

## **R4U backs UDC call for additional hearing during Stansted Airport expansion appeal due to new UK law that caps emissions to below 1990 levels**

*26 April 2021:* Residents for Uttlesford (R4U), the local party of north-west Essex towns and villages, has announced that it believes that an increase in passenger numbers at Stansted Airport to the size of Gatwick is incompatible with the UK's new Sixth Carbon Budget law, which caps emissions to 78% below 1990 levels. In light of the new law, the local residents' party, which leads Uttlesford District Council, says it backs the actions of the Council's legal team which last week wrote to the Planning Inspectors to urge that they schedule a further hearing to consider this new evidence as part of the ongoing planning appeal.

R4U's Cllr John Evans, who is the UDC Portfolio Holder for Planning, said "UDC has been vigorously defending its planning refusal of Stansted Airport expansion at the ongoing appeal. In the last few days UDC's legal team wrote to the Planning Inspectors to urge that they convene an additional hearing to consider the implications of the UK's new carbon reduction target, which has now been extended to cover aviation. The material new target, which will become law in June, reduces legally allowable levels of emissions to 78% of what they were in 1990."

Cllr John Evans continued "More passengers mean more planes, which means more pollution. In 1990, passenger numbers at Stansted were 1.2 million a year. The airport wants to expand to more than 42 million a year. Even though some planes are less polluting than in the past, a thirty-five-fold increase over the 1990 level is incompatible with the new law."

R4U's Cllr Louisa Pepper, who is the UDC Portfolio Holder for the Environment, added "Importantly the new law closes a massive loophole, which allowed pollution from the actual aeroplanes to be excluded. The airport's owners exploited this loophole by claiming that they are already 'carbon neutral', presumably because they believe that they bear no responsibility for the pollution generated by the planes themselves. Obviously this is nonsense and the government, supported by the UK Climate Change Committee and scientists, are now putting a legal stop to these claims. At R4U we welcome the law change, the closing of the loophole, and back UDC's legal team for asking the Inspectors for an additional hearing. We believe that UDC's legal defence, which was already based on four solid refusal reasons including emissions, has now been significantly strengthened."