

# GMB members meet Huw Merriman MP

19 Jun 2020

Over 600 GMB aviation members met with Transport Select Committee chair Huw Merriman MP on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June ahead of the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps appearing in front of the committee.

GMB members in British Airways conveyed their anger at the actions of the employer in issuing redundancy notices during the Covid-19 pandemic and Huw Merriman agreed, saying he would have expected better from companies that were receiving millions of pounds in government support.

He talked about the report his committee had produced on aviation which described the 'wanton destruction of the work force' at British Airways as a 'national disgrace' and which urged employers not to proceed with large-scale redundancies and restructuring to terms and conditions until Covid-19 restrictions had been lifted.

Demands for government intervention in the aviation industry during the Covid-19 crisis have come from all the main Parties in Westminster. GMB panellists in the meeting Karen Watson, Nadine Houghton and Danny Faith all talked about the support the union had had from Labour MPs on the Transport Select Committee and from Labour's Transport team. The panellists and many members thanked Huw for the work he is doing and for engaging with unions in that work.

## GMB webinar with Huw Merriman MP

Members also raised their concerns about outsourcing within aviation, in particular the outsourcing to GGS at Gatwick, and about the wider impact on the economy if the government fails to give the aviation industry the support it needs after existing programmes are ended in October.

Many members in regional airports are facing the possibility of large scale redundancies if operations are forced to be dramatically downscaled or even closed entirely. Nadine Houghton, National Officer for Aviation, talked about GMB's 'Save Our Airports' campaign. You can find out more about the campaign at <https://www.gmb.org.uk/campaign/email-your-mp-save-our-airports-our-jobs-keep-our-regions-flying>.

Overall, members felt that with the right support, the industry would recover from the crisis. GMB will continue to fight to make sure that happens and to protect jobs, pay and conditions in aviation.



Grant Shapps is appearing before the Transport Select Committee on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 10.30am. You can watch on BBC Parliament or at <https://parliamentlive.tv/Commons>.

