

# **PUBLIC SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES**

**BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW**



**2005/06**



## **CONTENTS**

---

- 1. Introduction – p 4**
- 2. Current Service – pp 5-9**
- 3. Challenge Section – pp 10-14**
- 4. Consult Section – pp 15-22**
- 5. Compare Section – pp 23-35**
- 6. Compete Section – pp 36-38**
- 7. Improvement Measures – pp 39-41**
- 8. Five Year Action Plan – pp 42-43**
- 9. Appendices – p 44**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

For the Best Value service review of Public Sports and Leisure Facilities, Members endorsed the decision to use an external 'Challenge' Panel to work alongside the Council's officers and Members at the commencement of the review. It was considered that such an approach would result in a more rigorous examination of the Council's service.

The Review Panel has met on several occasions between July 2005 and April 2006 and has consisted of the following personnel:

- ◆ Mr Paul Woodburn - Councillor, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Bill Richards – Town Clerk, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Sue Butt – (former) Policy & Projects Officer, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Stephen Pearson – Finance & Contracts Manager, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Bob Ayres – Parks & Premises Manager, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Des Knowles – Town Clerk, Amersham Town Council
- ◆ Trevor Pilling – Wilkins Kennedy & Partners
- ◆ Brian Wright – Chairman, Chess Valley Sports & Leisure Association
- ◆ Garry Marshall – Secretary, Chess Valley Sports & Leisure Association
- ◆ Morris Hogg – President, Chesham Rugby Club
- ◆ Paul Christie, Centre Manager, Chesham Leisure Centre

While not all the Panel members have been able to attend all the meetings, the mixture of service providers, external partners and other local authority providers have played an important role in drawing together a coherent plan to develop 'continuous improvement' for the Public Sports and Leisure Facilities service.

## **2. THE CURRENT SERVICE**

---

### **i. Definition of Service**

The Council's service objective is to provide high quality recreational facilities and to work in partnership with Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Association (CVSLA) to provide an open air swimming pool and adjoining leisure facilities for the town.

### **ii. What is the Service?**

**Codmore Playing Field** – This sports ground accommodates two football pitches, an artificial cricket wicket and pavilion that provides changing facilities and a small social area which is available for hire for social functions. A tarmac area is also still present that was previously used as a tennis court.

**Marston Playing Field** – This sports ground accommodates two football pitches and a pavilion. The Council took ownership of a multi-use games area that was installed during 2004.

**Chesham Park Community College Playing Field** – The college pitches are owned by Buckinghamshire County Council and leased to the Town Council on a 21 year arrangement for use by the local community outside the normal school hours. The facilities available to the Town Council under the agreement are two rugby pitches, athletics track and field sports facilities, artificial cricket wicket, hard courts and hockey pitch. The site is home to Chesham Rugby Club who pay an annual fee to the Town Council under a separate agreement that commenced in September 1996. This agreement is due for its second quinquennial review on 1 November 2006 of not less than the increase in the Retail Price Index.

**Heated Outdoor Swimming Pool** – the outdoor pool is managed by CVSLA, a not-for-profit organisation, on behalf of the Town Council on a 21 year lease arrangement. The centre was closed in 1995 for extensive refurbishment and re-opened in 1997. There are modern changing facilities including disabled changing cubicles and a small café serving light refreshments. A separate gymnasium is also accommodated within the building and this is managed by Strides on behalf of CVSLA. A solarium is also available as well as a therapy room hired out to private therapists. The building is open throughout the year between 7am to 10pm.

**The Moor Playing Fields** – The Moor is owned by the Town Council but the organisation of matches and the management of the pitches are vested in the CVSLA under a 21 year lease. The playing fields on the lower Moor accommodate four football pitches. The Upper Moor accommodates a floodlit tennis court and multi court (netball, tennis, five-a-side football,) where a tennis club operates and coaching sessions are also taught.

### **iii. What are the Specific Aims of the Service?**

The specific aims of the service are twofold;

- i) To provide high quality public sports areas that are well maintained and satisfy the requirements of users.
- ii) To work proactively and in partnership with CVSLA to provide and maintain an open air swimming pool and adjoining leisure facilities for the town.

### **iv. Cost and Unit Data**

Detailed below are the current charges with respect to the playing fields as well as the charges for CVSLA managed facilities:

#### **Codmore and Marston Playing Fields**

	<b>Charge (incl. VAT) 2005/06</b>
<b>FOOTBALL</b>	
(a) for each game of football including line marking	
(i) Marston	£48.00
(j) Codmore (excluding cleaning)	£48.00
(ii) Codmore (including cleaning)	£58.80
(b) charge per season (hire of pitch; line marking; use of pavilion; changing rooms; and cleaning costs) <b>* VAT exempt</b>	£1,311.00 *
<b>CRICKET</b> (Codmore Playing Field).	
(a) mid-week afternoon/evening matches	£33.50
(b) weekend and Bank Holiday club fixtures	£50.00
<b>Hire of Codmore Pavilion only.</b>	Negotiable- normally £4.00* per hour (minimum charge £12.00)
<b>* VAT exempt</b>	

## Chesham Park Community College Playing Fields

The Rugby Club pay an annual fee to the Town Council. This is increased annually in line with the Retail Price Index, with a review every five years in line with market conditions. The fee has been provisionally Index linked from 1 September 2005 to £2,570 for 2005/06 annual hire.

The administration and charges of the other facilities at the college are dealt with by the college in return for a small administration fee.

## Chesham Outdoor Heated Swimming Pool

Under the current contractual arrangements with the Council, CVSLA determine pool charges. Pool charges have increased significantly since the improved facilities were provided following the building refurbishment in 1997. The charges are normally fixed each financial year, having regard to other local facilities.

<b>SWIMMING PRICES</b>	<b>2005/06</b>
Adult	£3.70
Junior/Concession	£2.10
Chess Valley Swimmer Adult Member or Strides Gym	£2.70
Chess Valley Swimmer Junior/Senior/Concession	£1.40
Friend Wycombe Leisure Trust Adult Member	£3.20
Friend Wycombe Leisure Trust/Junior/Concession Members	£1.90
Aqua Aerobics, adult non-member	£4.20
Aqua Aerobics, adult member	£3.70
Aqua Aerobics, concession	£3.20
Aqua Aerobics, concession member	£2.60
Spectator	£0.70
Under 5	Free
<b>POOL HIRE</b> (for up to 30 swimmers and including two lifeguards)	Price on application
<b>SWIMMING LESSONS</b>	
1 person	£17 (30 minutes)
2 people	£22 (30 minutes)
3 people	£27 (30 minutes)
4 people	£32 (30 minutes)
<b>SEASON TICKETS</b>	
Adult	£75.00
Senior & Adult Concession	£45.00
Junior	£35.00
Junior Concession	£20.00
Chess Valley Swimmers membership: Adult	£10.00

Chess Valley Swimmers membership: Junior	£5.00
---	-------

Juniors: 5-16 years; Senior: 60 or over, Concession: disabled, full time student, registered unemployed and those on Income Support or Family Credit.

### Tennis Court and Multi-Court

	<b>From 1 April 2005</b>
Tennis Court - Adults	£4 (per hour)
Tennis Court – Concessions	£3 (per hour)
Multi-Court	£8 (per team)
Floodlights	£1.50 (per hour)

### Gymnasium

	<b>From 1 April 2005</b>	
Induction	£20	
	<b>Off Peak*</b>	<b>Peak</b>
Daily	£4	£6
Monthly (paid by standing order)	£30	£35
Monthly (cash/cheque)	£33	£38.50
Annual	£250	£325

\* Off Peak – 10am - 4pm Monday to Friday

### Solarium

	<b>From 1 April 2005</b>
5 minutes	£3.00
10 minutes	£5.50
15 minutes	£8.00

### The Moor Playing Fields

	<b>From 1 April 2005</b>
<b>SOCCER</b>	
Annual fee for Junior Football Club	£1,600.00
For each game of football including line marking	Adult - £50.00 Junior - £25.00

**v. Consultation and Information**

For the Council managed playing fields, on-going consultation takes place between officers and team organisers that make bookings through the main office. User feedback questionnaires are not in operation.

The door-to-door Residents' Survey that was carried out in February 2005 collated data on usage and satisfaction of the playing fields and CVSLA leisure facilities. The survey is currently repeated every five years.

The CVSLA hold approximately six management meetings a year where a Council officer attends. There is a Chess Valley Swimmers Club, who carries out a support role to the pool and is in regular communication with the CVSLA. User feedback questionnaires are not in operation.

There is an information board at the open air swimming pool which details who owns and manages the facility as well as contact details. The Council is in the process of undertaking a rolling programme of providing information boards at all sites, although no information boards are currently present at any of the playing fields.

A key recommendation that came from the Best Value Service Review of Democratic Services and Corporate Management, was to carry out targeted consultation with key groups in the town on the services the Council provides.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
The Challenge Panel acknowledged the recommendation from last year's Best Value Review to undertake more regular consultation with key service users.	<i>Consultation with service users was undertaken as part of the Review process and will continue on an annual basis thereafter.</i>

**vi. Other Items**

Integral to this review will be the consideration of a leisure card for Chesham residents to use at these facilities as well as The Elgiva theatre.

### **3. CHALLENGE**

---

“Challenge” is central to Best Value. The basis consists of:

- Why the service is provided
- What the service provides
- How the service is provided

#### **i. Why the Service is Provided**

A local council has powers to provide a wide range of recreational facilities. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 enables Town and Parish Council’s to provide buildings, equipment, supplies and assistance of any kind for athletic social or recreational activities. The Act also enables a local authority to make grants to other local authorities and grants or loans to non-profit-making voluntary bodies, in providing the facilities.

Facilities can be made available with or without charge as determined by the local authority.

There is no legal obligation for a local authority to provide recreational facilities or public baths.

The Challenge Panel were in agreement that the public sports and leisure facilities provided by the Council served an important function in giving the community a variety of recreational facilities that promoted health and wellbeing.

#### **ii. What the Service Provides**

The public sports facilities operated by the Council consist of two football pitches, a cricket wicket and a pavilion at Codmore playing fields; two football pitches and a pavilion at Marston playing fields; two rugby pitches, field athletics, artificial cricket wicket, hard courts and hockey pitch under the agreement between Buckinghamshire County Council at Chesham Park Community College.

