

PLEASE fill out the following details about yourself. Your details will not be included in any story but will be used purely by the BFP to validate your form. The BFP will validate every response. Any response that cannot be validated will not be included in the results. **Closing date for responses is Friday, February 4.**

Name: _____ Full Address: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____ Mobile: _____

■ Are you a fan of: Wycombe Wanderers ☐ London Wasps ☐ Neither ☐

■ Do you use any of the district's current sporting facilities? YES ☐ NO ☐
Reasons/Comments... (If yes, which? If no, why not?)

1. In principle, do you back the idea of a new Community Stadium in the Wycombe district? YES ☐ NO ☐
Reasons/Comments...

2. In principle, do you back plans for a Sports Village and an 'enabling development', such as a housing development or hotel, within the district? YES ☐ NO ☐ Reasons...

3. If Yes to Q2, what facilities would you like to see as part of a 'Sports Village'? Suggestions/Comments...

4. Do you believe Wycombe Air Park is the location with the "best potential" for a stadium? YES ☐ NO ☐
If no, where do you think any complex should be built...?

5. Do you think the project is a special case and justifies the development of Green Belt land? YES ☐ NO ☐
Reasons/Comments...

6. Besides the money already spent on feasibility studies and the public consultation, do you believe WDC should have any further financial investment into the stadium project? YES ☐ NO ☐ Reasons/Comments...

7. If you answered No to any of the above questions, would you back the proposals if a business case was made and proven that the council would make money from their initial investment, and the clubs would benefit from the project?
YES ☐ NO ☐ Reasons...

8. Were you satisfied with the information provided by the council and the clubs prior to, and during the public consultation process? YES ☐ NO ☐ Reasons/Comments...

■ Other comments: (If you have any further suggestions, please add them on a separate sheet)



County leader silent on stadium

THE county's top councillor will be staying silent over the community stadium.

Cllr David Shakespeare, *pictured*, Leader of Buckinghamshire County Council, will not be following fellow senior Tory Cllr Bob Woollard in declaring his views on the new ground proposals for Wycombe Air Park, Booker.

Ex-BCC Chairman Cllr Woollard spoke out last week, saying it was also a matter of concern for County Hall because of the potentially huge road infrastructure costs that would be required of the authority.

He condemned the plans, which affect his Chiltern Valley ward, and asked WDC Leader Lesley Clarke to 'think long and hard'.

He was backed by another former BCC Chairman Cllr Richard Pushman.

After he had been unreachable to comment directly in person, The *Free Press* asked BCC if Cllr Shakespeare agrees with Cllr Woollard's claims that there would be huge knock on costs which county bosses can not afford and if he is against the plan – or whether he would be open to the idea and willing to look at financing the project.

But BCC spokesman Andy Holmes said Cllr Shakespeare had decided not to get involved in the matter and would not be making any comment at this time.

Cllr Shakespeare is also a Wycombe District Councillor, representing Tylers Green and Loudwater.

Wycombe MP Steve Baker has also pledged to stay out of the issue.

He told the *Free Press* it was not his role as MP to 'escalate matters' and said it went against the Government's Localism policy which aims to decentralise power.

The stadium is a matter for residents and councillors to decide on, he said.

Comment, Page 12

Hundreds of survey forms flood into our offices

MORE than 900 responses have flooded into the *Free Press* offices since our community stadium survey went live last Friday.

And you still have your chance to add your voice to the debate (see page 2).

To take part in the survey on page 2, simply tick the appropriate Yes or No box next to the questions, and leave any further comments or reasons for each answer in the space provided.

You must provide your full name, address and contact telephone numbers with the form – this is purely so we can check and verify every entry, your details will not appear in any story or be passed on to

any third party. If you do not supply your full details, or your details cannot be verified, your votes will not be included in the results of the survey.

The BFP is limiting the survey to one vote per person. Closing date for entries is February 4. Send your completed forms to BFP Stadium Survey, Loudwater Mill, Station Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9TY. Or fill in the online form at bucksfreepress.co.uk

● Anti-stadium campaign group GASP has bought an advert in today's paper in response to the three-page advertisement wrap purchased last week by Wycombe District Council



INUNDATED: Reporter Lawrence Dunhill shows off the response

Stadium decision set to be 'called in' for scrutiny

By James Nadal

jnadal@london.newsquest.co.uk

A VOTE could be taken on plans to move forward with the scheme for a community stadium at Booker – as it was confirmed there is cross-party support to 'call in' the decision.

This week, Cllr Alex Collingwood revealed councillors of all political colours are backing a request for Wycombe District Council's scrutiny committee, which he chairs, to examine the Cabinet's decision.



Last week, Cabinet members agreed to support more investigations into Wycombe Air Park – as the site with best potential for a new ground for Wasps and Wycombe

Wanderers – and a sports village.

But major concerns were raised through the scrutiny report, primarily over the greenbelt.

Improvement and Review Commission Chairman Cllr Collingwood, *pictured*, told the *Free Press* Tory rebels Cllr Ian McEnnis and Cllr Dominic Barnes made the call in request.

It is being backed by Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Independent councillors, he said.

The call in could lead to the decision being referred to full council, meaning it could be put to a vote by all of the district's 60 elected representatives.

Independent Cllr Malcolm Blanksby last week claimed it was not democratic unless such a vote was taken.

The call in request has to be confirmed by

the close of Thursday, February 3 and must meet at least three of six criteria, including an expenditure in excess of £100,000 and the backing of five commission members.

Cllr Collingwood believes that it will do so.

He said: "It has to come from at least two political parties but there are four political parties involved.

"My gut feeling is that you will end up with three of the reasons to call it in but then what happens is the commission then discuss that at a meeting, the merits of the call in.

"They may even say the request of the five members is not justified."

If the commission does not agree to the call-in, then the original decision can be 'actioned'.

Cllr Collingwood stressed there were a "number of choices that could be made" including referring the decision back to Cabinet, rather than full council, adding "we are in the middle of a process".

He said calling in was "relatively rare".

Answers to the commission's queries must be given – whether it goes to full council or Cabinet, he added.

WDC spokesman Catherine

Spalton said: "Upon receipt of the response from the Improvement and Review Commission (unless the Commission has asked for the decision to be referred up to full council), the Cabinet may decide to proceed with the original decision or an amended decision."

A special meeting of the council's Improvement and Review Commission is likely to take place around February 15.

See letters, page 12



FINAL REDUCTIONS

Clothes, Shoes & Bags

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**THEY WILL
SELL
YOUR LAND AND
DESTROY
YOUR
ENVIRONMENT!**

**MAKE YOUR
VOICE
HEARD
SUPPORT US**

GASP
GROUPS AGAINST THE STADIUM PROPOSALS

HOW DO THE COUNCIL'S STADIUM PROPOSALS AFFECT YOU?

- THE COUNCIL WILL USE 240 ACRES OF YOUR GREEN BELT LAND TO BUILD ITS STADIUM!
- SELL OFF GREEN BELT LAND TO BUILD MANY HUNDREDS OF HOUSES TO FUND ITS STADIUM!
- BUILD HOUSING FOR A POPULATION TWICE THE SIZE OF MARLOW BOTTOM IN HALF ITS SPACE!
- USE YOUR VALUED ASSETS TO FUND COMMERCIAL EXPANSION!
- £308,000* OF YOUR MONEY ALREADY SPENT ON FEASIBILITY PLANNING AND A FLAWED PUBLIC CONSULTATION!
- THE COUNCIL CHOSE TO IGNORE ITS OWN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WHICH STATED ADAMS PARK CAN BE REDEVELOPED AT A FRACTION OF THE COST OF BOOKER!
- THOUSANDS MORE CARS ON YOUR ROADS AFFECTING WYCOMBE, MARLOW, HANDY CROSS, A404 ETC...!
- MANY OF YOUR LOCAL SPORTS FACILITIES WILL BE FORCED TO CLOSE!
- YOUR FOOTBALL TEAM WITH AN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF 4,170* WILL PLAY IN AN EMPTY STADIUM (MIN. 17,500 SEATS)!

**TO FIND OUT MORE PLEASE GO TO
WWW.GASP-NO.ORG**

GASP IS A COALITION OF PARISH COUNCILS, RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS, SPORTS CLUBS AND CONSERVATION BODIES FROM AROUND THE WYCOMBE AND MARLOW DISTRICTS WHO BELIEVE THE STADIUM PROPOSALS ARE FLAWED.

* Source: Wycombe District Council Planning Dept.

* Source: www.european-football-statistics.co.uk/attn/aveeng.htm

Bucks Free Press COMMENT

Wherefore art thou
Cllr Shakespeare?

WE know the life of a councillor is often a difficult one, and we understand what a thankless job they have at times. However, what we find more difficult to understand is why so many councillors serve on more than one local authority at a time in the county.

