records not been taken of meetings by you, planning and other council officers?
4. Were any Members involved or consulted before the PPA was signed with STAL? Do you accept that knowledge of the details of this application by Council Members and the public currently is inadequate and that the council needs to provide information about the pros and cons of the proposal before informed representations can be made? Will you accept that the timetable contained in the PPA is too short and that it needs to be extended. Do you accept that the number of briefings and meetings proposed for Member of this council falls far short of past practice and that a major review of current intentions is needed?
5. Have UDC officers and/or members participated in discussions that have led to STAL's alleged contrivance at pitching this application below the NSIP threshold of capacity changes of 10mppa?

These matters are of such significance and of public interest that I am making this letter an open letter and ask that you publish your responses.

Yours sincerely

(signed)

Alan Dean
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group