To: Members of Hawarden Community Council

From: Hawarden Rangers Football Club

Dear Community Council

Proposed Development at Gladstone Playing Fields

1 Hawarden Rangers Football Club is requesting that Hawarden Community Council consider their request to enhance facilities at the Gladstone Playing Fields.

Background To The Request

2 At present the football club has two sections: the Junior Section with youngsters from the age of five up to, and including, the age of sixteen and a Senior Section of adults. The Senior Section was formed in 1974 by the late Mr Elwyn Owen (Queensferry Sports) of Hawarden and the Junior Section was formed in 1984 with the amalgamation of the Hawarden Wayfarers and Hawarden Pathfinders Cub football teams.

In the period between 1984 and 1990 the Senior Section had a separate management committee and in 1990 it folded but in 1991 it reformed and was administered by the officers of the Junior Section; hence it became one club.

3 Before the beginning of the football season, late July/early August, the footballers are able to train/practice of an evening on Gladstone and during the autumn/spring, with reduced daylight, the training/practice takes place at Hawarden High School, either on the floodlit hard surface or indoors in the Sports Hall. The younger age groups practice skills on a Saturday morning; again using the school’s indoor facilities or on Gladstone.

4 Organised, competitive football matches take place as follows:

Queensferry Sports Flintshire Junior and Youth Football League

Saturday mornings: Under 12, Under 13, Under 14, Under 15, Under 16

Sunday mornings: Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 11

The League Handbook advises clubs of the location and parking facilities at each of the clubs.

Welsh National League (Wrexham area)

Saturday afternoons: Senior and Reserve Adult teams – and never do the two teams play at home on the same Saturday
Again this League's Handbook advises clubs of the location and parking facilities at each of the clubs.

**Hawarden Festival**

On Hawarden Festival Day the Club organises a mini tournament for the age groups from Under 7 to Under 11 and clubs from outside of the area do participate on this day.

Participating teams are advised of the parking facilities at Hawarden High School.

5 Although changing facilities are available in the Pavilion, invariably the teams that play on a Saturday morning come in their football kit (visit any location where junior football is played and you will observe that that is the norm: teams turn up in their football kit).

However, when the senior teams play, the participants use the changing facilities that are provided in the Pavilion.

On Hawarden Festival Day participating football clubs, more often than not, erect gazebos on the field for the use of their players.

6 On Saturday mornings those Hawarden adults (managers of the team and parents) responsible for a particular team will prepare the playing area and its environs prior to the match and at the end of the match will clear the area of litter - and encourage opposition supporters to remove any litter that they may have deposited.

Prior to the afternoon match, the officials and players of the senior team playing at home will likewise prepare the surface and environs of the playing area (remove mole hills, mark the pitch, and erect goal posts and wheel, from the lock up, the covered seating area for the substitutes). and, like wise, at the end of the match, wheel the substitutes' covered area back to the lock up and remove any litter that may have been deposited.

Before entering the Pavilion, at the end of the match, the players are encouraged to remove their boots – and there are boot scrapers available. Officials of the Club clean the changing rooms and tidy up the area around the Pavilion.

On Hawarden Festival Day officials of the Club help members of the Community Council to tidy up the site and remove litter.

7 With the exception of Hawarden Festival Day, there is sufficient parking at Gladstone for participants in the football matches and spectators and there is no need for those involved to park off site.
Why The Request For Enhanced Facilities.

8 The Club wishes to continue implementing its aim and objectives that it laid down when it was formed and to continue to play at the same level and standard that it does at present; and, to do so, it has to have in place requirements that the Welsh Football Association has advocated in its document “Tier 3 Ground Criteria.”

9 When the Junior Section was formed in 1984, with the amalgamation of the Hawarden Wayfarers cub football team with the Hawarden Pathfinders cub football team, the Club had a definite aim and objectives.

The aim was to foster and promote the benefit of healthy recreation for the youngsters of Hawarden and this to be achieved by;

- providing facilities for the local community to play football;

- fostering and promoting the playing of football at all levels within the community;

- promoting and fostering football by providing the opportunity for football related recreation: training, coaching and competition.

