

CHESTERTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting 7th July 2011

Summary of presentation, question and answer session.

1. Debbie Kaye, Head of Arts and Recreation, Ian Ross, Sport and Recreation Manager, and Alistair Wilson, Green Spaces Manager, gave a short update on local projects, and then invited questions from the floor.
2. Debbie introduced her colleagues and emphasised that they wanted to hear from local residents what they wanted form open space and recreation. The Council had a report going to the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee to initiate a consultation on a draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy. This would include a comprehensive audit of the City's open spaces.
3. The Council was also reviewing leisure grants as part of its ongoing consultation, nearly £300,000 in new grant money for sports and arts activities was going to be aligned to key areas such as the Olympics, three year grant agreements and start-ups. Priorities would be set through the Area Committees.
4. The consultation could be responded to through the Council's website and would close on 19th August.
5. Ian Ross gave an update on the project to bring the former Pye factory recreation field back into use. This included:
 - levelling the field and reinstating football pitches on it. He had been talking to Chesterton Eagles and Chesterton Crusaders on the type of pitches they needed;
 - working with Guy Belcher on Logan's Meadow extension and the land fronting the Vie estate which had now been linked by a new bridge;
 - Looking at options for changing facilities and toilets
 - Moving a gate to secure a vehicle access
 - Looking at the possibilities for cricket with NCI and the ECB to see what funding options were available and assessing the impact on football;
 - Installing footpaths and facilities in the open space fronting the Vie development such as picnic tables, compactor waste bins and dog waste bins, some minor landscaping and a good vehicular access.
6. There had been consultations with Vie residents on the play equipment to be installed in teh central area of open space earmarked for children's play.
7. Chesterton Recreation Ground had not needed much work recently: there was improved grass reinforcement and some work to tidy up the sports pavilion needed to be done.
8. There had been recent works at Chesterton Community College with an Astroturf pitch to provide an all-weather football facility. An Astroturf pitch would also be available at Manor School.
9. Green End Road Recreation Ground had had a major investment in new play facilities to provide for basketball and junior football. Equipment now included a 'big-belly' bin and some fitness equipment – mobile equipment previously provided was wel used – the tandem zip-wire was the only one in the City and the five a side pitches had been reinstated: a lot of investment with more to come.
10. Alistair Wilson said he was looking at improvements to or development of open space. The big current projects were Dundee Close and Woodhead Drive. There was a question over whether it was better to fund changes at Dundee Close or focus funds on Scotland Road Recreation Ground a short distance away. Woodhead Drive would be the main project for the autumn. If people had ideas for new projects they would be very welcome.
11. Issues raised in discussion included:

- The absence of tennis in the north of the city, Debbie indicated that they were looking to bring this issue forward as a priority;
 - Changing facilities: it might be possible to install a temporary facility on a suitable site as had been done at Trumpington whilst the new pavilion was being built;
 - Valerie Cutting noted that the Pippin drive play area had been found to be too small and had been shut off following safety concerns;
 - Ken Turner commented that having played both cricket and tennis in Chesterton he undertook task to get around the area of 17,500 people and see what we had. He got the overall impression that Chesterton is worse off than many small villages. Being deprived of community recreational facilities for such a large population people have to pay to go elsewhere. Facilities for small children were far better than for older ones and adults. Many communities are fighting to preserve the spaces they have. Using schools is not an answer as there are not enough facilities to meet children's educational needs. We need to improve the spaces we have. At Chesterton Festival he had talked to people about what they liked and disliked. They liked the closeness to town but disliked the lack of facilities in Chesterton. Two football pitches for over 17,000 people left some major lacks. It was essential to make the most of the new recreation space being made available.
 - Making contact with Chesterton Community College had proved difficult;
 - Mike Dawson drew attention to the facilities for tennis, and bowls formerly provided by the factory playing fields and was advised that the Environment Agency had ruled out any facility that involved fencing being built on the flood plain.
 - Eleanor Whalley noted that it was a fantastic facility for walking the dog.
 - Ian Manning praised the new waste bins as 'fantastic' and wondered if land recently identified at Kendal Way might be sufficient for tennis courts.
 - There was a need to assess the real demand for football facilities
 - Noted that the Pye Social Club was a club and had not been a public facility.
 - An idea suggested was a complete revamping of the Chesterton Rec. layout.
12. A vote of thanks was proposed by Ken Turner, seconded by Ian Manning and carried with acclamation.

Note prepared by Michael Bond