

**NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES of a SPECIAL MEETING of Nailsworth Town Council**  
**held at the Town Hall, Nailsworth**  
**on Thursday 29 November 2012**

Present	Cllr S Robinson (Town Mayor) Cllr N Dart Cllr JL Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr NI Kay Cllr MM Rahman Cllr SM Reed Cllr MP Robinson Cllr SE Thorpe <u>Invitees:</u> Mr Ian Crawley – Nailsworth Recreation Centre Mr Sean Davis – Chair of Governors, Nailsworth Primary School Mr Vince Southcott – Head Teacher, Nailsworth Primary School
Apologies	Cllr P Carter Cllr MJ Kelly
Non Attendance	Cllr MM Rahman

The Mayor welcomed Mr Crawley, Mr Davies and Mr Southcott to the meeting. It was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to enable the invitees to participate in the discussion.

Cllr Kay presented a joint report outlining the history of the MUGA project and the decisions which needed to be made, which had previously been circulated to all councillors. He expressed his frustration at the delays which had prevented the building of the proposed MUGA at Forest Green despite the best efforts of NTC councillors to move the scheme forward. This frustration was echoed by other councillors. Cllr Kay explained that, although his strong preference would have been to site the MUGA at Forest Green, his long involvement with the project had led him reluctantly to conclude that there was no realistic opportunity for it to be sited at Nailsworth Primary School without seriously jeopardising its availability to the wider community. He questioned the wisdom of spending a considerable amount of public money on a facility which, in his view, would only provide minimal access for the community at large. Under the proposed agreement drafted by the Nailsworth Recreation Centre and previously circulated to councillors, use of the MUGA would be exclusive to the school during the extended school day. This had led Cllr Kay to conclude that it would never be available for casual use as a kick-around area for the local community. Other areas in Forest Green which had been explored had proved unsuitable for a MUGA and therefore Cllr Kay felt that the best solution would be to seek to build the MUGA at the KGV Playing Field, where it would be under full control of NTC and could be administered by the Nailsworth Recreation Centre. In his view, this would ensure that the facility would have a secure future and would be available for casual use as well as being bookable by clubs and schools. Cllr Kay understood that this could only be done subject to agreement from SDC to release the current planning condition requiring the MUGA to be built in Forest Green, but felt that

preparatory work could be done on the KGV site whilst negotiation with SDC was in progress.

Mr Davis and Mr Southcott, whilst sharing Cllr Kay's frustration that the MUGA project had not yet come to fruition, were of the view that there was a considerable need for the facility to be built at the school. Mr Southcott stated that in his experience, there was significant demand for a kick-around area in the vicinity of the school, and that the school had attempted to meet that demand by allowing informal access to the playing field between 5pm and 6 pm on school days during the summer. Moreover, many community groups booked and used the school facilities through the Nailsworth Recreation Centre during non-school hours and in some cases other schools used the playing field during the school day at times it was not required by Nailsworth Primary. Mr Davis suggested that the latter practice could possibly be extended to other groups if the MUGA was built, if there was demand for this. Mr Southcott felt it should be recognised that the Primary School pupils were themselves part of the Nailsworth community. In his view, building the MUGA at the school would considerably extend the leisure possibilities for local children and young people, would be a major community asset and would help to engage hard-to-reach groups. He felt that a MUGA would be much less used if it were sited at the KGV field, away from the major centre of population. In response to a question, Mr Southcott confirmed that the proposed arrangement was that the school would be responsible for managing the MUGA during the extended school day, which ran from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and that NRC would be contracted to manage it at all other times, including school holidays.

Cllr Duckworth expressed his agreement with the view that siting the MUGA at the school would maximise its usage by the local community. He felt that the main beneficiaries would be Nailsworth people even if the school had extensive use, given that the school served the community. He also felt that, since Forest Green residents had experienced the disruption and inconvenience resulting from residential development and the building works to Forest Green Rovers FC, it was right that they should benefit from any planning gain.

The Mayor expressed his strong preference for siting the MUGA at the school. In his view, this site was ideally placed, being a good distance from local dwellings. He felt that it was regrettable that the people of Forest Green had had to wait so long for a MUGA and that the young people deserved to have one. He reported that Nailsworth Youth Club, which now had the benefit of sports development workers, would be interested in making use of a MUGA in that location.

Cllr Reed stated that she agreed that the MUGA should be built at Forest Green on the school site, but sought reassurance that there would be a commitment on the school's part for to ensure maximum access for the community in perpetuity. Mr Southcott emphasised that the school was wholly committed to this aim.