The *Free Press* has led the calls for unitary authorities to replace the present three-tier system, which includes district, parish and county councils. This would avoid duplication and confusion, and would also negate the need for two or three-hatted councillors.

For while we applaud their dedication to public life, it can place them in awkward positions. Take, for instance, Cllr David Shakespeare, the Tory leader of Bucks County Council.

He has gone on record recently stressing the pain taxpayers are bearing because of cuts forced on his council. And our sympathies are with him because we are acutely aware of the budget problems. We also understand why as county leader he does not want to comment on the district council's stadium plan, particularly in respect of the £750,000 members are spending.

But Cllr Shakespeare is also a Wycombe district councillor. And as a district councillor, he needs to spell out his position, especially after so many Tories have broken party ranks.

Instead he has remained silent of late. To misquote the Bard - wherefore art thou Shakespeare on the stadium?

MANN ON FRIDAY WITH CHARLES MANN

Real stadium survey
could come in May

IAGREE with those who say the subject of the proposed community stadium has caused the biggest debate and most controversy in living memory in Wycombe.

This paper has taken the correct stance in being neutral, rather than prompt public opinion in any one direction. So today I merely reiterate a simple point.

It is if you didn't like the council consultation or the *BFP* survey, there is an even better way to make your voice heard - either way. It is called the district council election and it is being held in May. One could even go as far as suggesting both critics and backers of the plan hold fire until then, because either the Tory-run council will have a mandate to go forward, or it won't.

Cynics will say local issues won't figure in this because people always vote on national lines when it comes to any elections. That may be the case, but the fact remains there is no better opportunity than the polling booth to make your voice heard in a democracy.

Sadly, if I were a betting man, I would gamble a good few quid on the fact that the turn-out in May will be no bigger than the normal disappointing 30 per cent or so. Despite all the furore, all the passion, the masses still won't get off their backsides either way to vote. They will be too busy watching TV or washing their hair. Honestly, watch this space and you'll see I am right.

Please prove me wrong. I genuinely don't care which your preference is in this or any other issue. Just take time to consider the views of all your local candidates and vote accordingly. And beware, if you don't get involved, you have no right afterwards to complain.

THIS WEEK'S TALKING POINT: PROPOSED COMMUNITY STADIUM

Timing of the advert will favour council's position

THE *Free Press* is doing an excellent job in covering the stadium saga. I say that in the hope that, in the interests of impartiality, the paper will print this criticism.

Last week, the paper printed a wrap advertisement that was paid for by Wycombe District Council to promote the new stadium project.

The issue invited readers "to give us your views on the stadium," by completing and submitting a response form.

However the decision to print the council's advert and embark on the paper's consultation on the same date was unfortunately timed in a way that will inevitably favour the council's position.

At the very least, the groups opposed to the stadium should have been given the opportunity to run an advert in the same edition in order to explain their alternative position.

Of course, they may not have been able to afford the £5,000 estimated cost of an advert of the size which the council ran and which was paid for by us.

But of course this entire game is not being played out on a level playing field. The council is making quite sure that is the case.

J.D.Burnham, Harwood
Road, Marlow

EDITOR'S NOTE: Groups Against
the Stadium Proposals (GASP) have
paid for an advert in this week's
paper.

To comment, go to the Your Say
section at: Bucksfreepress.co.uk



LOCATION:
The council's
cabinet has
backed
Wanderers
and Wasps in
choosing
Wycombe Air
Park as the
favoured
stadium site

A waste of public money

**RE: The three-page council
advertisement in last week's
Free Press on the proposed
stadium.**

ANOTHER shameless waste of public money this week. Having ignored protesters outside their offices as they discussed how much they were helping the local community, our beloved councillors have decided to spend even more of the taxpayers money on an advert to tell us how they have ignored us!

How long will it be before the money wasted on this project starts to show? Will the elderly who lose their community centres really enjoy the sports village that much?

Beatrice Harold, Lane End

Why do outsiders like it?

IF a sporting centre is considered to be such a great asset to a community as those in favour of it claim, it seems strange that so many people

from outside Wycombe district approve the proposal for its location at Booker Air Park (*BFP report, January 14*).

One would have thought they would be clamouring for it to be located in their own districts and would therefore have been very much against the Booker location.

It would seem that the only explanation is that those outside the Wycombe district consider a sporting centre to be anything but an asset and if one is to be built, for it to be built anywhere but in their district.