The playing fields and pavilions at Codmore and Marston are maintained by the Parks and Premises Department who undertake the following:

- the team Secretary liaises with the main office on forthcoming bookings/hirings
- The Parks & Premises Team undertake regular grass cutting and line painting
- the Parks & Premises Manager liaises with arboreal contractors for major tree works
- the Parks & Premises Team undertake the majority of pitch maintenance where some renovation works are contracted out
- litter picking of the playing fields is undertaken weekly by Parks & Premises Team

- cleaning and maintenance of pavilions is carried out by the Parks & Premises Team, although Codmore Pavilion is normally cleaned by a contract cleaner
- maintenance and regular inspections of football goals and posts is carried out by the Parks & Premises Team
- The Parks & Premises Team undertake health and safety checks of the pavilions and playing fields

The open air swimming pool is heated to a constant temperature of 84 degrees Fahrenheit and is 25m x 20m in size. The pool is sloped from a shallow end of 0.9m to the deep end of 1.8 metres depth and can accommodate four lanes. There are separate changing facilities including disabled cubicles. The pool operates a school term timetable as well as a school holiday timetable with specific sessions for adult swimming only, aqua aerobics, toddler swims and inflatable sessions. Swimming lessons are available and the pool can be hired privately for galas and parties outside of the main public swimming timetable. Season tickets and a membership scheme are available and this is administered by the Chess Valley Swimmers Club.

There is an adjoining gymnasium that offers various cardio vascular and weight resistance training machines as well as a separate weights room. The gym operates its own separate membership scheme.

Other facilities at the pool include separate modern changing facilities for football pitch hirers, a solarium, a Holiday Club for children ages 4 -7 years old during Easter and Summer and a therapy room (beauty and holistic therapies).

Adjoining the building is a tennis court and multi-court (netball, five-a-side football, hockey) where a club and coaching sessions operate from as well as public use.

The swimming pool is also home to the Chiltern Harriers athletic club who use the Centre for changing facilities and as a meeting point.

***The Panel visited all of the services provided by the Council to ensure they were familiar with the current facilities.***

***The Panel considered whether all of the above should continue to be provided by the Town Council through its current arrangements and whether other services should also be considered.***

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
The Panel challenged the quality of some of the services and facilities	<i>The Panel considered at length the quality of each service provided</i>
The Panel questioned the usage each facility received	<i>Usage data was presented to the Panel for each service area for consideration</i>

### **iii. How the Service is Provided**

All arrangements for bookings of the playing fields for Codmore, Marston and Chesham Park Community College, are made through the administration function at the Town Hall by team organisers. The pavilion at Codmore can be booked separately for social functions or parties and these are also administered in the main office at the Town Hall. The Rugby Club have an annual arrangement and then pay additional charges for using the facilities outside of the normal playing season. All hirers are required to adhere to the following criteria:

- Club organiser to write to the Council in advance of the season if it wishes to reserve a pitch and pavilion
- Contact names of the Treasurer and Team Secretary of the Club must be provided
- All fixtures to be notified to the Council at least five days in advance, including 'friendlies' and training sessions
- Facilities cannot be used without prior consent of the Council
- Payment must be made in advance
- Non-keyholders must collect a key from the Town Hall between hours of opening Monday-Friday
- No charges are made if a match is cancelled one month before the booking date. A 50% charge is levied with less than one month's notice but more than 48 hours cancellation notice. A full charge is levied if a fixture is cancelled within 48 hours of notice
- The hirer is responsible for the facilities at all times during bookings, including those of visiting teams and supporters, and liable for any damage caused during the time of hiring
- No Caretaker facilities operate at the playing fields or pavilions. Each hirer is responsible for providing their own goal nets and corner flag posts; ensuring the pavilion is left clean and tidy and fully secured and locked at the end of each hiring; ensuring the gate to the car park (Marston only) is securely padlocked
- All hirers are required to sign a copy of the terms and conditions before using the facilities

The Moor playing fields are owned by the Town Council but the organisation of matches and the management of the pitches are vested in CVSLA under a 21 year lease. Home to the Strides Football Club, there are two pitches and separate changing facilities are accommodated within the swimming pool building.

The heated outdoor swimming pool is owned by the Town Council and managed by CVSLA under a 21 year lease. The swimming pool is open from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> September and has a school term timetable and a school holiday timetable. The main building and other facilities on the site are open for use throughout the year. The facility is run by a Centre Manager and the gymnasium, located within the swimming pool building, is managed under a separate agreement between CVSLA and Strides gym. There is a separate gym manager.

The tennis court and multi-court facility is managed by CVSLA under a separate agreement with the Town Council. Both courts are open all year round and hired out to the general public as well as club and coaching use.

### **The Panel considered the current arrangements.**

- *In considering the quality of the various facilities, concern was raised about the poor and unsatisfactory state of Marston Pavilion. The Panel noted that the Council had, in principle, agreed to the possible community management of the facility, which had already enabled external funding to pay for a structural survey of the building. The Panel welcomed this move forward but agreed that renovation should be a priority improvement for the Council. In addition, it was felt important that the current sports teams that hire the facility be consulted on any redevelopment plans to ensure suitable changing and storage facilities are provided.*
- *The Panel noted with concern that the pitches at Marston and Codmore could only sustain one match a week in their current condition, thereby preventing any possible increase in usage unless pitch quality was improved. It was agreed that a review of the current pitch maintenance programme was required together with investigation of complete outsourcing of the service or sharing of specialist equipment with neighbouring Town/Parish Councils.*
- *The question of whether the current services were meeting the demands of users and the local community was debated at length by the Panel. It was agreed that further consideration should be given to the development of a floodlit astro turf multi-use pitch in partnership with the District and County Council - to enable provision of an all weather universal facility.*
- *The Panel did not consider it worthwhile to investigate outsourcing of the administration of hirings of Marston or Codmore due to their relatively low usage.*
- *In considering the services provided by CVSLA, the Panel questioned whether the facilities could be utilised more effectively. In particular, the Panel wanted to investigate the feasibility and impact of:*
  - i) *extending the open air pool season*
  - ii) *the conversion of the multi-court into a tennis court*
  - iii) *making the separate downstairs changing facilities into a multi-functional space*
- *The management arrangement between CVSLA and the Council was considered an integral part of this review and it was agreed that the current arrangements together with exposure of the service to outside competition should be explored further.*
- *Whilst reviewing the usage data for the various facilities, the Panel were in agreement that the artificial cricket wicket at Codmore should be removed. No bookings from individuals or league teams had been received since 1997, maintenance of the wicket had not been carried out and the preference of teams not to use an artificial wicket made the facility now obsolete.*

- The usage data for the facilities leased to the Council by Chesham Park Community College (Buckinghamshire County Council) indicated that only the Rugby Club made use of the site. No lettings for the other facilities have taken place for the last three years, with minimal lettings since the lease began. The Panel therefore wished to scrutinise the current service by reviewing the lease arrangement between the Council and the school and the Council and Rugby Club as well as consulting with both parties.
- Although not part of this review, the Panel was strongly in favour of advocating the use of the CVSLA Centre as a development project for a community hub/centre for the Waterside area.

**In challenging the service the Panel agreed to:**

<b>ACTION</b>
Complete a review of the current maintenance schedule and resources allocated to pitch and pavilion maintenance
Consider the outsourcing of all of the pitch maintenance or sharing of equipment with neighbouring Town Councils
Scrutinise the financial and contractual arrangement between the Community College and the Council and the Council and the Rugby Club
To review the financial and contractual arrangement between CVSLA and the Council and consider exposure of service to outside competition
Investigate the feasibility and impact of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) extending the open air pool season</li> <li>ii) the conversion of the multi-court into a tennis court</li> <li>iii) making the separate downstairs changing facilities into a multi-functional space</li> </ul>
Consider working in partnership with the principal authorities to provide a floodlit multi-use synthetic pitch within the town

## 4. CONSULT

---

Consultation with service users, partners and the town residents is essential to run an effective service.

Although ongoing consultation takes place between the Rugby Club and the Council and CVSLA and the Council regarding the way these services are delivered, the Panel acknowledged that very little consultation took place with the different users of the various facilities. A key recommendation from last year's Best Value service review of Democratic Services and Corporate Management, was for the Council to undertake more regular consultation with service users. This recommendation was taken on board and during this service review the following consultation took place:

### **i. Chesham Community Vision**

Launched in 2004, the Panel endorsed the final 'Vision' that had been developed for Chesham for 2015 and were particularly keen to see progress towards the development of a community hub as an additional facility to the CVSLA Centre. This consultation also included the '*Lights, Camera Gab*' research projects, which involved filmed interviews with young people.

### **ii. 2005 Residents' Survey**

The Council undertakes a door-to-door postal survey with every resident in the town in regard to its services every five years. The last such door-to-door survey was carried out by the Council in 2005 and attracted a 27% response. Various questions were asked about residents' satisfaction with the Council's public sports and leisure facilities and the results obtained are summarised in the following section.

### **iii. Users of Marston and Codmore Facilities**

The various football teams that hire the facilities at Marston and Codmore were consulted on the current level of service via a survey. Although team Secretaries have regular liaison with the administrative function of the Council, team members' have not previously been consulted on the facilities. A feedback survey (**appendix 1**) was therefore devised and agreed by the Panel and sent to all teams to give each member the opportunity to have their say on the current service.

### **iv. Chesham Park Community College**

A meeting with the new School bursar was held to discuss the current leasing arrangements with the school (Buckinghamshire County Council) and the Council and the usage the facilities currently received. The meeting also considered the impact of the forthcoming development of the new classroom facilities that would be reducing the overall sporting facilities once completed.

### **v. Members of Chesham Rugby Club**

The Secretary and President of the Rugby Club make regular contact with the administrative function of the Council by virtue of the agreement that is in place. Additional consultation with users of the site, namely the Rugby Club, has not taken place and a questionnaire (**appendix 2**) was agreed by the Panel and sent to club members to ascertain their views on the current service.

## **vi CVSLA Management Committee and Users of the Facilities**

Council representatives attend the CVSLA Management Committee bi-monthly meetings to ensure regular liaison between both parties takes place under the management agreement. To ascertain current satisfaction with the facilities from the users' perspective and identify any areas for improvement, a survey (**appendix 3**) was designed and agreed by the Panel and made available in the Centre reception for users to complete.