Cllr Thorpe expressed her support for the building of the MUGA at the school site. She felt there was a lack of play space in Forest Green and referred to evidence gathered by Mr Stephen Stafford, a local community worker that local young people in the 16-20 age group tended to congregate around the existing MUGA in Lawnside as they had nowhere else to go. She hoped that the proposed MUGA would be well used by this age group. However, she was uncertain of who would actually own the MUGA under the proposed agreement and who would be ultimately responsible for

its management and maintenance. She wanted to be clear on the advantages and disadvantages of NTC's pursuing a lease agreement for the site with its owners, the Gloucester Diocese. She also wondered about the long-term viability of NRC.

Responding to these concerns, Mr Crawley confirmed that the proposal recommended in his report 'Unlocking the Forest Green Multi-Use Games Area' (previously circulated to all councillors) would envisage the MUGA being owned by the Diocese, as the landowner. The school would be the client and would let the contract. GCC would project manage the design and build process. The existing 10 year NTC Business Plan for the NRC would be extended to cover the management agreement for the facility, with the incorporation of a small sinking fund to cover maintenance. Mr Crawley was confident that the facility would be self-financing, pointing out that NRC was currently running at a surplus of approximately £2000 for 2011/12, after paying the school for use of its facilities, and NRC would benefit from all revenue income outside school hours. He confirmed that, under the proposed plan, the school would not be required to contribute to the maintenance costs of the MUGA. However, Cllr Kay stated that it was his understanding that, under the original draft agreement for the MUGA project, any shortfall in revenue would be divided between all stakeholders and he would wish this arrangement to continue.

In response to a question from the Clerk, Mr Crawley stated that, in his view, there was no benefit to NTC from entering into a lease agreement with the Diocese to ensure the MUGA was retained on the site as the school, as the Diocese and GCC did not believe that there was any likelihood of the school being closed or relocated in the foreseeable future. Consequently the MUGA would be available for the same open-ended period. Mr Davis confirmed that it was his understanding that the Diocese would follow the wishes of the school, and the school was committed to the long-term future of the MUGA. Responding to a question, Mr Southcott confirmed that the school had no plans to seek Academy status, and if it did eventually go down that path, ownership of the MUGA site would transfer to the school governing body. Mr Crawley explained that it was his understanding that, if no lease agreement existed, NTC would have no maintenance responsibilities for the MUGA.

Mr Crawley then explained his recommendation to use the MUGA monies to seek match funding for other sporting and recreational improvements in the town. He saw this as a unique opportunity to obtain up to £100,000 through an application to the Football Foundation for monies allocated by the Premier League to Football Conference Clubs such as Forest Green Rovers. He reported that FGR's Chairman had indicated that the club would look carefully at providing the necessary support. Planning consent for the MUGA and any other relevant works would need to be obtained before an application could be made, and it would take a further 6 weeks for the Football Foundation to make its decision. Councillors were concerned that such an application might delay the MUGA project further, but Mr Crawley was confident that this would not happen, as the project was not dependent on this match funding.

At this point, Standing Orders were resumed and the following decisions were made:

- 1. A MUGA should be built on the school playground (site C on the map, attached). Proposed by Cllr S Robinson, seconded by Cllr M Robinson, to unanimous support.**
- 2. A lease agreement with Gloucester Diocese would not be pursued, but a Management Agreement would be sought to secure NTC's relationship to the MUGA facility. Proposed by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Reed, to unanimous support.**
- 3. SDC to be asked to achieve the most favourable terms possible to enable Forest Green Rovers FC to discharge its planning obligation relating to the provision of a MUGA. Proposed by Cllr Thorpe, seconded by Cllr Kay, to unanimous support.**
- 4. A proposal by Cllr Kay that Section 106 monies be used as match funding to achieve improvements to sports facilities owned by NTC and Nailsworth Primary School on the understanding that no benefit from these monies be accrued to FGR failed to attract a seconder and therefore FELL.**
- 5. MUGA funds be used to seek match funding from the Football Foundation if an agreement has been reached by all parties to do so by the date of planning consent for the MUGA. Proposed by Cllr Thorpe, seconded by Cllr Duckworth and agreed by majority vote, with 7 councillors supporting and one opposing.**
- 6. To confirm Mr Ian Crawley in the role of unpaid facilitator to provide advice and assistance to the MUGA project. This role to include the facilitation of liaison between the various parties working with GCC, who would project manage the design and build of the MUGA. Agreed by majority decision.**

Councillors expressed their gratitude to Mr Crawley for his unstinting efforts in moving the MUGA project forward. It was agreed that Cllrs S Robinson and Kay would act as lead NTC members on the project, and that written confirmation of Mr Crawley's role be sent to the school governors.

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Date

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Signed