

WILL IT EVER BE TIME FOR TEA?

Thames Estuary Airport Key Influencer Survey published today in Parliament

London: 23 January 2013

The findings of the **Gateway Associates** Key Influencer Survey on proposals for a hub airport in the Thames Estuary were published today at a Parliamentary event chaired by Brian Donohoe MP, the Chair of the Aviation All Party Parliamentary Group.

The report consolidated the views of 67 of the most influential private, public, local, national and international stakeholders and concludes that the Coalition Government has to act quickly if it wishes to prevent the country's aviation industry and UK Plc from being grounded by competitor markets in Europe.

Respondents to the survey believe that if Heathrow is not included in the Davies Commission's analysis then the work will need to be redone in future to rectify the omission, by which time the UK will have lost its aviation advantage to newer and larger hub airports in Europe.

This frustration is further reflected with the call to 'Get on with it' since most believe the timescale for reaching a decision could be significantly reduced. In fact, the current plan to deliver the Davies Commission's report and Government's response after the 2015 general election is thought by some to be timed for political rather than economic or social advantage.

This unnecessary procrastination will have a significantly negative impact on communities in the Thames Estuary, and those around London and regional UK airports, while they are left waiting on tenterhooks. Many also believe that the environment will be completely side-lined and ignored when it comes to making the eventual decision about future aviation development.

Paul Clark, Director of **Gateway Associates** and former Transport Minister, said: "I am grateful to everyone who gave their time and contributed so fully to this report. The key influencers have made it clear that they want the Davies Commission to act transparently looking at all options and for a speedy conclusion to this issue.

"Their real concern centres on the competitive position of UK Plc and the on-going uncertainty blighting households, the environment and business.

"All political parties need to recognise the genuine concerns expressed in this report and urge everyone involved to prepare the way for a decision to be made sooner rather than later," added Clark.

The report was compiled jointly by Clark and two other **Gateway Associates**: business and government communications specialist Katrina Krishnan Doyle and aviation industry expert Rob Sibley. Together they have analysed the responses and set out six specific recommendations to politicians and policy officials detailing the steps that need to be taken to ensure a decision can be reached quickly and that money and time are not wasted as a result of delays:

- Do not ignore Heathrow
- Get to the decision sooner
- Align policies across Whitehall
- Find your customer in advance
- Publish a decision making criteria
- Be upfront about funding and compensation

~ends~

NOTES to EDITORS

For further information, details and interviews please contact Paul Clark on 07733 260929 or 0871 662 9589. Alternatively email media@gatewayassociates.co.uk, visit www.gatewayassociates.co.uk or follow us on Twitter [@GatewayAssocs](https://twitter.com/GatewayAssocs) for further commentary.

A full copy of the report entitled ***Will it ever be time for TEA?*** can be downloaded from the Gateway Associates website: www.gatewayassociates.co.uk. Full colour print and bound copies can be order by emailing TEASurvey@gatewayassociates.co.uk or calling 01634 317 123. Price, including postage: £35

Gateway Associates was established in 2010 by former MP and Transport Minister Paul Clark and draws on the skills and experience of policy, government and communications experts to help organisations from a variety of industries and sectors communicate with Westminster and Whitehall and inform Central Government's political decision making processes. With a focus on transport, regeneration and social enterprise policies and government strategies, Gateway Associates helps company and community leaders understand the unique culture and stakeholder landscapes that they are operating within.

As well as providing strategic and implementation support, **Gateway Associates** has also developed a clean question survey that presents all sides of a policy debate in a balanced and neutral way. By creating this independent platform, **Gateway Associates** provides a first point of information for anyone wishing to learn about the issues surrounding the proposals and get a better understanding of the key organisations and people involved.

By setting out twenty concise, clean questions and asking the most influential people in the UK to answer them, the survey is able to capture the landscape of opinion about the UK's aviation strategy and proposals for a Thames Estuary Airport that exists today.

Gateway Associates is powered by **The Eye of the Storm**, a new community initiative that helps people and business activate their redundant resources, skills, talents and time for social good at the same time as improving their employability. For more information visit: www.TheEyeoftheStorm.co.uk