P D Somerville, Coningsby
Road, High Wycombe

Wycombe deserves this

**RE: The open letter to Jerry
Unsworth (*Letters, last week*).**

EVEN though Rex Pawley admitted to not attending any of the forums held regarding the new stadium and sports village, he still feels qualified to advise Mr Jerry Unsworth [Head of planning] how to do his job.

He admits his age prevents him from leaving his house after dark, but gives no thought to all those who do.

People who want a place to go to watch sport, take part in sport, enjoy any of the list of proposed amenities that there will be once this exciting plan comes to fruition

We have many places of outstanding beauty, but do thousands of people go there to gaze at it? He has totally missed the point. He speaks of Normans and Domesday. It's pointless living in the past.

Adams park is a nice little stadium. Once it was large enough for the then population. But just to build a few extra tiers in the stands just wouldn't work.

Has Rex ever tried to get out of the ground after a match? Has he ever had to pay £5 just to park a car once the car parks are full?

Once upon a time, Wembley Stadium was big enough for any occasion, from the Olympic Games, the World Cup in 1966, and anything else since, but we out-grew it, just like Adams Park.

High Wycombe deserves this Sports Village.

People already travel great distances (me included) for the matches, and more will follow.

It is not fair to throw words like 'decency' and 'conscience' at Mr Unsworth.

He is doing a very difficult job, and doing it well.

Mrs Margaret Webb
Harthall Lane, Kings
Langley, Herts

Global warming is more a fact than opinion

DESPITE Anthony Weeden's usual certainty on the letters page two weeks ago that 'Climate Change is a Failed Science' (Phew! Thank goodness for that eh kids?), I remain healthily sceptical - about climate scepticism.

Over in Wycombe, Mr P D Somerville says he believes I am following the orders of a High Priest. An imaginative idea, but no, I am simply following the science.



Press freedom
is a wonderful
thing.

People have been warning about the reality of manmade climate change for 50 years, but people are still free to state that they believe the exact opposite.

I'm all for reasoned debate and giving the minority fringe a voice.

But the word 'debate' is misleading here.

Something like 99% of

climatologists (even in the US) agree it's manmade. That's closer to a "dead cert" in betting parlance, than a coin toss on which horse to back?

School teachers have a duty to teach the balance of probabilities, as well as a balance of opinions. So too should the media surely?

The science, and the evidence, have spoken loud and clear for the last 50 years, despite all our attempts at wishful denial.

So, just as a few sceptics continue to protest, so too does manmade global warming remain closer to being a 'fact', like gravity, than an 'opinion'.

Dave Hampton, pictured,
Hyde Green, Marlow

Enlighten world leaders

WHAT a relief! *BFP* readers no longer have to worry about global warming. We can ignore what the government says, what the great majority of the world's scientists say. We can ignore persistent eye-witness reports of ice loss in glaciers and in polar regions. We don't need to worry when calamitous floods, droughts and

other extreme weather events become ever more widespread and more frequent.

Who offers us this comfort? Roderick Taylor of Abbotsbrook, Bourne End. It's not just the address that's impressive: he's done the thermodynamics (*Letters, January 21*). Brilliant! He deserves a personal entry in Wikipedia.

But why is he wasting time writing to the *Bucks Free Press*?

Hasn't he heard of Kyoto, Copenhagen, Cancun? He should be offering enlightenment to all those world leaders who spend so much of their time and energy trying to build a global response to global warming.

Eric Alexander, Dovecot
Road, High Wycombe

Don't forget pollution

I READ the letters about global warming on 14th January, but it is important that we also pay attention to the harm that other pollution can cause to health.

Pollutants can cause oestrogen-mimic chemicals which are thought may be a cause of the large increase in hormonal

cancers. Breast cancer has gone up from 25,000 cases a year in the 1980s to 44,000 cases a year in UK now. Visit the website: breastcanceruk.org.uk

Prostate and testicular cancer have risen several fold in recent years.

Blood tests carried out for WWF found that everyone tested had several man-made toxic chemicals in their blood. These had come from flame retardant chemicals, pesticides, fluorides and the hundreds of other chemicals in common use. Benzene is proven to cause cancer and leukaemia but is widely used by industry! Some chemicals can damage DNA, and dioxins from incinerators can cause cancer and birth defects.

Government statistics show that 24,000 early deaths a year from breathing problems are caused by air pollution in Britain.

Preventing serious illness in the first place would save so much suffering, but little attention seems to be paid to it.

BA.Wills, Ruislip

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