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1. In the latter half of last year the Government scrapped the HRA borrowing cap, thus enabling the Council to access even more borrowing than the £400m it calculated it could afford in 2012. This has been called the most significant development for social housing in decades. Does the <sup>Committee accept</sup> auditor agree that the Council can't possibly say that its regeneration plans are the best option, in terms of both value for money or increasing social housing, until it has investigated the alternative opportunities provided by the scrapping of the borrowing cap?

[I raised it before the Finance & Contracts Committee on 4 October 2018 and the Housing and Planning Committee on 8 November; again before the Finance Committee on 18 March and the Housing Committee on 19 March and finally at the full Council meeting on 24 April.]

2. On 24 April Council voted to award the joint venture contract, despite the fact that it will have to pay Countryside Properties £1.5m from the HRA if residents vote against regeneration in the ballot this Autumn. The only time residents have been asked how they feel about regen is when the Resident's Association did a survey and 58% of respondents said they were against it. What are the auditor's thoughts on awarding this contract in these circumstances? <sup>Committee's</sup>

3. Section 123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 prescribes that "a council shall not dispose of land... for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained".

The Council's joint venture regeneration plans involve it transferring the leasehold of the Cambridge Road Estate site to a Limited Liability Partnership. Does s123 apply to such a transfer? If not, are there any other statutory duties to obtain the best consideration in exchange for providing land to a developer to build on?

It is clearly a foregone conclusion that the Council will grant planning permission to redevelop the site in accordance with the masterplan the Council and its developer partner, Countryside Properties, intends to present later this year and it has already announced that it intends to deliver 767 social rented units, 100 shared ownership units and around 1,500 private sale units. Would the auditors agree that in obtaining the best consideration for the land that it can, the Council needs to value the land in light of the fact that planning permission to build that mix of units will be granted? Who would be expected to provide an independent valuation to ensure compliance with that statutory duty?

4. The Land Compensation Act 1961 requires local authorities to pay a price for land that reflects its likely future use, rather than its current value. Have the Council taken this into account when calculating how much it will have to pay any freeholders on Cambridge Road Estate for their land and have any purchases made to date complied with this statutory duty?

If so, how does the Committee reconcile this with the fact that the Council has suggested that freeholders may only be able to afford a 25% share in one of the new flats? Surely if the Land Compensation Act is complied with, the freeholders would receive more than enough to purchase 100% of a similar-sized house in North Kingston?

5. I obtained a quote from Electoral Reform Services in June 2018 which shows that a ballot of the Cambridge Road Estate residents would cost under £5,000. This quote is commercially confidential but ERS agreed that I could share it with councillors and I did so to ensure that they knew how much a ballot would actually cost. However according to the report from the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee meeting of 19 March, the Council is going to pay them around £20,000. I would like to ask the auditors to investigate this matter as it is rather concerning if the Council has agreed to pay around four times more than it needed to and it raises questions about how it came to agree this figure after having seen the quote I shared with them.

6. I note that a £462,000 contract has been awarded to Ark Consultancy for services relating to the Housing Revenue Account. Ark previously produced a report which stated that all residents were to be decanted off the Estate by January 2021 and when challenged on this the Council claimed this was untrue and Ark's report was incorrect and when I raised this at the SHAP meeting on x all the committee members and Tom Bremnar, the Lead Housing Consultant, denied all knowledge of this report. I would like to ask the Committee, and the auditors, whether they are concerned that a company who, according to the Council, produces reports that contain statements that are entirely untrue and based on no evidence, have now been awarded this very valuable contract?

4. At the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee meeting on 19 March, Harry Hall, who is a non-voting advisory member and sits on the Committee to represent residents, was required to recuse himself from the debate on the Cambridge Road Estate regeneration ballot on the grounds that as a tenant of Cambridge Road Estate and Chair of the Resident's Association he had a pecuniary interest.

However the day before at the Finance and Planning Committee, a representative from Savills, who are profiting from the Council's regeneration plans and thus has a direct pecuniary interest in them going ahead, was allowed to sit on the Committee and encourage Members to support the joint venture regeneration contract award.

I find this favourable treatment for someone from a company profiting from regeneration compared to someone who represents the residents who are threatened by regeneration very troubling and I want to ask this Committee to investigate whether the Chair of the Finance and Planning Committee, Cllr Dave Ryder-Mills, or anyone else who might be responsible, breached any rules by allowing the representative from Savills to sit on the Committee and speak in favour of regeneration.