

Sport comment

Wasps are here, at last

AFTER six months of deliberating, cogitating and digesting, Wasps and their international stars are coming to High Wycombe.

It seemed like an eternity before Wasps signed on the dotted line to groundshare with Wycombe Wanderers next season but it has finally happened, leaving Wycombe with a £1 million cash bonanza and Wasps with a ground to play at next season.

But if it took hard work to get Wasps to come, it will take even more work to keep them there.

Wanderers had to placate the council by coming up with a green travel plan to get more fans to come to matches using public transport or by park & ride or by car-sharing.

Sands residents have had just about enough of parking problems and traffic chaos and the council wants to see action.

And if no action is taken and Wasps and Wycombe supporters fail to park responsibly or use the travel schemes provided, the council could go to court to stop Wasps playing, leaving the Blues with a massive cash shortfall.

Of course, Wanderers would be facing a black hole in their finances had the council voted against the groundshare.

Simon Monkman – and Ivor Beeks – must be relieved men because the knives would have been out if the rugby had not come to Wycombe after their £500,000 gamble on a pitch for Wasps.

But they were right. They must feel like they gambled on the council roulette and their number's came up.

Blues recoup some of the pitch cash

WASPS signed on the dotted line on Wednesday and immediately eased the financial pressure on Wanderers.

The Blues took one of the biggest gambles in their history when they risked £500,000 on a new Desso pitch before they knew whether the council would allow them to groundshare with the rugby giants.

But they received a large chunk of that back this week when Wasps chief executive Alistair McLean confirmed that Wasps will now be

contributing a substantial percentage towards that outlay.

In addition, Blues are set to receive £300,000 rent in the first year and £312,000 in the second year, with Wasps having the option of extending the contract.

With a percentage on bar, catering and other revenue streams, Wanderers are expecting to net upwards of £1 million from the deal.

Wanderers will have priority on fixtures with Wasps playing on Sundays or Friday nights.

Open day for Wasps

WANDERERS and Wasps are planning to hold an open day at Adams Park to introduce rugby fans to the stadium and help them make their choice of seats when it comes to choosing season tickets.

Wasps hopes to release season ticket and matchday price details through the Bucks Free Press next week and are keen to keep prices competitive.

Last season at Loftus Road, juniors could buy a season ticket for £29 while adult prices ranged from £99 to £149.

Wasps chief executive Alistair McLean said: "We've had a very encouraging response from the fans to our move to Wycombe."