## **vii. Targeted Consultation with Specific Groups**

Following a key recommendation that arose from last year's Best Value service review of Democratic Services and Corporate Management, the Council now undertakes regular consultation with specific groups within the town on the services it provides. Council officers now engage on a more regular basis with minority ethnic groups, older persons, voluntary bodies and disability groups. This has proved a valuable exercise in gaining feedback from those groups that are traditionally more difficult to engage with.

## **viii. Other Consultation**

The Panel considered what other means of consultation could be undertaken:

- Devise item for Town Council newsletter to seek views on the services and promote the available facilities.
- Promote use of the Council's feedback form and online discussion forum on the website.
- Commit to undertake annual consultation with service users of the public sports and leisure facilities.

**In considering the consultation process, the Panel agreed:**

<b>ACTION</b>
Consultation to be completed by February 2006 and results and subsequent recommendations to be fed into the improvement plan
Feedback surveys to be sent to all users of the various facilities on an annual basis as part of a continuous consultation procedure
A external review body to be established to enable greater scrutiny and a more comprehensive monitoring of the CVSLA management arrangement

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

### **i. Chesham Community Vision**

*Over 400 residents from Chesham and surrounding communities plus representatives of more than 40 local businesses, groups and organisations responded to the exercise. Over 3,000 individual responses were captured as part of the community-wide appraisal and the following issues that affect this service review were identified:*

1. Waterside youth projects  
(perhaps via an extension onto the CVSLA Centre to provide a community centre facility).
2. Pond Park community Hub)

(redevelop Marston pavilion to provide a community facility and improved changing and shower facilities for football hirers).

The young people in the '*Lights, Camera, Gab*' interviews called for a greater all-round investment in leisure facilities for young people.

#### **ii. 2005 Residents' Survey**

*2314 surveys were returned, representing a response rate of 27%.*

1. The pitches all received between 54-63% 'satisfactory' rating
2. 50% rated Marston pavilion as 'poor'
3. 54% rated Codmore pavilion as 'satisfactory' and 20% 'good' or 'excellent'.
4. 40% of respondents said they use the open air pool, with 11% using the gym and 10% the tennis court.
5. 75% said the staff were either 'good' or 'excellent'.
6. 77% rated the open air pool as 'good' or 'excellent'.
7. 67% said the gym was 'good' or 'excellent'.
8. 63% rated the tennis court as 'good' or 'excellent'.
9. Those who live in the Waterside Ward are the most frequent visitors to the Centre.

#### **iii. Users of Marston and Codmore Facilities**

*6 questionnaires were returned from users of Codmore facilities.*

*0 questionnaires were returned from users of Marston, despite receiving reminders.*

1. 100% normally get to the site by car.
2. 20 years was the average length of time the team had been using the facilities.
3. 100% rated car parking as 'satisfactory'.
4. 67% rated the pitch as 'poor' with 33% indicating it was 'satisfactory'.
5. 67% rated the cleanliness of the pavilion as 'satisfactory' and 33% said it was 'poor'.
6. 67% rated the changing area as 'satisfactory', although 33% said it was 'poor'.
7. 83% said the showers were 'poor' with only 17% saying they were 'satisfactory'.
8. All respondents, 100%, said the social area/kitchen was 'satisfactory'.
9. 100% rated the security of the pavilion as either 'good' (50%) or 'excellent' (50%).

10. 67% said the administration they received from the Town Hall regarding their booking was 'good' with 33% indicating this service was 'excellent'.

11. 50% rated the grounds maintenance as 'poor', with 33% indicating it was 'satisfactory' and 17% as 'good'.

12. All respondents, 100%, said the site met their team's needs and that they would recommend the facility to other teams/individuals.

13. 17% said the charge to hire the facility was 'about right' with 83% indicating it was 'expensive'.

14. Overall, 50% of respondents rated the facility as 'satisfactory' with an equal 50% rating it as 'good'.

15. When asked what would be the three things they would do if there were put in charge, the most popular responses were:

- Improve grounds maintenance of pitch
- Improve general cleaning of pavilion
- De-scale/clean showers

#### **iv. Chesham Park Community College**

A meeting with new Bursar of the school took place to discuss the contractual arrangements.

1. The college is happy to continue to accommodate the Rugby Club.
2. The college acknowledged and agreed the changing facilities were inadequate.
3. The college explained that since its achievement of specialist status, new classrooms and a specialist arts block would be built during 2005/06. As a result, two hard courts and a large section of the grass training area would be lost upon completion of the building works.

#### **v. Members of Chesham Rugby Club**

*17 questionnaires were returned from members of the Rugby Club.*

1. 94% normally get to the college by car with 18% choosing to walk (a number of respondents said they used both means of transport to get to the college, hence the percentages do not equal 100%).

2. The average length of time members had been playing for the Club was 9.6 years.

3. 76% rated the car parking as 'satisfactory' with 24% indicating it was 'poor'.

4. 65% said the pitches were 'satisfactory', 24% said they were 'good' and 12% said they were 'poor'.

5. 94% rated the training area as 'poor' with only 6% saying it was 'satisfactory'.

6. 65% said the changing facilities were 'poor' with 35% indicating they were 'satisfactory'.

7. 60% rated the showers as 'poor' and 40% said they were 'satisfactory'.

8. 47% said the storage area for equipment was 'satisfactory', with 35% indicating it was 'poor' and 18% that it was 'good'.
9. 53% said the club house/social area was 'satisfactory' with 41% indicating it was 'good' and 6% saying it was 'excellent'.
10. 47% rated the security of the club house as 'good' with 41% indicating it was 'satisfactory' and 12% 'poor'.
11. 53% said the grounds maintenance was carried out to a 'satisfactory' standard, 29% said the standard was 'poor' and 18% said it was 'good'.
12. 69% indicated that the site did not meet the club's needs. A number of reasons were given for this, namely that there was insufficient space for training, inadequate floodlighting and the poor layout of facilities.
13. 76% said they would not recommend the facility to other teams/individuals compared to 24% who would. The main reason given was that the site was already at full capacity and could therefore not accommodate other teams.
14. 35% said the charge to hire the facility was 'about right' and 18% said it was 'expensive'. 47% did not answer the question, indicating that they did not know what the hire charges were.
15. Overall, 65% of respondents rated the facilities as 'satisfactory' with 35% saying they were 'poor'.
16. When asked what would be the three things they would do if there were put in charge, the most popular responses were:
  - Improve the changing rooms, showers and toilets
  - Re-locate changing area and club house closer to the pitches
  - Floodlights – for night time training

#### **vi. CVSLA Management Committee and Users of the Facilities**

*37 surveys were returned by users of the facilities at the Centre.*

*NB. The questionnaires were distributed during the winter and a follow up survey will therefore take place in the summer during the open air pool swimming season.*

1. 78% normally travel to the Centre by car, with 19% walking and 3% by motorbike.
2. The most popular facilities were the gym (70%) and the swimming pool (62%). 19% use the café, 16% said they use the tennis court and poolside social area and 8% the multi-court.
3. The average length of time users had been visiting the Centre was 7 years.
4. 66% rated access to the Centre as 'good' (36%) or 'excellent' (30%). 27% said it was 'satisfactory' and 6% 'poor'.

5. 74% said the swimming pool was 'good' (26%) or 'excellent' (48%), with 23% indicating it was 'satisfactory' and 3% that it was 'poor'.
6. 56% said the football pitches were 'satisfactory' with 44% indicating they were 'good'.
7. 67% rated the tennis court as 'good' (61%) or 'excellent' (6%), where 33% said it was 'satisfactory'.
8. 58% said the multi-court was 'satisfactory' and 41% said it was 'good' (33%) or 'excellent' (8%).
9. 59% rated the gymnasium as 'good' (28%) or 'excellent' (31%) with 34% saying it was 'satisfactory' and 7% that it was 'poor'.
10. Just over half of the respondents, 51%, said the changing facilities were either 'good' (48%) or 'excellent' (3%) with 45% indicating they were 'satisfactory' and 3% that they were 'poor'.
11. 52% rated the café as 'good' (38%) or 'excellent' (14%), with 29% saying it was 'satisfactory' and 19% 'poor'.
12. 59% said the poolside social area/spectator facilities were either 'good' (36%) or 'excellent' (23%) with 41% indicating the area was 'satisfactory'.
13. 95% of respondents rated the staff at the Centre as 'good' (30%) or 'excellent' (65%).
14. 78% of respondents said the Centre met their needs. Of the 22% that said the Centre did not meet their needs, the main reasons cited for this reason was to do with inadequate gym facilities and opening hours.
15. 95% said that they would recommend the Centre to others.
16. 75% of respondents said the charges to use the facilities were 'about right' with 17% indicating they were 'expensive' and 8% saying they were 'cheap'.
17. Overall, 73% said the Centre was 'good' (22%) or 'excellent' (51%), where 24% said it was 'satisfactory' and 3% that it was 'poor'.
18. When asked what would be the three things they would do if there were put in charge, the most popular responses were:
  - Extend swimming season
  - Larger gym and associated training rooms

#### **vii. Targeted Consultation with Specific Groups**

*From the consultation carried out with the specific groups, most of the feedback received was in regard to the facilities run by CVSLA. None of the groups consulted made use of Marston or Codmore public sports facilities or were members of the Rugby Club. Regarding the facilities operated by CVSLA, the following comments were made:*

1. The open air swimming pool and gymnasium were facilities enjoyed by all groups.

2. It was felt better lighting should be introduced between the car parking area and the Centre.
3. Signage of the disabled spaces should be improved.
4. Bus services to the Centre could be improved.
5. The neglected tarmac area at Codmore should be reinstated for informal ball play activities.

## ANALYSIS

---

Unfortunately, no surveys were returned from users of Marston facilities but from the results received for Codmore, it was clear that users were dissatisfied with the showers (83% 'poor') and the grounds maintenance (50% 'poor'). These ratings are unacceptably low and should be considered for improvement measures in the recommendations. Conversely, security of the pavilion received high satisfaction scores (100% 'good' or 'excellent') and all respondents indicated they received a 'good' or 'excellent' administration service from the Town Hall.

Following the discussion with the new school Bursar at Chesham Park Community College, various issues were raised that require further consideration by the Panel. The overall facilities available to the Council under its existing 21 year lease agreement will be reduced upon completion of the new building works. This clearly raises financial and contractual issues for the Council under the current lease and user issues in terms of the reduction of facilities for the Rugby Club.