Ideally the ancient parish of Hawarden with its original sixteen townships of - Aston, Bannel, Bretton, Broughton, Ewloe Town, Ewloe Wood, Hawarden, Mancot, Manor, Moor, Pentrobin, Rake, Saltney, Sealand and Shotton. - was defined as “community” and, as there was a recognition that some youngsters, because of parental choice, may have attended schools within Hawarden, but live outside the schools’ catchment area, it was felt that “community” should be a five miles radius of the village.

These aims and objectives are applicable to both the Junior Section and Senior Section of the Club.

10 Today at least 70% of the members (both adults and juniors) live within the area specified in Paragraph 9. Some youngsters, who live in Hawarden, and, because of parental choice, are educated in the Welsh medium schools in Mold and in the Roman Catholic Schools in Mold and Flint. There are some, also, living outside the area; their parents have an affiliation with, and to, Hawarden eg lived there as a youngster, attended one of the schools.

Significantly this season 9/10 players in each of the two senior sides played junior football with Hawarden and still live locally. And not many senior football teams playing in the Welsh National League can make that claim. In fact all the players in one of the senior teams in this league travel from Merseyside.

11 The aims and objectives of the Club echo the promises and statements made in the Sports Manifestos of the Conservative and Labour parties:

- encourage sport governing bodies to make rapid improvement on provision;
• ensure that the Premier League delivers on its promise to invest five percent (5%) of its television rights into the grassroots games to help the next generation of players and coaches and to improve pitches and facilities;

• sport and recreation can play a part by tackling such health problems as obesity and mental health;

• sport helps people perform better at work or school and lead happier lives;

• help to boost sports at grassroots level;

• help local communities to produce a new generation of sporting talent;

• secure more funding to improve grassroots sports facilities and provision;

• support volunteer sports organisers by sweeping away unnecessary bureaucracy;

• enable more local sports fields and facilities to be created so local people can create space and sporting facilities;

• refurbishing community sporting facilities to support community cohesion, improve health and raise educational levels;;

• support volunteer sports organisers by sweeping away unnecessary bureaucracy;

**What Are The Enhanced Facilities That The Club Requires**

12 From Football Season 2020/21 The Football Association of Wales is reconstructing its leagues and, in order to play in a league of the same standard of football that Hawarden enjoys at present, the Club must fulfil the criteria laid down in the document “Tier 3 Ground Regulations.”

The Club must have:

1 Covered seating for a hundred (100) spectators;

2 A public address system;

3 A playing area of 98 meters in length by 62 meters in width;

4 A warm up area;

5 Two sets of goals to meet the “Laws of The Game”;
6 Covered sets for the substitutes;

7 Parking area for ten (10) cars;

8 Post match food and drink for players and match officials;

9 Refreshments for spectators;

10 Hardstanding area around field of play;

11 Female and Male sanitary facilities;

12 First Aid Officer fully qualified;

13 Provision for spectators with a disability;

14 Displayed Ground Regulations.

13 Council members will know that due to Council support and the hard work over many years of Lyn Owen (Chair), Stuart Lawrence (Vice Chair), Dave Dickel (Secretary) and Paul Hughes (former Treasurer) the Club has in place Criteria 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13. Criteria 2 can be a mobile system and some of Criteria 14 is in place (provided by the Council), and other ground regulations are printed in the match day programme. There is ample parking facilities to fulfil Criteria 7 and Criteria 8 is met by informing the players and match officials of off site provision in a local hostel. The Club sends regularly managers on First Aid Courses and many of the senior players, by nature of their work, are trained in First Aid; thus fulfilling Criteria 12

There are two criteria that, at present, are not in place and in order to comply with the laid down criteria, the Club is requesting of the Council’s approval to have in place:

Criteria 1: Covered seating for a hundred (100) spectators;

and to extend the width of the playing area so that it meets

Criteria 3: A playing area of 98 meters in length by 62 meters in width

14 It is unfortunate that in the FA of Wales documentation that the words “stadium”, “stands”, “turnstiles” are used as it conjures up a picture of ground facilities akin to the facilities of clubs such as Broughton Airbus, Buckley, Flint, Holywell that play in the Cymru Alliance and Connah’s Quay Nomads that play in the Welsh Premier League

Request For Any Further Enhanced Facilities

15 The Club is ambitious, but it also realises that it would not be possible to consider playing football at Gladsone in the next higher-level Tier 2, such as the Cymru
Alliance. The local clubs mentioned in the previous Paragraph 14 have fixed turnstiles, catering facilities to provide post match food and drink for the players and a licence to sell alcohol. And in order to maintain their status these clubs will pay players who, perhaps, are regarded as “better” and are recruited from further afield.

16 Hawarden would most certainly not want to go down that road as it wishes to retain its "village" feel, playing on the local recreation ground and meeting the needs of the local community, as laid down in its aim and objectives; a truly amateur club that does not pay its players as many other local clubs do.

The Cost Of The Enhanced Facilities.

17 90% of the cost of providing the enhanced facilities will be met by the Welsh FA and the remaining 10% will be paid by the Club.

Why Is It Important For The Club To Have These Enhanced Facilities

18 It is important that the Club should be able to play its football at the present same level so that aspiring and talented young footballers will have the opportunity to improve their skills and, hopefully, emulate the success of former players who have achieved national and international fame: David Brett, Andy Dorman, Ian Edwards, Barry Horne, Gareth Owen, Michael Owen, Ian Rush, the late Gary Speed – all who represented Hawarden Rangers at various levels of local football.

It would be sad and disappointing if local talented youngsters had to play their football at clubs outside the Hawarden community.

Finally

17 During the last four years the Community Council has recognised the contribution made by of the three gentlemen mentioned in Paragraph 13; of how they have developed, over many years, grassroots coaching soccer skills and organised football. The Council, furthermore, has acknowledged and supported the improvements to the Pavilion and playing area that these gentlemen, with the support of an active committee, have brought forward to enhance performance and achievement.

18 It is important that the judgement – the need for the requested enhanced facilities - of these three, gentlemen and the Club membership, is supported by the Council as it will make it possible for the present level of playing competitive football to be maintained in the future.
Frequently asked questions:

**Widening the field of play.**

The extension is to the side nearest the highway will not encroach on the other two pitches.

We will need to bring top soil onto the site to keep the extension at the same level as the existing field of play in the far corner.

The tarmac spoil from the existing path will be put to one side to be reused as a base for the new path. Nothing will be taken off site. All existing soil, stones and tarmac will be reused.

We will be installing a new drainage system alongside the full length of the new path.

**Covered seating area.**

This unit is only 3 meters deep and 3 meters high. There will be no need to cut down trees or cut back branches. There will be ample room between the unit and trees for pedestrians. The path at the front will still be there.

The steelwork and cladding will be brown and the seating green to blend in with the existing backdrop.

When not in use lockable anti vandal steel screen’s will be fitted to the front and sides so no one can access the unit.

There will be composite anti vandal spikes fitted to the roof (same as the pavilion) so that no one can get onto the roof.
Tier 3 Ground Regulations

1.02 - Approved Capacity Level.
1. The Applicant must have in place an approved capacity level, which is relevant and safe for all competitions. Minimum capacity is 500.
2. The Applicant must have in place 100 covered seats.

1.04 - Public Communication System.
1. The stadium must be equipped with a public address system.
2. The public communication system should cover all areas of the stadium and be secured against failure of the main power supply.

1.05 - Field of Play.
1. The stadium must be equipped with either a natural playing surface or turf.
2. The field of play should be 105 meters long and 68 meters wide. If this is not possible due to stadium constraints, the minimum allowable is 98m long and 62 meters wide.
3. There must be a grass verge of the minimum width of 1.5 meters between the touch line and perimeter barriers.
4. Barrier or emergency gates must surround the perimeter of the pitch.

