

## **COUNCIL**

**22 MARCH 2016**

### **ITEM 6 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR D EVERITT TO COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

I represent the Thringstone Ward and the boundary of the ward runs around and encloses the built up area of Thringstone and does not include the areas of countryside and woods that surround. The people I represent in Thringstone will be affected by any developments that are proposed beyond their back gardens, however recent changes to the constitution have changed the planning rules preventing me as their Councillor from bringing forward the plans for consideration and resolution outside the boundaries. Although the development proposed may be controversial and detrimental to the people I represent, how has democracy been served by restricting the rights of the electorate from raising concerns in a democratic planning meeting?

#### **RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

The reason why this change has been brought into effect is to simplify the process, and to ensure that local Ward Members, who have the benefit of local knowledge and are elected to represent their own constituents, are able to use their judgement about whether to call a planning application to the Committee.

In the hypothetical scenario set out in the question, there is nothing to stop a member from speaking with the Ward Member concerned, if they think there is a valid planning reason for such a planning application to be considered by the Planning Committee.

Ward Members are ultimately responsible to their own constituents, and it would be anti-democratic for one Ward Member to interfere in how another Ward Member goes about representing the best interests of their constituents.