From the analysis of the responses received from members of Chesham Rugby Club, the training area (94% 'poor') and changing facilities (65% 'poor') both received unacceptable low scores. This view was compounded by over two thirds, 69%, indicating the site did not meet the club's needs. Although improvement measure are likely to entail considerable cost implications, the issues need to be thoroughly investigated for possible improvement measures.

Users of the CVSLA Centre were generally more satisfied with these facilities. Nearly three quarters (74%) of respondents rated the open air swimming pool as 'good' or 'excellent', just over two thirds (67%) said the tennis court was 'good' or 'excellent' and over half (59%) rated the gymnasium as 'good' or 'excellent'. Equally, nearly all respondents (95%) said the staff were 'good' or 'excellent' and would recommend the Centre to others. In considering areas for improvement, the main suggestions put forward were to extend the swimming season and increase the size of the gymnasium.

In comparing the results received from last year's household Residents' Survey and users that were consulted as part of this service review, it is clear that satisfaction with the CVSLA facilities remains relatively high. On the other hand, the results for the pitches and pavilions mirrored those received from the user questionnaires, indicating no improvements had been made since the Residents' Survey was conducted in 2005. This is clearly a key service area that requires improvement measures to be implemented.

As a key partner in the Chesham Community Vision (Countryside Agency's Market Town Health Check initiative), the Council presented the final 'Vision' to the Panel for consideration. The Panel were particularly keen to see progress made towards the redevelopment of Marston pavilion, particularly in light of the unacceptable poor rating the

facility received in the 2005 Residents' Survey. It was also felt that the lack of response received from any of the current users of Marston was a worrying sign and consultation with these users on any redevelopment plans should be undertaken with vigour before any designs are approved and building works commences.

The results from the consultation with specific groups illustrate the importance the various sports and leisure facilities serve to the local community. Wider issues of improved signage and lighting and reinstatement of a neglected play space are all worth of consideration by the Panel for key improvement measures.

## **5. COMPARE**

---

The Panel's comparisons with other service providers were undertaken on two levels. On the first level, the Panel decided to visit two local authorities and a voluntary managed open air swimming pool to compare the services offered at these facilities, particularly in regard to adopting examples of good practice. At a second level, the Panel compared charges, usage data, income and expenditure with the 41 other Best Value Councils to ascertain whether the Council's services were comparable to neighbouring authorities.

Comparison of performance with other local authority providers on this service is difficult where leisure and sports facilities are unique to each locality. However, 'Compare' is not only about external comparisons but also comparing in-house performance year-on-year and seeking continuous improvement. The Council operates its own local indicators that form part of the annual Best Value Performance Plan and are listed as **appendix 4**.

### **i. SITE VISITS**

The Panel visited Amersham and Hatfield Town Council public sports and leisure facilities and Chipping Norton lido and Rugby Club.

#### **VISIT TO AMERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**In Attendance**                      Cllr Paul Woodburn, Chesham Town Council  
Sue Butt, Policy & Projects Officer, Chesham Town Council  
Steve Pearson, Finance & Contracts Manager, Chesham Town Council  
Des Knowles, Town Clerk, Amersham Town Council  
Mark Richardson, Parks Superintendent, Amersham Town Council  
Garry Marshall and Brian Wright, CVSLA

#### **Introduction**

Des Knowles introduced Mark Richardson, Parks Superintendent, and showed the group around the main depot. The group then visited the three sports facility sites operated by Amersham Town Council.

#### **Hervines Park**

Comprising 28.5 acres including 12 acres of preserved woodlands. Facilities include a large brick pavilion; changing rooms with showers and toilet facilities; bowling green; cricket table; two football pitches and a rugby pitch; children's play area.

The site used to accommodate a hockey pitch but this has now been taken away where the neighbouring school has a new synthetic multi-use games pitch that is used for hockey.

Adjacent to the pavilion is a lawn bowling green that is managed and maintained by the bowls club but owned by the Town Council.

In the pavilion, facilities include separate female and male changing rooms with adjoining showers and toilets, a referee changing room with shower and main pavilion with internal kitchen area. There is disabled ramp access to the main pavilion.

Usage of the facilities between September 2004 – September 2005 was as follows:

34 Cricket Hirings  
90 Football Hirings  
63 (bowls) Pavilion Hirings and 21 other

Weekdays – Challoners School use pitches for football and rugby.

The changing facilities at the pavilion had been redecorated this year and the showers and changing rooms were all in good order. The kitchen area had also recently been refurbished with new units and worktops. All of this refurbishment work had been carried out in-house by the Parks Team.

The pitches get quite extensive use with the neighbouring school using the area for football and rugby during the week and local teams using the pitches at weekends. During the summer the area is turned into a cricket wicket with a team using the facilities most weekends and some evenings.

The pitches are worm and weed controlled and verti-drained and the improved drainage ditch that was re-dug around the site in 2004 has improved the drainage situation. However, the site does still suffer with some drainage issues due to its continued use.

The pavilion unfortunately experiences some vandalism and the changing room top windows have been boarded over to help prevent damage.

### **Barn Meadow**

A 6 acre site including three football pitches, cricket table and a brick pavilion with changing rooms, showers, and toilet facilities. Children's play area.

In the pavilion, facilities include two separate changing rooms with adjoining shared showers and main pavilion with small internal kitchen area. The changing rooms open straight out onto the pitches and are wall to ceiling tiled with drainage channels located in the middle. The Parks Superintendent explained that this made it extremely easy to clean and maintain where the changing room walls and falls could be hosed down to remove mud and debris.

This is the most popular site for team sports that the Town Council manages. The Parks Superintendent explained that all the pitches were free draining which combined with good quality soil made pitch quality very good and therefore extremely popular with local teams. As a result the pitches get quite extensive use over the weekends and are also used by the neighbouring school for sports activities during the week.

The main pavilion had been redecorated a couple of years ago and the Parks Team would be looking to redecorate again in the next financial year. The small kitchen area had been recently refurbished with new units and worktop. All refurbishment work was carried out in-house by the Parks Team.

Usage of the facilities between September 2004 – September 2005 was as follows:

31 Cricket Hirings  
150 Football Hirings  
112 Pavilion Hirings

Weekdays – St Mary’s School use pitches for PE/Games and annual Sports Day

### **Westwood Park**

Comprising approximately 17 acres. Facilities include a wooden pavilion; changing rooms with shower and toilet facilities; cricket table; four all-weather tennis courts and two full size and one junior football pitches. Children's playground area.

In the pavilion, facilities include separate changing rooms with adjoining shower and a main pavilion with small internal kitchen area. The pavilion is all wood in construction and suffers from flooding and drainage problems from the showers. The exterior has also received extensive vandalism and graffiti over the last couple of years. The Town Council is currently looking at plans to completely redevelop the pavilion to bring it in line with its other sports facilities that are in good order.

The 4 all weather tennis courts had new fencing installed last year and are particularly popular in the summer and at weekends. Payment for usage of the facilities is on a trust basis through the purchasing of a ticket at the meter.

Usage of the facilities between September 2004 – September 2005 was as follows:

18 Cricket Hirings  
120 Football Hirings  
2 Pavilion Hirings

### **Cost Analysis**

The Town Clerk had undertaken a cost analysis of providing the sports facilities and was able to provide a breakdown of how much it cost the Town Council to provide for each match. The figures take into account staff preparation time, materials and end of season work.

Cost Per Match – Cricket (62 matches a year) = £66.80

Cost Per Match – Football (230 matches on 10 pitches a year) = £32.50

***A comparison of the charges and income and expenditure for these facilities are detailed in section 5.ii.***

### **VISIT TO HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

#### **In Attendance**

Cllr Paul Woodburn, Chesham Town Council  
Sue Butt, Policy & Projects Officer, Chesham Town Council  
Des Knowles, Town Clerk, Amersham Town Council  
Brian Wright, CVSLA

#### **Introduction**

Peter Clark introduced himself and provided details of each of the sports and leisure facilities operated by the Town Council.

It was noted that the Council served a population of approximately 30,000 which is likely to grow considerably over the coming years with large areas identified for new housing development.

There has been greater demand for all of the Council's recreation facilities since the recent closure of British Aerospace and its adjoining social club facilities.

### **Birchwood Leisure Centre**

The site occupies 9,315 hectares of land and comprises a leisure centre and recreation ground providing the following facilities; Sports Hall (4 badminton courts); Function room; Café; Health suite/Gym; Pilates studio (tenant); Playscheme for all holidays; Children's indoor play area (tenant) and Wellfield Trust Room (tenant); 4 senior football pitches; 1 junior football pitch; 2 mini football pitches; 1 floodlit synthetic; 1 grass floodlit training area; Car Boot Sales (private operator); 1 play area.

The centre was built in 1991 where the site previously accommodated a basic pavilion and changing rooms. The build was funded by a grant from the District Council, increases on the precept and borrowing through a 20 year fixed rate loan. The build also received capital funds from the Children's indoor play area (Activity World) and the Wellfield Trust at the initial build stage where the Council now acts as their tenants under separate lease arrangements. The Children's indoor play area is managed on a 15 year lease arrangement and the Wellfield Trust on a 99 year lease arrangement. The build was scaled down slightly from the original plans where the District Council did not agree with the perceived need for all the proposed facilities.

The centre was originally built with a bar but this was completely removed in April 2005 due to low usage. The room is now used as a general function area for hiring's and by the playscheme.

The Centre is fairly well used by the local community and the Council operates a membership scheme called the 'Gold Card'. This costs residents and non-residents £19.00 a month and entitles members unlimited use of the health suite (gym), fitness classes and off peak badminton (9-5pm Mon-Fri and all day Sunday) at the centre. Separate membership of the health suite is available for £20.00 per annum.

The synthetic pitch is fairly well used for practice sessions and is floodlit until 11.00pm. The Council has not received any complaints regarding the floodlighting. There is very little wear on the synthetic surface as it is kept well sanded. The pitch was built through financial help from Sport England. The pitch was originally built with a 1 metre high brick surround with steel rebound fences on top of the brick surround. The Council would not recommend this build design as the brick wall prevents natural air circulation and does not wear very well against constant ball hitting. The Council would like to remove the brick wall and install the steel rebound fencing all around the pitch.

The drainage for all the pitches on the site is very good and no problems have been experienced.

The car parking is ample during the week but often inadequate at the weekends during the winter when the pitches are being used by local teams and the Activity World indoor play centre is popular.

The Council is currently investigating the possibility of relocating their main administrative offices to the centre by building an extension to the side of the building.

