



House of Commons Westminster London SW1A 0AA

Liam Byrne MP

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BYRNE BRANDS COUNCIL SOFT TOUCH ON TESCOS

Liam Byrne, MP for Birmingham Hodge Hill, today branded Lib Dem Tory Birmingham City Council a soft touch on Tesco's after it was revealed that the Council have refused to hold a site visit when the pitches are in use, and have scheduled a public meeting at a time when many people will be unable to attend.

On Thursday 13th October, Birmingham City Council Planning Committee will be holding a site visit on the Brockhurst Playing Fields at around 3pm, which will be followed by a public meeting in the Beaufort Sports and Social Club when residents' will get the chance to give their views on the application.

The meeting has been scheduled for mid afternoon on a weekday despite a motion that was put forward at recent residents', Ward, and District Committee meetings, calling on Birmingham City Council to reschedule the meeting so that the Planning Committee could see the pitches in use, and when many of the residents' who have been campaigning so hard over the years could put their views across. The motion received unanimous support at the meetings, but has been ignored by the council.

In a recent survey carried out by the Hodge Hill MP, only 10% of respondents said that they would be able to attend a public meeting held between 2 and 4 pm on a weekday.

Liam Byrne said

"The council is just being a soft on Tesco's. They're completely ignoring the local democratic voice of residents and elected representatives, and it raises real questions about how seriously they are listening to the views of local people'.

'No matter your view about whether the Tesco's bid is good or bad, local people are entitled to a fair hearing which the City council seems bent on denying'.

The news comes following the announcement by Government Ministers that they are set to launch a probe into supermarkets, in a bid to save our 32,000 corner shops around the country.

Trade Minister Gerry Sutcliffe MP, wants the investigation to look at both planning and competition rules, which could mean that fewer new supermarkets are built.

Mr Sutcliffe said:



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"We recognise the increasing concern about the balance between supermarkets and corner shops. That is why we are going to look into this properly."

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