

Agenda Item 9

Twenty Key Questions following Audit Commission Report (paragraph numbers in brackets)

Record keeping was weak

- 1) Are there written records that show the authority for:
 - land purchase negotiations after they were first mentioned at the Management Board on 15th December 1998?
 - the start of the landraising in July 2001?
 - the issuing of a tipping licence in March 2003?

(The Audit Commission have not seen such written authority)

Key Decisions were not taken by Members

- 2) How was it that the land purchase agreement was reached in principle (December 2000) by officers without Member authority? (14)
- 3) Why did the purchase of land to the west of the airport not go ahead, (20) and in what terms were the landowners advised?
- 4) What was the involvement of the consultant surveyors in the land purchase negotiations?
- 5) Why (as of April 2006) has the landraised area at the north-west of the airport's boundary not been used as a helicopter training pad or for any other purpose? (15)

Officers acted beyond their authority

- 6) Why was Member approval not sought prior to submitting a planning application (March 2002) to raise the level of land in the south-west of the airport? (24)
- 7) After it was first mentioned at the Management Board on 5th September 2000, to what extent were SAJC and/or SAMB informed about tipping operations on the airport-owned land?

There is little evidence that Members of the (Shoreham Airport) Committee were kept abreast of developments.

- 8) Why was the Committee not kept fully informed of the broader strategic direction for the airport? (19) or of the landraising operations?

On occasions, decisions were made on poor or incomplete information

9) How were legal, financial and environmental implications taken into account in:

- issuing a landfill licence for a peppercorn?
- starting tipping in advance of the purchase of the 70 acres

(22)

The Council's own governance framework was not followed and there was little regard to minimising the risks of fraud and corruption. (The Audit Commission found no evidence of fraud)

10) What was the management structure for officers involved in managing the airport and what levels of responsibility were delegated to airport staff and senior managers?

11) Why was the governance framework not followed regarding landraising operations at the airport on several occasions? (27)

12) Could/should more effective support for airport staff have been provided by the councils? (33)

13) How could supervision by senior officers have been improved? (33)

There was no consideration to achieve value for money

14) What were the assumptions made and what was the basis for the Airport's consultant surveyor to state (9th April 2001) that the land raise cost/benefits were self-cancelling or cost neutral? (21)

15) Why was the tipping licence holder given tipping rights over 14.8 acres in the south-west of the airport for no consideration? (24)

16) Why was a future option not secured on the purchase of the 70 acre as part of the negotiations on tipping rights on its land in the north-west of the airport? (25)

17) Why was the landraise to the north-west and south-west of the airport not subject to a tendering exercise? (29)

18) Can it be shown that best consideration was obtained for the terms of the disposal interest in the airport's land? (29)

19) Why was there no consideration of treating the granting of tipping rights and land raise construction works as separate contracts to maximise value for money? (35)

20) How can internal systems of control be improved to avoid similar weaknesses in future? (36)