The Council operates extremely successful playschemes for 5-11 year olds at the centre which last year were attended by 3,671 children.

### **Usage**

The centre is used by 12 senior football teams and numerous junior teams. The Centre has had to make some alterations to the football pitches eg. guard rail and spectator plates to meet with Football Association standards where a senior team has moved up a division.

### **Financial Data**

The total expenditure for the centre in 2004/05 was £576,493 with an income that year of £299,735. The net expenditure was therefore £276,758 representing a cost to the elector of £14.02. Income as a percentage of operating costs was therefore 52% for 2004/05 financial year.

The annual income from the studio room in 2004/05 was £15,565.

The letting out of the site for Car Boot sales returned an income to the Council of £15,713 in 2004/05.

Activity World is an extremely popular facility that runs numerous children's parties at weekends that the café then caters for. The café is run by the Council and generated an income of £81,050 in 2004/05.

### **Roe Hill Hall**

The site occupies 4,514 hectares of land and comprises a function hall and recreation grounds providing the following facilities; 2 senior football pitches; 1 mini football pitch; 2 rugby pitches; 1 cricket square; 1 net practice area; 2 tennis courts; 2 floodlit grass training areas; 1 play area; function hall with capacity of 200; activity room; bar, kitchen and terrace.

### **Usage**

Hatfield's QE2 rugby club is based at the facility and the Council are now concentrating on football and rugby for the facility where the cricket square was proving costly to maintain to the high standards required by clubs.

The facility is regularly used by two football teams, two rugby teams and two cricket clubs as well as numerous junior football teams.

### **Financial Data**

The total expenditure for the centre in 2004/05 was £152,168 with an income that year of £82,492. The net expenditure was therefore £69,675 representing a cost to the elector of £3.53. Income as a percentage of operating costs was therefore 54.2% for 2004/05 financial year.

### **Lemsford Hall**

The site occupies 1,223 hectares of land and comprises a function hall and recreation grounds providing the following facilities; 1 football pitch; floodlit grass training area ; a function hall with capacity for 120; a lounge bar; outdoor terrace and enclosed play area.

### **Usage**

A number of community groups make use of the indoor facilities including fly dressing, Scottish dancing, carpet bowls. It is also the home of Annabel's Montessori School for 2 – 5 year olds and the Splits Dancing School.

The facility has recently lost two of the three teams that play on the pitches where these teams have progressed up a league and the site no longer meets Football Association standards. The facility is currently home to two football teams and a number of junior teams.

### **Financial Data**

The total expenditure for the centre in 2004/05 was £80,505 with an income that year of £59,411. The net expenditure was therefore £21,094 representing a cost to the elector of £1.07. Income as a percentage of operating costs was therefore 73.8% for 2004/05 financial year.

### **Newgate Street**

The site occupies 2,025 hectares of land and comprises a function hall (run by a management committee) and recreation grounds providing the following facilities; 1 football pitch; 2 tennis courts; play area; a function hall with capacity for 120; a stage area; kitchen; bar and outdoor play area.

### **Usage**

A number of community groups make use of the facilities including children from the local school for PE, a toddler group, social events organised by the church, a monthly wine circle and a small Post Office open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Badminton and carpet bowls also take place indoors.

One football team and a number of junior teams currently make regular use of the pitches.

### **Charges**

A copy of the charges to use the various indoor and outdoor facilities at the centre is attached.

### **Financial Data**

The total expenditure for the centre in 2004/05 was £21,816 with an income that year of £871. The net expenditure was therefore £20,944 representing a cost to the elector of £1.06. Income as a percentage of operating costs was therefore 4% for 2004/05 financial year.

### **New Development**

The Town Council will shortly be taking on over the ownership and management of 6/7 acres of public open space under S.106 agreement that was the former sports and social club facilities of British Aerospace.

### **Points of Interest**

The Town Clerk explained during the site visit that the Council had developed excellent working relationships with the District Council's Planning Department and Leisure Services. By developing a good relationship with the Planning Department, this has enabled the Council to negotiate directly with developers on S.106 agreements and other developments. The Town Clerk has also found that the District Council take the view that the Town Council is in a better position to manage sports pitches and public open spaces and is therefore open to discussion about the delivery of such services.

The town is extremely well catered for with private health clubs and gyms and as such the health suite at the Birchwood Centre has concentrated on providing basic equipment where their most popular user is a 40 year old female that prefers a relaxed non-competitive environment.

The changing rooms at the Birchwood Centre are used for both internal and external sports which has created numerous problems for cleaning and change over of activities especially over the weekend. The Council is looking to see how the changing room space could be better utilised so that outdoor sports have their own changing facility.

The playscheme at the Birchwood Centre is extremely popular and runs for each school holiday.

The newest addition to Birchwood Centre is the pilates studio which is leased out to a specialist pilates company and generates approximately £15,000 income for the Council per annum.

The Birchwood Centre site also accommodates two mobile phone masts that each generate £5,000 income per annum for the Council.

There are no grounds staff on duty over the weekends, all preparation and pitch markings are carried out during the week.

***A comparison of the charges and income and expenditure for these facilities are detailed in section 5.ii.***

### **VISIT TO CHIPPING NORTON**

**In Attendance** Sue Butt, Policy & Projects Officer, Chesham Town Council  
Steve Pearson, Finance & Contracts Manager, Chesham Town Council  
Morris Hogg, Chesham Rugby Club  
Garry Marshall and Brian Wright, CVSLA

#### **Chipping Norton Lido - Introduction**

Jono Slatter, Centre Manager, and Patrick Neale, Director, introduced themselves to the group.

Sue explained the purpose of the visit and Steve provided a summary of the current operational and financial set up of Chesham's Open Air Pool.

## **Historical Context**

The open-air swimming pool in Chipping Norton opened in 1970 following seven years of fundraising by local residents. The facility was leased to the Town Council for a modest rent by the Chipping Norton and District Volunteer Fire Brigade Fund (CN&DVFBF). Responsibility for the management of the pool transferred to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) in 1974. The facility was then sub-contracted by WODC to Wycombe Leisure Ltd (WLL) in 2001. In 2003 WODC paid WLL an index linked management fee of £21,288 and £5,000 for pre-season maintenance.

A new leisure centre was opened in Chipping Norton by WODC in 2002 and later that year the local Authority announced that for financial reasons it would be withdrawing its funding for the open air pool and that the facility would close.

Residents stepped in and formed an action group called KOPO (Keeping Our Pool Open) and argued that the facility was 'more than just a swimming pool'. WLL were approached to manage the facility but were not interested in negotiating a management fee where KOPO offered to undertake the marketing, training and insurance separately. KOPO therefore formed a company limited by guarantee, Chipping Norton Lido Ltd, who took over the management of the facility from March 2005.

## **Facility**

The lido comprises of a 25 metre by 9 metre heated outdoor swimming pool, a small toddlers pool, reception area and office, first aid area and disabled changing facilities, male and female changing rooms, café annex and 1/3 acre grassed area with three mature sycamore trees in close proximity to the pool.

## **Ownership**

The facility has a complicated ownership arrangement.

The plot of land into which the pools, buildings and car park stand belong to the Chipping Norton & District Volunteer Fire Brigade Fund. The buildings are owned by WODC and the grassed area is on loan from the school and as such belongs to Oxfordshire County Council.

The land is leased to WODC who has agreed a 30 year lease with three year break clauses. The land and buildings are then sub let to Chipping Norton Lido Ltd for an annual rent of £250 (index linked).

## **Funding and Financial Set Up**

When Chipping Norton Lido Ltd took over management of the facility, essential work and repairs had to be carried out to meet Health and Safety standards before the pool could be re-opened to the public. This was largely paid for through funds raised by KOPO including two successful 'auction of promises' hosted by local celebrity, Jeremy Clarkson. 2005 was the first season the pool operated under the management of Chipping Norton Lido Ltd.

Chipping Norton Town Council currently contributes £6,000 per annum towards the provision of the facility and this contribution has been agreed for 2005 and 2006. The Town Council's precept for 2005/06 was £114,400.

During 2003 and 2004, WLL operated the facilities at a deficit of around £20,000.

Chipping Norton Lido Ltd has committed to bridge the annual deficit with sponsorship (eg. website advertising banners) and funding from KOPO, who has committed to continue to raise funds annually.

The set up of the facility and financial expenditure is extremely similar to CVSLA, except for the water supply which for the lido comes from the Mains.

Chipping Norton Lido Ltd is about to apply for charitable status and agreed to share details of their application with CVSLA.

A three year operating forecast has been devised by Chipping Norton Lido Ltd with emphasis on a long term Marketing Plan to help raise the necessary sponsorship and funds to bridge the annual deficit.

### **Management**

The facility has a full time manager that is employed for the summer season. There is also a duty manager, a pool of approximately 20 lifeguards, cashiers and a cleaner. All staff are employed seasonally and there is no centre manager outside of the summer season.

The facility is managed by a volunteer committee in the form of Chipping Norton Lido Ltd. The Committee largely carry out the administrative function with day to day management carried out by the Centre Manager.

Chipping Norton Lido Ltd has developed a comprehensive three Business Plan for 2005 – 2007 which includes a three year operating forecast.

### **Usage**

The maximum bathing load for the lido is 120 and for the toddler pool 20.

Chipping Norton Lido Ltd carried out some extensive market research before taking on the management of the facility which highlighted the following:

- Three out of four users are under the age of 45 years old. The most typical group composition was 2 adults and 2 children.
- The majority of users, 60%, travel less than 2 miles to reach the lido, 20% come from a five mile radius and a further 20% from a greater distance.
- The research showed that although the opening of the indoor pool may have had some impact on the use of the lido, the impact was limited with only approximately two thirds of the users overlapping and more than a third being distinct users of the lido only (summer swimmers).
- Almost 1 in 3 users walk to the pool.
- Length of stay per visit: 37% stay 1-2 hours, 31% stay more than 2 hours to half a day, 21% stay less than hour, 11% stay more than half a day.

From this research, Chipping Norton Lido Ltd has been looking to promote the facility more widely to potential new users as well as ensuring existing users continue to make repeated visits.

The facility benefits from a large grass (1/3 acre) shaded picnic area and admits a number of spectators (sun bathers) who do not use the pool.