1.06 - Warm-Up Area.
1. A warm up area for substitutes must be available along the touch line, advertising boards the goal or a separate area.

Hawarden Rangers Current Position.

HAVING THE 100 COVERED SEATER AND THE WALKWAY AROUND THE PITCH WOULD GIVE US THE CAPACITY.
BUT, WE WOULD NEVER NEED TO ACCOMMODATE THIS AMOUNT AS WE ONLY HAVE AROUND 20 TO 30 SPECTATORS WATCHING ON A SATURDAY AFTERNOON. MAYBE 40 FOR A LOCAL DERBY.

WE WOULD ONLY NEED TO USE A HAND HELD MEGAPHONE TO ANNOUNCE THE TEAMS BEFORE THE GAME.

THE PRESENT FIELD OF PLAY IS 105m LONG X 55m WIDE.
THEREFORE WE NEED TO INCREASE THE WIDTH BY 7 METERS.
WE HAVE A GRANT FROM THE FAW TO DO THIS WORK. £18k.

THERE IS A 2m GAP BETWEEN THE TOUCHLINE & BARRIERS.
THERE IS A 3m GAP BEHIND EACH GOAL.
THERE ARE STEEL BARRIERS & A GATE TO THE PERIMETER OF THE FIELD OF PLAY. COST TO THE CLUB IN 2009 WAS £9.5k

WARM UP AREAS ARE PROVIDED ON THE ADJACENT PITCH'S.
1.07 - Goals and Spare Goals.

1. Goalpost must be compliant with the Laws of the game as promulgated by the International Football Association Board (IFAB)
2. Spare goals to made available.

1.08 - Substitutes Benches

a. The Stadium must be equipped with two covered benches at pitch level, each with seating room for at least 8 people.

1.09 - Dressing Rooms.

1. The Stadium must be equipped with:
   a. A dressing room for each team with: Showers, toilet & seating for 18 people.
   b. Referees dressing room with: Shower, toilet & seating for 3 people
2. Clubs to provide a safe access and egress for both teams and referees from the dressing rooms to the playing area.

1.13 - Parking Areas.

1. Parking space for a minimum of ten cars must be made available for the teams and officials

1.14 - Refreshment Facilities.

Clubs to provide Players & officials with food and drink after the game.

1.15 - Stands and Spectator Facilities.

1. Seats for spectators must be individual, separate and unbreakable.
2. Use of temporary stand and bench seating is prohibited.
3. The stadium must be equipped with Refreshments facilities for spectators.

1.16 - Hardstanding.

1. There must be hardstanding surrounding one length and one width of the field of play, compromising of concrete or tarmac.

1.19 - Sanitary Facilities.

1. Sufficient clean and hygienic sanitary facilities to be provided for spectators.

1.20 - First Aid Officer.

1. Clubs to have the services of a qualified First Aid Officer.

1.21 - Facilities for spectators with disabilities.

1. Club to have suitable facilities for persons with disabilities.

1.22 - Ground Regulations.

1. The club must arrange to have its Ground Regulations fixed in suitable areas of the ground so that spectators can read them.

PLEASE NOTE:
IN THE TIER 3 OF THE FAW LEAGUE WE DO NOT HAVE TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES:

1. Perimeter fencing and Turnstiles.
2. Floodlighting.
4. Press Box / TV Gantry.

THESE FACILITIES ARE ONLY REQUIRED AT LEAGUE GROUNDS IN TIERS 1 & 2 WHICH WE AS A CLUB COULD NEVER ASPIRE TO.

THE SEATING AREA WILL BE PAINTED TO BLEND INTO SURROUNDINGS. WE CURRENTLY SERVE REFRESHMENTS TO SPECTATORS FROM THE KITCHEN IN THE PAVILION.

WITH A GRANT FROM THE FAW AND CLUB FUNDRAISING IN 2015 WE INSTALLED A TARMAC OUTER PERIMETER PATH. COST £14k

THERE ARE LADIES, GENTS AND DISABLED TOILET / WASHROOM FACILITIES IN THE PAVILION FOR SPECTATORS.

