

£2 million new funding allocated to support local airfields

- the airfield development fund will provide commercial expertise support to local airfields
- the funding will support airfields, help general aviation businesses to grow, and support science and engineering training to workforces
- launching in spring, applicants will have 4 weeks to apply for advice as part of the £2 million fund

Today (12 February 2020) Aviation Minister, Paul Maynard launched the Airfield Development Fund, which will increase support for airfield owners, operators, local councils and associated businesses, helping them upskill, thrive and grow.

Airfields are an integral part of the £3 billion general aviation sector and considered the grassroots of the entire aviation sector, however many have often struggled with business development and financial sustainability.

This new funding aims to ensure airfield businesses receive access to advisors, offering help on a range of legal and business-related topics to support their future development – which could include advice on science and engineering training, developing electric aircraft and preserving heritage aircraft.

Applicants are encouraged to apply for advice from the £2 million fund from spring by demonstrating how it could help them protect or expand their business. This includes applying for help on proposed developments, protecting airfields, or expanding training facilities and commercial opportunities.

Paul Maynard, Aviation Minister, said:

The UK government recognises the enormous contribution smaller airfields make to the UK economy, and to the people they serve, where many aviation careers take first flight.

We're committed to protecting our airfields and easing the challenges that many businesses face. This support will help airfields prosper, creating and securing more jobs, while inspiring the next generation of aviation and engineering enthusiasts.

Airfields eligible to apply for advice through the fund must be licensed (EASA, national regulations, GA national) or unlicensed and handling less than 200,000 terminal passengers per year.

The government recognises the significant contribution smaller airfields make

to the wider UK economy. The launch of this fund demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting the general aviation industry – as part of a wider pledge to level up the country – and aims to make the UK a world leader in general aviation.