

Chorleywood Common Youth Football Club

The Editor, Watford Observer

16th December 2008



Dear Sir

TWO MONTHS OF DEAFENING SILENCE

In mid-October our football club were refused permission to expand our land for further pitches. The Observer was kind enough to provide some excellent coverage of the meeting, where 150 club members turned up in support. Despite our having a very sound case, based on strongly growing demand and our need for a girls' team, the Council turned us down on highly dubious planning grounds.

Opposition to our plans was led by two members of the Development Control Committee, Councillor Spencer, who represents Chorleywood, and Councillor Shaw. Both Councillors claimed to be supportive of the football club – indeed Councillor Shaw said she would do her utmost to help and, as stated in the Minutes, “the Council were committed to find another suitable location in the District”. We were reassured by that public display of commitment, notwithstanding the fact that we consider the decision to refuse planning permission was unreasonable and wrong.

During the discussion much was made of the availability of other pitches locally which the club could use, so we were expecting to hear about these. After the first month of silence I wrote to both Councillors reminding them of their commitments, asking about these pitches and what actions they had taken; I haven't even had the courtesy of an acknowledgment from either.

So, two months on, may I please ask publicly through your letters page whether Councillors Spencer and Shaw will deliver on their commitments to our youngsters or are these just Politicians' promises?

We have an extremely successful Saturday morning soccer school, which over the last year has coached 100 under-6's in the basics of the game. The Club and its members are proud to play such a role in the local community. The Council's decision will force many of them to leave the club in a few years unless further pitches are made available. How ironic, when there is national concern over childhood obesity, that our Councillors should seek to deny them the opportunity to enjoy sport.

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