### Timetable

The facility is open at the following times:

<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>Weekends and Bank Holidays</b>
Early Swim 6am - 8am	Adults only 10am - 12pm
Public swim 12.30pm - 6.30pm	Public swim 12.00pm – 7.30pm
Adults swim 6.30pm – 7.30pm	

### Special Events

The lido this year held two special events. A 'Pirate Day' incorporating an evening outdoor movie and a 'Summer Barbeque' evening.

### Points of Interest

The Lido also sells its summer season tickets through the local bookshop in the town centre.

Opportunity to purchase a spectator season ticket for those who just want to sun bathe and use the café.

The lido has a website with sponsorship opportunities eg. banner advertising to generate revenue. Season ticket application forms and swimming lesson booking forms can also be downloaded.

Two special family fun day events to attract large crowds.

The lido is open for more hours during the day time and weekends than Chesham's open air pool and remains closed for October – April.

The Marketing Plan includes some interesting promotional activities, for example:

- i) An annual fun run – starting and ending at the lido
- ii) Youth club evenings at the lido (requires partnership funding by youth services)
- iii) Exercise on prescription (requires partnership funding)
- iv) Over 60's swim
- v) Canoeing, kayaking, PADI diving instruction
- vi) Themed weeks eg. seaside (kiss me quick hats, candy floss, sand pit area)

***A comparison of the charges and income and expenditure for these facilities are detailed in section 5.ii.***

### Chipping Norton Rugby Club

#### Context

The rugby club is located in West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and serves an area of about a 10 mile radius around the town of Chipping Norton. Total population of this area is 22,172.

The club has a well-developed mini-junior section at all age groups (U18 to U7), a thriving, competitive senior section including First and Second XV squads and was the first rugby club in Oxfordshire to gain the RFU Seal of Approval.

The Club's current land is leased from WODC on a 90-year tenure with 80 years remaining. The main car parking space, adjacent to the clubhouse, is owned by WODC with permission to use for parking. Access to the site is shared by the Rugby Club with Chipping Norton Bowls Club and the Silver Band.

### **Management**

The Club is currently run by a Club Committee of 8. The Club's constitution has recently been revised to bring it in line with guidelines approved by the RFU. This has clarified areas of responsibility, streamlined the running of the Club and incorporated a policy on sport equity, access, disability, etc.

### **Recent Development**

The club purchased some new land (freehold), located adjacent to the club, with help from lottery and WODC funding in the late 1990s. The club obtained planning permission in 1997 for the conversion of the new land from agricultural to leisure use. This new area of land provides three full sized rugby pitches and a dedicated minis/juniors playing area. Existing car parking space has been improved and some new parking facilities created on the new site. The existing clubhouse (built in 1994) was also extended and reorganised in accordance with Sport England standards to provide extra changing rooms and showers suitable for women's or minis' use. A Multi-Purpose Room, segregated from the main function area, was also built to enable the club to offer suitable (non-smoking) amenities for families, coaching seminars, meetings, crèche etc.

The aim of this development was to:

1. To improve the quality and extent of the provision of rugby football to the Chipping Norton catchment area.
2. To make the Club's facilities more suitable for families and female players.
3. To increase the usage of the Club's facilities by the local community.
4. To improve the training and fitness levels of members especially senior players.

Overall, £226,968 was required to carry out this project, of which 56%, £127,887, was provided from the Lottery grant, £43,351 Lottery Support Grant from West Oxfordshire District Council, £1,762 of a total £7,100 through the *Sportsmatch* scheme for the floodlights, £2,000 over 3 years in ad hoc grants from WODC for coaching development, £51,940 from the Club and £23,676 through fundraising and pledges.

A comprehensive demand analysis was carried out to show that the plans for this expansion met with the County Sports Development Plan and Oxfordshire's RFU development plans. The club also identified a 54% likely rise in players which their current facilities would not have serviced or sustained. At the time of the Lottery grant application the club was already exceeding Sport England's optimum usage levels.

### Typical Week's Usage - September/April

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>W'nesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
<u>Morning</u>		<u>Fitness Training</u>		<u>Fitness Training</u>	<u>Fitness Training</u>	<u>Women's &amp; Junior Rugby Matches</u>	<u>Minis' Matches and Training</u>
<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Aerobics</u>	<u>Step Class</u>	<u>Fitness Training</u>	<u>Aerobics</u>	<u>Step Class</u>	<u>Senior Matches</u>	<u>Veterans Matches/ Social (lunches etc)</u>
<u>Evening</u>	<u>Colts Training &amp; Coaching</u>	<u>Senior Training &amp; Coaching</u>	<u>Women's and Midis Training &amp; Coaching</u>	<u>Senior Training &amp; Coaching. Comm. Meetings</u>	<u>Private Hire. Junior Coaching &amp; Training</u>	<u>Post Match/ Social Usage</u>	<u>Post Match Social Usage</u>

Following the site visits, the Panel agreed that the Council should:

<b>ACTION</b>
Consider tiled changing room walls with central drainage outlet and direct access to the outside area for any redevelopment of Marston pavilion
Increase promotion of the CVSLA Centre facilities and investigate possible themed weeks or annual events
Investigate the provision of an adjoining open space to the open air pool
Investigate the development of Chesham Rugby Club facilities in consultation with the District and County Council
Investigate how the Town Council can work with the District Council in negotiating and benefiting directly from S.106 agreements
Investigate the provision of a pilates studio or other amenity at CVSLA centre to help generate additional income.

#### **ii. COMPARISON OF CHARGES, USAGE AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

As well as the data collated from the providers of the various leisure facilities during the site visits a questionnaire was sent to all of the 41 other Best Value Town/Parish Councils to enable greater comparison of the Council's own service to that provided elsewhere by local authorities. A total of 21 questionnaires were returned.

The results obtained are summarised in the attached spreadsheets.

**Following the comparison of the charges, usage and income and expenditure, the Panel agreed that the Council should:**

<b>ACTION</b>
---------------

Ascertain the number of Chesham teams playing at facilities outside of the town
---

That the charges levied by the Town Council and CVSLA for football pitch hire remain unchanged
--

That CVSLA increase tennis court charges in line with other local providers
---

That CVSLA review their proposed swim charges on an annual basis in consultation with Chesham Leisure Centre
--

That CVSLA remove the discounted swim rate for Leisure Centre members, where no incentive or income is received for providing this discounted rate
--

## **6. COMPETE**

---

When considering the 'Compete' aspect of public sports and leisure facilities, this can be defined as to '*show fair competition as a means of securing efficient and effective service*'.

Currently, competition exists in regard to some of the pitch and pavilion maintenance where the grass cutting service is put out to tender and the cleaning of Codmore pavilion is undertaken by a contractor.

The operation of the open air swimming pool and adjoining facilities has not previously been exposed to outside competition. Upon completion of the new Leisure Centre in the town, the District Council pulled out from running the open air pool and the Town Council took over the Centre and CVSLA was set up to manage the facility. As the CVSLA agreed to run the Centre on a not-for-profit basis, the Council did not undertake a competitive tendering process.

The Council took on a 21 lease arrangement with Chesham Park Community College in 1996 to provide sports facilities to the local community outside the normal school hours. The Rugby Club also moved to the site at this time where they were previously based on The Moor. A separate agreement is in place between the Council and the Rugby Club. As can be seen from the 'challenge' and 'consultation' exercise, the site has only ever received significant usage from the Rugby Club, despite the intention of the agreement to enable wider community use of the other facilities such as tennis courts and field athletics.

### **i. Analysis of CVSLA Management Agreement**

Trevor Pilling, accountant at Wilkins, Kennedy and Partners, undertook an independent review of the current CVSLA management agreement.

While he appreciated that the Association managed the venue for a exceptionally small management fee in relation to commercial operators, he did have certain concerns. Particularly, these were in regard to a lack of transparency in operation and long-term planning which goes against the principle of fair competition.

He recommended that a 'scrutiny group' be set up to periodically meet with the Association to question and advise. It was felt by the Panel that members for a scrutiny group might be difficult to find since if people had an interest in the pool and associated facilities they ought to be encouraged to join the Association directly. Instead the Panel agreed to try and set up occasional 'critical friends' meeting involving the Chipping Norton Pool Association and/or Wycombe Leisure

### **ii. Analysis of Community College and Rugby Club Agreements**

Trevor Pilling also undertook a review of the arrangements between Chesham Park Community College, the Council and the Rugby Club in respect of letting arrangements. It was noted that historically the Council was at liberty to hire and let out all outdoor facilities at the college but in reality this had not happened. The Panel agreed with Trevor Pilling's key recommendation that it appeared rational for the Council not to be part of the letting agreement and for the Rugby Club to hire facilities directly from the college.

### **iii. Wycombe Leisure Limited (WLL)**

WLL took over the operation of the District Council's leisure services in 2005 and have been operating Wycombe District Council's leisure services for 4 years and West Oxfordshire District Council Leisure Services for 9 years. The Panel therefore felt it appropriate to ascertain the views of WLL in regard to exposing the services operated by CVSLA to competition. A meeting with the Operations Director of WLL and the Centre Manager of Chesham Leisure Centre took place to discuss the current arrangements and exposure of the facilities managed by CVSLA to outside competition. A separate meeting with WLL accountant was also held to discuss the financial implications and indicative figures for operation of the service by WLL.

At the meeting with the Operations Director of WLL and the Centre Manager of Chesham Leisure Centre, the matter of contracting out the facility was raised. No definitive commitment was given by WLL but the possibility of running the facility for a management fee was not precluded.

The meeting with the Council's Finance and Contracts Manager and WLL Accountant, concluded with the latter stating that *'I am happy that the figures appear to represent a fair cost to operate the facility.'* Matters that were felt to be worthy of further investigation was the perceived high level of the gym management fee and the VAT status of the income from the gym.

### **v. Private Operator**

From carrying out the site visits and undertaking a comparison exercise with the other 41 Best Value Councils, it was shown that two thirds managed their public sports and leisure facilities via an in-house arrangement. Those that didn't stated that their respective District Council operated all sports and leisure services in the area or the facility was leased from the Town/Parish Council to a private club, a community organisation or a group of trustees.

The Panel considered whether all of the pitch and pavilion maintenance should be contracted out. In earlier agreeing to the idea of exchanging equipment and good practice with Amersham Town Council, it was agreed that such an arrangement should be monitored for at least two years before any contracting out (save for a possible management agreement for Pond Park Community Association to manage Marston Field) was considered.