WE PRESENTLY HAVE 3 QUALIFIED FIRST AIDER’S WITH THE CLUB.

THERE IS AN EASY ACCESSED DISABLED TOILET / WASH ROOM FACILITY IN THE PAVILION.

THESE WILL BE POSTED AT THE ENTRANCES TO THE PLAYING FIELDS

PLEASE NOTE:
MONEY SPENT TO DATE UPGRADING THE FACILITIES AT THE GLADSTONE: £54k

FINAL INVESTMENT PLANNED.
WIDEN THE PITCH BY 7 meters: £18k
PURCHASE AND INSTALL 100 SEATER COVERED AREA: £25k

TOTAL INVESTMENT WOULD BE: £97k
Mrs Sharron G Jones
Clerk and Financial Officer
Hawarden Community Council
113 The Highway
HAWARDEN
Deeside
CH5 3DN

Dear Mrs Jones

I have sent the attached letter to County Councillor Dave Mackie.

As I understand that you are to be involved in a meeting with him and Stuart Lawrence I am sending you the copy as your chair may refer to some of the content in your meeting.

Sincerely

Fred Evans
Dear County Councillor Mackie

Hawarden Rangers Football Club: Proposed Development at Gladstone Playing Fields

As President of Hawarden Rangers Football Club I was invited by Stuart Lawrence to accompany him to a meeting of the Hawarden Community Council when he was to be questioned about the proposal to enhance facilities for the football club at Gladstone Playing Fields.

First of all may I thank you for the friendly welcome that you gave to Stuart and myself (a third member of the Club came after our item had been discussed) at Monday evening’s Community Council meeting. We understood fully why we were there: to provide answers to questions that councillors may have had about our proposed development.

However, I am disappointed deeply in how the meeting progressed and the final decision.

You allowed the resident to speak for five minutes and, after his presentation, he constantly interrupted the proceedings despite warnings. Why did you not adjourn the meeting as per the Standing Orders (SO 28)?

With the reference to traffic and parking in Birch Rise it was obvious that the resident was describing either Saturday/Sunday mornings when Junior football (age groups up to the age of 16) takes place or Hawarden Festival Day; and not Saturday afternoons when Senior football takes place with two teams playing in the Welsh National League; and never do the two teams play at home on the same afternoon.
Councillor Small alluded to the fact that traffic and parking is a problem in Mancott when Junior teams are playing; and you need only visit other areas where Saturday morning Junior football takes place; traffic and parking problems. We could have intervened at that point but respected that we were there only to answer questions. It is disappointing that councillors did not pursue that point.

Disappointing, too, that the point that he made about litter and mud in Birch Road was not pursued. Councillor Turton pointed out that litter seems to be a real problem in society these days and streets close to Take Aways, for instance have a real problem. If councillors were to be present at the end of a match on a Saturday afternoon they would see members of the committee pick up litter from the playing area and clean up the mud from near the hard area around the pavilion. Players are asked to remove their boots at the entrance and, invariably, some players will remove mud from their boots at that point.

Incidentally you may find this fact of interest. I attended a match on a Saturday afternoon and the wind played havoc with my umbrella. I placed the damaged umbrella in one of the bins by the pavilion; three weeks later it was still in the bin.

I just wonder whether Councillor Carver had asked the Club Secretary for a breakdown of where Hawarden Junior and Senior footballers live? His outrageous claim (and reading the Minutes of Council meetings that seems to be the word that often describes his remarks) that members of the football club come from miles away. If he were to research the Constitution of the Club he would see that it was a clear aim, when the Club was formed, that it was a facility for youngsters living within a five mile radius of Gladstone -- and that still holds today. As parents have a choice of where they want their children to be educated, it may be now that some children, who attend one of the five primary schools and one high school in our area, come from outside that catchment area; they wish to play football with the friends that they have made in school.

Incidentally, too, you may wish to note that regularly 9/10 of the players in the Senior teams will have played Junior football with Hawarden and live within our original catchment area. And there are not many Senior Football Teams/Clubs in the Welsh National League can make that claim. In fact all the players in one Senior team in the Welsh National League come from Wirral/Liverpool.

