

## **South Gloucestershire Liberal Democrats**

Contact: 07811 872 274

**EMBARGO:** Immediate

### **Lib Dems Concerned at Lack of Public Participation at Development Management Committee**

Liberal Democrat councillors are calling for the public to be allowed to speak at virtual planning committee meetings.

With the first virtual meeting of South Gloucestershire's Development Management Committee taking place tomorrow (Thursday 28 May), the council is only allowing written submissions from members of the public. Normally local people would be able to speak at the meeting and the councillors have raised serious concerns that there will not be sufficient public participation.

#### **Cllr Jayne Stansfield, Liberal Democrat Lead Member on the Development Management Committee said:**

"Development Management is the committee at which we most often have local residents speaking on issues which directly affect them. Being able to hear what local residents think of developments in their areas is an important part of the process – for opportunity to address the committee to be reduced to now just the opportunity to submit a prepared statement to be read out by a council officer is far from satisfactory.

#### **Cllr Mike Drew, Liberal Democrat Lead Member on the Strategic Sites Delivery Committee added:**

"The Council has rightly moved to holding meetings virtually, rather than in person, since March. But it is vital that, as part of the move to virtual meetings, members of the public are not denied their right to address meetings. Whilst some early challenges are to be expected, it is now time that proper public participation is brought back to South Gloucestershire Council."

**ENDS**

#### **Theo Butt Philip**

Political Assistant to the Liberal Democrat Group on South Gloucestershire Council

Mobile: 07811 871 274