### **v. Leisure Card**

At the outset of the review, the Panel were asked to consider the options of introducing a Residents' Card for the Council's public sports and leisure facilities that could also be extended to include The Elgiva theatre.

From consulting the other 41 Best Value Councils, only one other local Council operates a residents' leisure card scheme. The Panel considered the implications of operating such a discount scheme for the residents of Chesham and, in principle, were supportive of developing such a card.

The Panel also considered the new joined up Leisure Card scheme that would be rolled out across the Chiltern and Wycombe District in April 2006 with South Bucks District looking to join the scheme in 2007. The scheme would work by giving leisure card holders discounts on certain activities at all facilities signed up to the scheme. The advantages would be that the card could be used across District boundaries making the scheme attractive to a wider group of users. The opportunity for Chesham to join the scheme was available and the incentive would be for the venue to sell leisure cards as they would then keep the income generated from card sales.

Taking into consideration all of the information, the Panel was in agreement that the Council should actively investigate joining the scheme by meeting with WLL in early 2007 to review the first year of the operation of the scheme.

## 7. THE IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Having rigorously considered the 4 'C's of Best Value and particularly the main issues pertinent to this service, the Panel has put forward a number of suggestions for an action plan designed to lead to continuous improvement. All of the below were debated and the Panel decided upon which should be progressed and recommended to Council for adoption.

### General

PROPOSAL	RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION ?
Ensure that the Town Council liaises closely with Chiltern District Council in respect to PPG 17 – Study of Open Space, Sport and Recreation – to further sport and leisure priorities within Chesham.	YES
Investigate how the Town Council can work with the District Council in negotiating and benefiting directly from developer contributions	YES
Support a proposal to build a full-size synthetic pitch in Chesham.	YES
Invest in improved road and other signage, lighting and play space.	YES - dependent on budget

### Sports Pavilions and Pitches

PROPOSAL	RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION ?
Support the bid by local community association to manage the building and bid for external funding to rebuild Marston Pavilion	YES
Begin process of sharing of specialist equipment and knowledge with Amersham Town Council to improve ground maintenance	YES
Consider tiled changing room walls with central drainage outlet and direct access to the outside area for any redevelopment of Marston pavilion	YES – subject to the possible costs associated with any funding bid not being prohibitive.
Write to football clubs reminding them of their responsibilities to clean changing facilities after use at the Moor and Codmore (and Marston after renovation)	YES
Begin internal maintenance programme for both Codmore and Marston pavilions	YES – monies in budget
Remove artificial cricket wicket from Codmore Field	NO – attempt to ascertain informal recreational usage first

Ascertain the number of Chesham cricket teams playing at facilities outside of the town to decide upon need for extra provision	<b>YES</b>
---	------------

### **Chesham Park Community College Facilities**

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION?</b>
Investigate the development of Chesham Rugby Club facilities in consultation with the District and County Council	<b>YES</b>
Support the Rugby Club in renegotiation of rental agreement directly with Chesham Park	<b>YES</b>
Recommend the Council withdraw from current agreement to let out facilities, in agreement with the Chesham Park and the Rugby Club.	<b>YES</b>

### **Swimming Pool and Associated Facilities**

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION?</b>
Work with CVSLA to ensure transparency of decision-making and finances is improved	<b>YES</b>
External review body or 'critical friends' group be set up to help, advise and scrutinise management arrangement.	<b>YES</b>
Investigate the provision of a pilates studio or similar amenity to help generate additional income	<b>YES</b>
Make decision on whether to possibly convert the multi-sports area to tennis courts on the basis of community benefit as well as financial benefit.	<b>YES</b>
The matter of contracting out the pool and associates facilities be considered, subject to there being no restrictions previously stipulated in the Sport England grant.	<b>YES</b>
Increase promotion of the CVSLA Centre facilities and investigate possible themed weeks or annual events	<b>YES</b>
Support and encourage proposals to provide an adjoining open space to the open air pool	<b>YES</b>
CVLSA increase tennis court charges in line with other providers.	<b>YES</b>
That CVSLA review their proposed swim charges on an annual basis taking into account WLL fees	<b>YES</b>
That CVSLA remove the discounted swim rate for Leisure Centre members, where no incentive or	<b>YES</b>

income is received for providing this discounted rate	
Seek formal national QUEST accreditation at swimming pool to prove high quality provision	<b>YES</b>

**Leisure Card**

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION ?</b>
Council to monitor the success of the leisure card for a year to ascertain what, if any, benefits would accrue to Chesham residents.	<b>YES</b>

## **8. FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN**

---

### **2006/07**

- Respond to Chiltern DC's PPG 17 audit and express support for an all-weather pitch for Chesham.
- Respond to Chiltern DC's Local Development Framework consultation expressing the importance of developer contributions to leisure provision.
- Begin upgrade of signage and lighting.
- Begin process of sharing of specialist equipment and knowledge with Amersham Town Council to improve ground maintenance
- Assist Pond Park Community Association with development of business plan for external funding bid for Marston pavilion
- Write to football clubs reminding them of cleaning responsibilities
- Begin internal maintenance programmes for Codmore and Marston pavilions
- Audit informal recreational use of artificial cricket wicket at Codmore.
- Audit number of Chesham teams playing at facilities outside town
- Begin discussions with Chesham Park Community College on current arrangements with Council and rugby club.
- Work with CVSLA to ensure transparency of decision-making and finances is improved
- External review body or 'critical friends' group be set up to help, advise and scrutinise CVSLA management arrangement
- Increase promotion of the CVSLA Centre facilities and investigate possible themed weeks or annual events
- CVLSA increase tennis court charges in line with other providers
- Examine the gym's income in relation to management fee.

### **2007/08**

- Consider joining WLL Leisure card scheme following a period of monitoring.
- Convert old Codmore tennis courts into informal young persons' recreational area upon prove of need and finances available.
- Work to provide a business plan for the proposal to provide adjoining open space to the open air pool and creation of indoor exercise studio.
- Redevelopment of multi-court/tennis courts at pool
- CVSLA review their proposed swim charges on an annual basis taking into account WLL fees
- CVSLA remove the discounted swim rate for Leisure Centre members, where no incentive or income is received for providing this discounted rate
- Submit Marston Pavilion lottery or other external funding bid.

**2008/09**

- Seek formal national QUEST accreditation at swimming pool to prove high quality provision
- Review agreement between CVSLA and Council when the option of contracting out the facility is considered advantageous by both parties and legally allowable.
- Re-examine hiring agreements for football clubs.

**2009/10**

- Complete signage and lighting upgrade programme
- Start build on new pavilion subject to external funding being obtained
- Re-examine pitch maintenance schedule provision

**2010/11**

- Revisit agreements on leisure card provision
- Undertake major survey on sports and leisure facility usage

## • APPENDICES

---

1. Sports Pavilion and Pitches Survey 2006
2. Chesham Rugby Club User Survey 2006
3. CVSLA User Survey 2006
4. Best Value Performance Indicators



Chesham  
Town Council

# Chesham Town Council Sports Pavilions and Pitches User Survey 2006

Every five years the Council carries out a door-to-door household residents' survey to assess the Council's services and performance. In-between this time the Council would also like to receive your views on the service it provides. As a regular hirer of one of Chesham Town Council's pavilions and sports pitches, we would appreciate 5 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire below. We value your comments and suggestions and these will help us to identify where improvements can be made in the future.

We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

**Please complete the survey by placing a  in the appropriate box or writing in the space provided.**

1. Which site do you use? Marston   
 (If you use more than one site please Codmore   
 complete a separate survey for each site)

2. How do you normally get to the site?  
 Walk  Car  Bicycle  Motorbike  Bus   
 Other (please specify):.....

3. How long has your team been using these facilities?  
 Please write in: .....

4. How good are the facilities at the site?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Car Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pitch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pavilion - cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pavilion - changing area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pavilion - showers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pavilion – social area/kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How would you rate the security of the pavilion?

Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How would you rate the administration received from the Town Hall regarding your hiring of the facility?

Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How would you rate the grounds maintenance carried out at the site?

Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

---

8. Does the site meet your team's needs?

- Yes   
No  (please state why in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

9. Would you recommend the facility to any other teams/individuals?

- Yes   
No  (please state why not in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

10. What is your opinion of the charge to hire the facility?

- Cheap       About Right       Expensive

---

11. Overall, how would you rate the facilities?

- Poor      Satisfactory      Good      Excellent

---

12. If you were in charge, what are the three things you would do to improve the facilities? (please write in)

- 1).....  
2).....  
3).....

---

**Additional Comments**

13. Please write in below if you have any additional comments you would like to make:

*Thank You for your time in completing this questionnaire  
Now please return to Chesham Town Council, Town Hall, Chesham, HP5 1DS  
by Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006*



# Chesham Town Council Chesham Rugby Club User Survey 2006

Every five years the Council carries out a door-to-door household residents' survey to assess the Council's services and performance. In-between this time the Council would also like to receive your views on the service it provides. As a member of Chesham Rugby Club, who leases the Community College facilities from the Town Council, we would appreciate 5 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire below. We value your comments and suggestions and these will help us to identify where improvements can be made in the future.

We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

**Please complete the survey by placing a  in the appropriate box or writing in the space provided.**

1. How do you normally get to the College?

Walk       Car       Bicycle       Motorbike       Bus

Other (please specify):.....

2. How long have you been playing for Chesham Rugby Club?

Please write in: .....

3. How good are the facilities at the site?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Car Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pitches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The training area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The changing facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The showers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage area for equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The club house/social area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. How would you rate the security of the club house/storage area?

Poor       Satisfactory       Good       Excellent

5. How would you rate the grounds maintenance carried out at the site?

Poor       Satisfactory       Good       Excellent

---

6. Does the site meet your club's needs?

- Yes   
No  (please state why in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

7. Would you recommend using the facility to any other teams/individuals?

- Yes   
No  (please state why not in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

8. What is your opinion of the charge to hire the facility?

- Cheap       About Right       Expensive

---

9. Overall, how would you rate the facilities?

- Poor      Satisfactory      Good      Excellent

---

10. If you were in charge, what are the three things you would do to improve the facilities? (please write in)

- 1).....  
2).....  
3).....

---

**Additional Comments**

11. Please write in below if you have any additional comments you would like to make:

*Thank You for your time in completing this questionnaire  
Now please return to the Chesham Town Council, Town Hall, Chesham, HP5 1DS  
by Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006*



# Chesham Town Council

## Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Centre

### User Survey 2006

Chesham Town Council is one of 41 larger local Town/Parish Councils that are required to meet the government's 'Best Value' legislation. The aim of 'Best Value' is to ensure that service provision is appropriate for the residents of Chesham.

