

**STANSTED AIRPORT REFERENDUM GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 3.30 pm on 11 SEPTEMBER
2002**

Present:- Councillor P G F Lewis – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs M A Caton, Mrs C M Dean, R J O'Neill and
G Sell.

SAR8 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R D Green.

SAR9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2002 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SAR10 WORDING OF REFERENDUM QUESTION

At the last meeting of the Group it had been agreed that, subject to the advice of Electoral Reform Services, the question to be included in the Referendum should be "The Council is opposed to any further runways at Stansted Airport. Do you agree?"

Electoral Reform Services had advised that it could be claimed that the question was leading and as such any referendum result would almost certainly be considered to be biased by the overt view of the Council and the legitimacy of the referendum would be reduced. The company had suggested that asking a neutral question in a referendum would provide a result that had a greater legitimacy and also left far less scope for criticism. Further advice had also been received from the Council's PR/lobby consultants on the wording of a suitable question which expressed the same view.

The Group agreed with the advice which had been received and reiterated the need for the referendum to be credible.

RESOLVED that the question to be included in the referendum be as follows:

"The Government is consulting on options to increase airport capacity including the construction of more runways at Stansted.

Do you want more runways at Stansted? Yes/No"

SAR11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Officers circulated suggested draft text for a leaflet which would accompany the ballot paper. The Group made amendments to the draft, which would then be sent to the Council's consultants to seek their advice on the final text

and the layout of the supporting information. Once this had been agreed it would be circulated to all Members of the Referendum Group prior to printing.

In answer to a question, it was explained that it was most likely that the ballot paper and supporting information would be circulated during the first week of October and a period of 21 days would be allowed for return of ballot papers.

Officers circulated examples of the envelope which would be used to distribute the ballot paper and supporting information and suggested that a “strapline” could be added to the foot of the envelope to include the Council’s logo and highlight the importance of the subject matter enclosed.

RESOLVED that the arrangements for the supporting information including the addition of a “strapline” to the envelope be approved.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm.