East Midlands Airport Accessibility Forum Notes

23rd April 2026 13:00 – 15:00

Pathfinder House Room 2000 / Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Meeting Chair – Christiane Link, (Ortegalink) (CL)

Liz Wilcox* Interpreter

Fraser Homes (FH Interpreting)

Gemma (Accessibility Matters)

Mhairi Simpson* (British Deaf Association)

Jessica Luke* (Guide Dogs)

Amanda Little* (Access Assistant)

Danny Byrne* (Spinal Injuries Association)

Jessie

Craig Holland - (MAG)

Joe Gleadall - (MAG)

*Attended via Microsoft Teams

APOLOGIES

1. **Welcomes and Introductions**

CL opened the forum by thanking all members for attending.

2. **East Midlands Airport Update**

CH took members through the agenda for the forum and then the Customer Service Department structure.

CD has now left the organisation, and applications live for his replacement. CL shared appreciation of the work he has contributed to this forum. CL reiterated the importance to continue this forum on a regular basis to ensure the next manager of Customer Services can continue from where CD left off.

CH reassured attendees that CD has left 5 experienced duty managers running the operation, expressing desire to continue the operation that has been managed successfully. Concentration on operation and continuing working effortlessly until a replacement has been made will be prioritised.

NK left has also left the organisation. JG will be taking NK's role within the forum and will capture the minutes and actions.

We have the new Sensory Pod open and already being used. This has opened by gate 17, with features such as a silent space, interactive lights, music space, tactile and quiet space, designed for all ages.

Change in structure to 24/7 CSDM cover.

Increase in Operations Supervisors.

We now have 24/7 Customer Service Duty Manager cover. Our Operation Supervisor population has increased by 1. We have 2 additional positions to offer resilience for absences.

The Customer Service team and Assisted Travel team have been combined, resulting in a larger team dedicated to the Assisted Travel service.

10 cadets that joined last year have graduated and accepted annualised positions. CH explained that Cadet programme to attendees. Next years intake has already commenced.

Quiet room has been successfully moved to its new location, at gate 17. It is away from retail and catering part of airport, offering a quieter location.

Terracotta has opened up in replacement of Frankie and Benny's. Accessible works successfully implemented following feedback from previous forum.

The Assisted Travel Desk and check in space has been expanded and branding works are to be completed this weekend. This has helped to store more wheelchairs. Mobility scooters storage has also increased.

Check in toilet refurb has now been completed. Upgrade that brings in line with the Airside toilets. CL stated that even the accessibility toilets were too small before these refurbishments.

Little Flyers activity area is now open.

3. **CAA - Emily Kilby – Consumer Policy & Enforcement Advisor**

No update within this meeting.

4. **East Midlands Airport General Updates**

Feedback requested around the summary of the MAG Accessibility and Inclusion Policy.

__Action__ CL suggest a change in wording to non-visible from hidden disabilities.

Gemma stated that there is no mention of changing areas.

CL – standard of airport / public place should be that high that a sunflower lanyard doesn't make a difference.

Mhairi asked if there are there any BSL signs onsite so they can see what is where. CH stated we have the interpreter live service which is shown at the Assisted travel check-in point and Assisted travel waiting areas. We've also put in the interpreter live QR code at the security lanes. CL requested for text announcements, not just audible ones.

JL stated she would be happy to review the document in full and provide feedback.

5. **Commercial Updates**

6. **Steve Wilson – Jet2 & Jet2Holidays Assisted Travel and Medical Manager & Co-Chair of the DfT Implementation Group**

No update throughout this meeting.

7. **Accessibility Forum Members Discussion**

CH asks members if they have any points they would like to raise.

Gemma raised an issue regarding using the Ambulift, where she was told that her and my husband would need to leave our children and meet them passport control, due to limiting numbers on the Ambulift. CH stated we have a strict rule with separating parents and children, it is not something we do, but ultimately the decision lands with you, the passenger. CH shared the process of 'Try Before You Fly', to support those with anxieties around flying, new flyers and those with concerns due to restrictions. CL

queried Ryanair's restrictions around number of passengers allowed on Ambulift. Their number is 4, we can get 20/30 on an aircraft using the Ambulift during busy periods.

JL has been contacted by a Sight loss organisation saying they've had issues hearing the terminal announcements. JL is planning to meet with them next month to gather more information, to bring back to this forum. CH stated members are more than welcome to walk round with CH and explore issue further.

CH provided dates for the walk around – looking at November, gives time for CD's replacement to start and settle in. CH looking at a tour and a shortened forum. 19th November for the tour.

8. **Closing Remarks & AOB**

CH will send out next forum dates.

Provided full year data for 25/26 year, confident in retaining 'very good' rating from CAA.

Meeting Closed.