Every five years the Council carries out a door-to-door household residents' survey to assess the Council's services and performance. In-between this time the Council would also like to receive your views on the service it provides. As a user of the Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Centre, which is managed for the Town Council by a not-for-profit organisation, we would appreciate 5 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire below. We value your comments and suggestions and these will help us to identify where improvements can be made in the future.

We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

**Please complete the survey by placing a  in the appropriate box or writing in the space provided.**

1. How do you normally get to the site?

Walk  Car  Bicycle  Motorbike  Bus

Other (please specify):.....

2. Which facility do you use? (please tick all that apply)

Swimming  Tennis  Multi-court  Football  Gym  Café  Poolside   
Pool Court Pitches social area/spectator

Other (please specify):.....

3. How long have you been using the Centre?

Please write in: .....

4. How good are the facilities at the Centre?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Access to the Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Football pitches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multi-court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gymnasium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Café	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poolside social area/spectator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How would you rate the staff at the Centre?

Poor  Satisfactory  Good  Excellent

---

6. Does the Centre meet your needs?

Yes

No  (please state why in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

7. Would you recommend the Centre to others?

Yes

No  (please state why not in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....

---

8. What is your opinion of the prices charged to use the facilities/activity?

Cheap

About Right

Expensive

---

9. Overall, how would you rate the Centre?

Poor

Satisfactory

Good

Excellent

---

10. If you were in charge, what are the three things you would do to improve the Centre? (please write in)

- 1).....  
2).....  
3).....

---

**Additional Comments**

11. Please write in below if you have any additional comments you would like to make:

*Thank You for your time in completing this questionnaire.  
Please return in the box provided in the main reception area.*

## ***Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields***

---

### ***The Council's service objective is:***

to satisfy the requirement to provide high quality recreation facilities within the town.

### ***The service we provide...***

- **Codmore Playing Field** – This sports ground accommodates 2 football pitches, an artificial cricket wicket and pavilion that provides modern changing facilities and a small social area which is available for hire for social functions.
- **Marston Playing Field** – This sports ground accommodates 2 football pitches and a pavilion.
- **Chesham Park Community College Playing Field** – The college pitches, owned by Buckinghamshire County Council, are leased to the Town Council outside normal school hours for use by the local community. Home to Chesham Rugby Club, which rents two pitches from the Town Council, the playing fields also provide pitches for hockey, cricket and football, as well as field athletics, cricket nets and a tennis court.
- **The Moor Playing Fields** – The Moor is owned by the Town Council but the organisation of matches and the management of the pitches are vested in the Chess Valley Sports & Leisure Association under a 21 year lease. The playing fields on the lower Moor accommodate 4 football pitches. The Upper Moor accommodates a floodlit multi court (netball, tennis, five-a-side football, hockey and volleyball), a separate tennis court and a heated outdoor swimming pool.

<b>Our key targets last year</b>	<b>Did we meet them?</b>
Take ownership of a multi-sports play area – Marston Field	<b>Yes</b> – this was installed in the summer and an additional rebound wall for the play area has received external funding and will be erected in 2005/06.
Internal redecoration of Marston Pavilion	<b>No</b> – this has been put on hold where investigations are currently taking place as to the possible Community Management of the facility.
Internal redecoration of Codmore Pavilion	<b>No</b> – this was postponed and has been rolled over to 2005/06 so that it can be included with other redecoration works scheduled for the Chapel and Marston Pavilion.
Devise and implement Health and Safety/Risk Assessment policy for sports pavilion and open spaces	<b>Yes</b> - a Risk Assessment for the sports pavilions and playing fields has been carried out and any necessary follow up actions are being instigated.

## Service Performance and Targets

*Performance indicators for this service are:*

<b>Performance Indicator Sports Pavilions, Playing Fields</b>	<b>Target 2003/04</b>	<b>Actual 2003/04</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Actual 2004/05</b>	<b>Target 2005/06</b>
Cost to the Council per elector.	£0.69	£0.55	£0.74	£0.60	£0.65
Income from lettings as a proportion of operating costs.	30.7%	42.6%	36.6%	39.8%	40.3%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that Marston Pavilion was 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%*	60%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that Codmore Pavilion was 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.	N/A	N/A	N/A	74%*	75%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that football pitches were 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.	N/A	N/A	N/A	79%*	80%
Number of lettings for football matches.	70	91	90	76	85
Number of organisations in total using these facilities.	11	11	11	11	11

\* taken from 2005 Chesham Residents' Survey.

### Next year's key targets for 2005/06

Internal redecoration of Marston Pavilion unless facility is taken over through a community management initiative (carried over from 2004/05)

Internal redecoration of Codmore Pavilion (carried over from 2004/05)

Install a rebound wall to the south-west side of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Marston Field

Improve football pitches at Marston and Codmore with application of high nitrogen fertiliser in the Spring

Carry out a survey of the condition of Codmore Pavilion to ascertain causes of dampness and prioritise necessary repairs

Consider renovation of tar macadam area in Codmore Field

### SUMMARY OF THE SPORTS PAVILIONS AND PLAYING FIELDS SERVICE

The number of football bookings at Marston Field and Codmore Field is down on the previous year. This is due to the disbandment of one of the teams half way through the football season this year. As a result, income as a proportion of operating costs is also down and this year's target has not been met. The Council has received tentative enquiries from a new team about possible usage of the pitches and it is therefore hoped that the number of lettings in the next year will be brought back up to previous levels.

This year the Council agreed in principle to the possible leasing of Marston Pavilion to a local community organisation which has enabled external funding to pay for a structural survey of the building. Further work with the community on taking the possible management of the facility forward will take place over the coming year.

The low levels of satisfaction recorded from this year's residents' survey reaffirm the need for major renovation of Marston Pavilion and it is hoped that this community drive will help provide the large scale investment needed on the building. Codmore Pavilion on the other hand received very favourable responses from respondents to the residents' survey and it is hoped these levels of satisfaction can be further improved with the planned redecoration work that will now take place in 2005/06.

The multi-sports play area at Marston field has proved extremely popular since its installation in the summer and further external funding has come forward to pay for a rebound wall to enhance the facility during 2005/06.

The sports pitches will be scrutinised under this year's best value service review, which will be looking at public sports and leisure facilities.

**TWO YEAR IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

- ⇒ Progression of Marston Field Pavilion leasing agreement with community association.
- ⇒ Instigate recommendations emanating from 2005/06 Service Review.

## ***Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Association (CVSLA)***

### ***The Council's service objective is:***

Working in partnership with Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Association to satisfy the requirement to provide an open air swimming facility for the town.

### ***The service we provide...***

Owned by the Town Council but leased to and run by the Chess Valley Sports & Leisure Association, a non-profit making organisation, with the support of the Council, this facility provides a heated outdoor swimming pool open May to September and adjoining gymnasium and solarium, football pitches, a tennis court and a multi-court. The centre was closed in 1995 for extensive refurbishment and re-opened in 1997. It now provides modern changing-room facilities for the outside sports pitches as well as a pool hire facility.

<b>Our key targets last year</b>	<b>Did we meet them?</b>
To develop PIs in association with CVSLA	<b>Yes</b> – bookings for the tennis court and multi-court have been logged for the first time this year and will continue for future years. Due to the different membership schemes that operate for the gymnasium and the swimming pool, recording of actual usage is problematic and therefore PI targets have not been set for these facilities.
Devise and implement Health and Safety/Risk Assessment policy for the facility	<b>Yes</b> - a Health and Safety policy has been devised and a Risk Assessment of the facility has been carried out and any necessary follow up actions are being instigated.
Erect signage to highlight Town Council's ownership of facility	<b>Yes</b> – an information board has been installed at the facility.
Ensure Town Council acknowledged on future CVSLA advertising	<b>Yes</b> – the centre manager and management committee have been working hard to ensure all publicity acknowledges the Town Council.

## **Service Performance and Targets**

### ***Performance indicators for this service are:***

<b>Performance Indicator Chess Valley</b>	<b>Target 2003/04</b>	<b>Actual 2003/04</b>	<b>Target 2004/05</b>	<b>Actual 2004/05</b>	<b>Target 2005/06</b>
Cost to the Council per elector	£1.97	£1.96	£1.59	£1.58	£2.22
Net funding provided to Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Association per swim #	£1.62	£1.19	£1.11	£1.20*	£1.61
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that the outdoor swimming pool was 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.	N/A	N/A	N/A	98%**	98%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that the tennis court and multi court was 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'	N/A	N/A	N/A	96%**	96%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that the gym was 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%**	95%
Number of lettings for tennis court	N/A	N/A	2200	1692	1800
Number of lettings for multi-court (includes tennis, netball, football)	N/A	N/A	550	533	540

# Based on number of swims in a season including those taken by season ticket holders.

\* Net funding higher than anticipated due to poor 2004 summer.

\*\* taken from 2005 Chesham Residents' Survey.

**Next year's key targets for 2005/06**

Review the security arrangements of the outdoor swimming pool building

Develop a more comprehensive monitoring system of the management of the facilities between CVSLA and the Council

Look to develop a leisure card scheme in conjunction with CVSLA

**SUMMARY OF THE CVSLA SERVICE**

The outdoor swimming pool had a poor season during 2004 summer due to consistently unfavourable weather. Despite this, CVSLA continued to promote the facilities throughout the season and the cost to the Council per elector was slightly reduced.

For the first time, performance indicators were set this year to measure the usage of the tennis court and multi-court facility. The setting of the new PIs was based around the SMART principles and it was encouraging to see that both targets were nearly met. These targets will now enable CVSLA and the Council to measure continuous improvement of these amenities.

A Health and Safety policy together with a comprehensive Risk Assessment was carried out on the outdoor swimming pool and associated facilities this year and actions that have arisen are currently being prioritised. At the same time, the Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) together with the Emergency Operating Procedure (EOP) were revised and put into operation. The Council and CVSLA take Risk Management very seriously and ongoing monitoring of these policies and procedures will now take place.

The CVSLA service will be scrutinised under this year's Best Value service review, which will be looking at public sports and leisure facilities.

**TWO YEAR IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

- ⇒ This will be the focus for the 2005/06 Service Review. Improvements will be considered accordingly, following the recommendations that are put forward.