I know that some of the councillors claim to be members of the Conservative and Labour Parties. Invite them to read their party's Sports Manifesto -- I don't suppose they have or they would not have such a blinkered, narrow view. I will remind you of some of the promises and statements contained in the said documents:

- encourage sport governing bodies to make rapid improvement on provision;
- ensure that the Premier League delivers on its promise to invest 5 percent of its television rights into the grassroots games to help the next generation of players and coaches and to improve pitches and facilities;
• sport and recreation can play a part by tackling such health problems as obesity and mental health;
• sport helps people perform better at work or school and lead happier lives;
• help to boost sports at grassroots level;
• help local communities to produce a new generation of sporting talent;
• secure more funding to improve grassroots sports facilities and provision;
• support volunteer sports organisers by sweeping away unnecessary bureaucracy;
• enable more local sports fields and facilities to be created so local people can create space and sporting facilities;
• refurbishing community sporting facilities to support community cohesion, improve health and raise educational levels

I find it somewhat hypocritical that the Community Council is basking in the glory, enjoying the high profile, that the village enjoys and it wishes to identify with the achievements of national and international well known footballers; David Brett, Andy Dorman, Ian Edwards, Barry Horne, Gareth Owen, Michael Owen, Ian Rush, Gary Speed; all associated with, and represented, Hawarden Rangers at various levels of local football; and now the Council denying the opportunity for future aspiring young footballers to play their football at Gladstone at the same level but with enhanced facilities: a wider playing area and a 100 seater stand.

Although the FAW has stipulated a 100 seater stand, it is not envisaged that there will be that amount of spectators present on a typical Saturday afternoon.

I am sure that you will recall that during the last four years or so the Council has recognized the contribution that three of Hawarden Rangers’ long standing officers - Stuart Lawrence (Vice Chairman), Dave Dickel (Secretary), Paul Hughes (Treasurer) - have made successfully to the development over many years of grassroots coaching soccer skills and organised football. The Council acknowledged and supported their (the officers) judgement on the improvements that they have brought forward to enhance performance and achievement. And this success is acknowledged further afield: the Club regarded as one of the top clubs in North Wales. And sadly now, the Council does not wish to support the judgement of these volunteer stalwarts who want to ensure that the Club has facilities that will enable its Senior members to play football at the same level.

You are aware that 90% of the cost of the proposed development was being met by the Football Association of Wales. It is therefore important that the Club, so that it can forward information to the parent body, should have a full and detailed explanation of why this request has been turned down. We have parents who have a legal background and I am sure, too, that the FAW will want to seek advice. The reasons for refusal may influence future decisions that the FAW may take in deciding which football clubs, in the future, should benefit from grant aid.
I note from Standing Order 45 that a Council member is entitled to have her or his name recorded in the minutes as voting against a specific matter or as abstaining from voting. I would welcome a breakdown of how councillors voted as it is important for parents (and players who are eligible to vote) to know how councillors voted as they (the voters) may be represented in their wards by councillors who have, at present, prevented the club from improving its facilities and thus denying the opportunity for present Senior members, and future Senior members, from playing at the present level. They may wish to challenge the said councillors and perhaps think carefully for whom they vote for in the future.

Finally I heard one councillor mention the cutting of trees down if the proposed stand were to go ahead. It is the view of the Club that would not be necessary. Notwithstanding that I remind you that Gladstone himself had a great passion for tree work and he famously said, "We cut down that we may improve" - and it is my belief that if the stand were to go ahead, with the necessity of shaping some of the trees, there would be improvement; and the improvement that is outlined in the Conservative and Labour Sports Manifestos that I quoted earlier.

Each councillor should self-examine and ask themselves the simple question: "Am I a "community" councillor who has the interests of the folk I represent, especially the young?"

I thank you for taking time to read this letter and I await your response.

Yours sincerely

Fred Evans
President Hawarden Rangers Football Club