CABINET

4 August 2014

This report is submitted under Agenda Item 14. The Chair will be asked to decide if it can be considered at the meeting under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency in order for the outcome of the call-in meeting to be considered.

Title: Call-In of "Gascoigne Estate (East) Regeneration Proposals - Site Masterplan and Phase 1" report: Response of the Living and Working Select Committee	
Report of the Living and Working Select Committee	
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Accountable Divisional Director: Fiona Taylor, Head of Legal and Democratic Services	
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Summary

On 30 July 2014, the Living and Working Select Committee (LWSC) held a meeting to hear the case for a Call-in, submitted by Councillors Tarry and Young, of the Cabinet decision of 30 June 2014 regarding the Gascoigne Estate (East) Regeneration Proposals - Site Masterplan and Phase 1. Their reasons for the call-in were as follows:

> "The previously agreed policy for the Gascoigne development had an expected tenure mix of 33% at social rent (as stated in paragraph 2.3 of the Cabinet report on 20 September 2011). Unfortunately, this has now changed to 25% "affordable rent". The relatively small amount of social rent housing originally planned has turned into an even lower figure, with some of those being at rents higher than social rent, and needs to be seen in the context of a loss of 1709 HRA units ending up as an affordable rent replacement figure of 394 on the project as a whole." This was led by Councillor Young.
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> "The massive decanting operation necessary to develop the new estate was to be assisted by a Housing Association partner contributing at least 20% towards the decanting in real terms. This agreed commitment appears to have been dropped. This will add massively to the burden that decants create on the current waiting and will restrict those on our waiting list getting access to our current stock." This was led by Councillor Tarry.

Following questions and answers from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and other members and officers, the LWSC agreed to uphold the call-in for the reasons outlined below.

The LWSC took the view that that the drafting of the report presented to Cabinet on 30 June 2014 was unclear in a number of material matters. Furthermore, due to the

unavailability of information on the financial aspect of the masterplan, the LWSC felt that the viability of the proposals could not be fully assessed.

In regards to the call-in by Councillor Young on the issue of the tenure mix, the LWSC concluded that the new proposal was not in line with the Council's vision of 'invest in Council housing to meet need' as there would be fewer houses available to residents at social rent and this would have an adverse impact on residents' ability to afford the higher rent.

In regard to the call-in by Councillor Tarry on the issue of decanting, the LWSC was referred to the minutes of the LWSC meeting on 8 November 2011 in respect of a previous call-in on the Gascoigne Estate Renewal Programme which stated that the East Thames Group would be expected to make 30% of their voids properties available to the Council (the figure had reduced to 20% but was not specified in the report to Cabinet on 30 June 2014). Furthermore, the report from the officers in response to the call-in indicated that at least 140 units were expected to be offered by the East Thames Group across the decant process, which does not amount to 20%. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration acknowledged the discrepancy and assured the LWSC that he would refer the matter to Cabinet and that 20% would be seen as the minimum figure.

The LWSC concluded that there was disparity in figures presented in the reports and the figure of 33% tenure mix at social rent would not be delivered. Furthermore, the report to Cabinet on 30 June 2014 did not clarify the reasons for the alteration of the figures. The LWSC also stated that the figure of 140 units should not have been included in the Officers response to the call-in.

Recommendation(s)

The LWSC recommends the Cabinet to reconsider its decision and:

- Consider alternative options to achieve the indicative tenure mix of 33% of the new build at social rent, as presented as part of the report to Cabinet on 20 September 2011.
- Ensure that the 20% contribution by the Estate Thames Group towards the decanting process is seen as minimum.

Reason(s)

To accord with the Council's Call-In processes.